

God's Grand Story pt 19 The Wedding Supper

Intro: Stefan Duerksen, Lead Pastor

Church-Wide Prayer: Matthew 22:1-14 And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.'" But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

- Reflect: We have been invited to the wedding! are you ready?
- Pray for us to be found loving God, loving people, being discipled & making disciples.
- Pray that you are your household would grow in love for Jesus & boldness in witness.
- Pray for those stuck in addiction, anxiety, depression, bondage, to be freed in Christ!
- Pray for peace in Jerusalem & for ALL of Israel to be saved!
- Pray "Maranatha" - the Lord has come. The Lord is coming. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

A. Marriage was God's idea!

Have you ever thought about why marriage is so important to human beings?

What is marriage: A covenantal relationship between one man & one woman.

Contrary to what GOOGLE will say – Marriage was GOD'S IDEA.

- **Marriage was God's idea to reveal himself & his desired relationship with us!**
- **Marriage is not a human invention.**

Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

The Grand Story starts with the institution of marriage! Adam & Eve! And culminates in a FINAL WEDDING between Jesus & his Bride! (Rev 19:7-9)

Matthew 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

1. Marriage is meant to mirror God's relationship with us:

- **Marriage is a covenant relationship. SAME.**
 - **Genesis 1:27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
 - **1 Corinthians 11:7-12** ... since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man...

- **BOTH created in God’s image and equal in value and worth.**
 - **Man is the “picture” of God. Woman is the “picture” of mankind. MARRIAGE is where this PICTURE PLAYS OUT.**
 - (Traditionally – not always! 😊) **Man pursues woman – woman responds to man!**
 - **1 John 4:19** We love because he first loved us.
 - **MARRIAGE.** God (man) pursues us. Mankind (woman) responds. We either choose to accept the invitation or reject it.
 - **IF ACCEPTED: Exchange vows & rings (sign of covenant)**
 - **We are given an INVITATION to salvation! & have the Holy Spirit as a guarantor (ring)**
 - **IN marriage: New life & Oneness!**
 - **1 Corinthians 6:16-17** Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.
 - **TWO THINGS: NEW LIFE & ONENESS** were ONLY to come through sexual union which was reserved for MARRIAGE.
 - A covenant relationship that mirrors the relationship God desires to have with his people! ONE THAT SHOULD NEVER BE BROKEN.
2. **God hates divorce – it mirrors the breaking of that oneness & life! the breaking of the covenantal relationship!**
- **Malachi 2:15-16** “For I hate divorce,” says the Lord, the God of Israel
 - **Matthew 19:8** He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.
 - **Divorce hurts people. Kids. Families. BUT... because of SIN... is permitted in certain circumstances.**
3. **God is faithful! He will not break the Covenant! EVER**
- Not with Israel and not with us!
 - **Romans 8:35-39** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 - **WE GET A CHOICE. He gives us the dignity of CHOOSING HIM or REJECTING HIM. He is FAITHFUL! We need not fear!**
 - **Hosea 2:14-17** “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt. “And in that day, declares the Lord, you will call me ‘My Husband,’ and no longer will you call me ‘My Baal.’ For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more.

The Devil seeks to destroy marriage and what it represents!

- The devil tempts us, “you don’t need God for new life! You don’t need God for oneness!”

- You can have oneness without marriage! or with two men or two women! Or with multiple partners!
- We live in a day and age where we are told that HAPPINESS is the ultimate goal! And expressing your sexuality is the BEST way to get there! Sound familiar?
 - **Sexual liberation has NOT led to utopia as promised!** Mental health and addiction number continue to go UP.
 - **Studies show that “hooking up” before marriage leads to a MIGH higher rate of divorce and lower marital satisfaction! 50-80% higher rates of divorce!** (Practical Guide to Culture – John Stonestreet)
 - **Young couples, who waited till they were married to have sex,** had the highest rates of success! (OPPOSITE OF WHAT SOCIETY SAYS)
 - **Children born of single parents are more prone to various psychiatric illnesses, alcohol abuse and suicide attempts that home with two parents.**
https://www.medicinenet.com/how_does_single_parenting_affect_a_child/article.htm
 - **Don’t despair if you are single parenting! REMEMBER: the SAME power that raised Christ from the dead lives in EVERY believer! Just press in through prayer! (Eph 1)**

MY INTENT IS NOT TO SHAME ANYONE HERE who has experienced marital or sexual brokenness! Me and Lou have experienced BOTH!

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

IMPORTANT: For those who are SINGLE and desire marriage! MARRIAGE IS IMPORTANT! Humanity depends on it to grow and thrive. BUT marriage is TEMPORARY. Jesus was single. Paul was single. AND none of us will be married to each other in Heaven! ULTIMATELY every believer will be MARRIED TO JESUS. YOU ARE ALREADY COMPLETE IN CHRIST.

B. The Marriage Covenant at Sinai

Joel Richardson does a wonderful job expanding on this in his book Sinai to Zion. I am just taking a piece of his work and showing it here.

You will find at Mt Sinai ALL the elements of a Jewish wedding were present!

- 1. Mikveh – ritual cleansing. The bride would wash herself before the ceremony.**
 - **Exodus 19:10-11** the Lord said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.
 - God commands the people to cleanse themselves before he arrives.
- 2. Chuppah – Jewish weddings have a canopy or covering that the Bride and Groom stand under for the ceremony.**
 - **Exodus 19:16-17** On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the

camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.

3. The Bridegroom arrives! And speaks to them!

- Exodus 20:1-2 And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

4. Ketubah – the wedding vows – the 10 Commandments

Penned by his own hand – God wrote out the wedding vows!

- Seeing it through these lenses makes sense of the 1st Commandment.... Exodus 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before me. 2nd Command "no idols"
- **MARRITAL and COVENANTAL FAITHFULNESS. He wanted an EXCLUSIVE relationship with his people! NO OTHERS ALLOWED INTO THE COVENANT RELATIONSHIP! (REFLECT)**
- **The breaking of the covenant is seen as SPIRITUAL ADULTERY (REFLECT Jms 4:4-5)**

5. Exchange of vows – do you take this man to be your husband?

- Exodus 24:3 Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do." The people responded, "WE DO!"

6. Sealed with blood – "till death do us part"

- Exodus 24:6-7 And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient."

7. The Marriage Supper – Moses and the elders ate with God!

- Exodus 24:9-11 Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

8. The wedding ring – the Sabbath

- Exodus 31:13 "You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you.
- **Sabbath was a weekly reminder! God was their husband! Provider! Creator! Redeemer!**
- **It wasn't just a day of rest – it was a day of worship! And trusting the Lord! It was like weekly Date Night!**

Isaiah 54:5 For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called

The adulterous bride – ON THE WEDDING NIGHT. ISRAEL HAD COMMITTED ADULTERY. They were serving other gods and worshipping an idol! Moses throws the tablets down and God is furious against his bride – who just promised to be FAITHFUL TO DEATH. The marriage is annulled.

God judges the idolators and destroys the idol!

MOSES PRAYS and God does the most unexpected thing!!!! He forgives and RENEWS THE COVENANT!

C. The Church is the Bride of Christ – Jew & Gentile!

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

Ephesians 5:25-27, 32 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish... This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

- **From OT – NT → Marriage was GOD’S IDEA TO SHOW US WHAT HE IS LIKE!**
- **Perhaps you have been abandoned in your marriage!** I am sorry! JESUS WILL NOT ABANDON YOU! HE IS FAITHFUL!
- **Perhaps you abandoned, cheated on your spouse!** I am sorry! JESUS CAN & WILL FORGIVE YOU! HE IS FAITHFUL!
- **Perhaps you are alone! And desire marriage!** I am sorry! YOU ARE ALREADY WHOLE & COMPLETE IN CHRIST! JESUS CAN SATISFY THAT LONGING IN YOUR HEART!
- **God did not break his covenant with Israel!** He has ALWAYS accepted her back! AND God will not break his covenant with us! HE will always accept us back too!

The proposal was extended to us!

- The proposal: "Come, everyone who thirsts..." (Jn 7:3-7-38, Jn 3:16)
- Ritual Cleansing: "Confess your sin & he forgives & cleanses..." (1 Jn 1:9)
- He is faithful to keep his covenant! AND to keep us in the covenant! (Eph 2:8-9)
- The engagement ring: "God has put his seal on us, the Holy Spirit" (2 Cor 1:22)
- The Bridegroom is coming back: He will come and rescue us! (Rev 19:11-16)
- The marriage supper: We will celebrate with a feast! (Rev 19:7-9)

NOW is the time to get ready!

- **Accept the Invitation!** Say, "YES"!
- **The Great Command:** Love God & love people! Love Jesus by obeying Jesus.
- **Repent from sin:** Strive for holiness. Present yourself as pure and spotless.
- **Abide in Christ:** Pray, worship, fast, study the Word & obey Jesus
- **The Great Commission:** Make disciples. Teach others to love & obey Jesus.

THIS IS HOW WE GET READY FOR THE BRIDEGROOM.

Revelation 19:7-9 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

Revelation 19:11-16 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a

sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

D. Practicum: FAITHFUL TO THE END

Revelation 22:16-17 “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.” The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9AM and 11AM

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2024

Cruise ship → → → → → Battleship

- 1. Life on Mission** (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus
- 2. Next Gen** (Ps 78:7-8): Encounters with Jesus, strong mental health, boldness & belonging
- 3. Israel & Persecuted Church** (Lk 21:13): Faith, fortitude & wisdom “to not waste the opportunity to share the Gospel”
- 4. Heart of Prayer** (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer
- 5. Church Renewal:** Directors for India and other new countries & many global disciple makers