

Victory Hour

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Here Comes the Bride: The Bride of Christ



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Introduction

It matters not who you are or what your cultural background may be, all of us can relate to weddings. The word *wed* is derived from the Greek word for *pledge*, which is to make a vow, an oath or a promise. In every culture, “to wed”, is to pledge oneself to another. This pledge is made in the presence of family and friends and carries with it a solemn promise to be true, faithful and loving to one another. Marriage is the bringing together of two separate people into a union to become a part of each other, and in tune with each other’s wants, needs and desires.

How exciting it is when we hear of two people preparing to marry. Couples begin their planning months, sometimes years, in advance. Excitement fills the air. There is the selection of the wedding party, which consists of the couple’s closest friends. In the Western culture, the bride traditionally leads in the planning of this “once in a life time”, grand occasion. There is so much to be done: setting the date, reserving the place, choosing the colors, selecting the bridesmaid’s dresses, planning the reception, identifying a caterer, a baker, a musician, a soloist, and certainly we cannot forget... the perfect wedding gown. The bride has anticipated this day for a long time. She has envisioned the wedding day in her mind over and over. She has worked hard and planned long, and she wants the day to be a perfect day. Finally the wedding day arrives. The moment that once seemed as if it would never come, is at last, just hours away. All the planning has been executed. Everything and everyone is in place. With just a few hours at hand, the bride now begins to prepare herself. She too, must be flawless. Not a hair is out of place, her make-up has been meticulously applied, her nails are manicured, she has lost pounds and inches in all the right places, so the dress fits like a glove and she is ready to present herself to her bridegroom. Her eyes will be on him, and his on her, as she slowly walks down the aisle. She will take his hand and he will take hers as they join together in a new covenant relationship.

The Bible speaks of the church as the bride of Christ. We as believers make up the Church, therefore, we as believers, are the bride of Christ (Is. 54:5; 62:5; Jer. 3:14; Hos. 2:19; Matt. 22:2; 25:10; II Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-27; Rev. 19:7-8; 21:2,9; 22:17). Yes that’s right, you are the bride of Christ. But what exactly does it mean? How does being the bride of Christ affect your life? What should you be doing to prepare for your bridegroom? These are just a few questions that this lesson will address. The hour is drawing nigh and the bridegroom is waiting. Come let’s prepare for Him.

1) Old Testament Bride of Christ: Israel

- a. Israel is the bride (Jer. 2:2)
- b. Israel’s unfaithfulness (Jer. 3:6-9, 20)
- c. Israel’s spiritual adultery (Ez. 16)

2) The Husband

- a. God is the Husband / Groom (Is. 54:5a; Is. 62:5b; Jer. 3:14)
- b. Betrothed (engaged / A new beginning) in (Hos. 2:19)
 - 1) Forever - security
 - 2) Righteousness & justice
 - 3) Love & compassion
 - 4) Faithfulness



3) The Marriage

- a. It is a time of celebration (Is. 62:5b; Rev. 19:7a)
- b. It is a time of preparation (Rev. 19:7b; Rev. 21:2)
- c. It is a time of transformation (Rev. 19:8)
- d. It is a time of invitation (Rev. 22:17)

4) The New Testament Bride of Christ: The Church / _____

- a. The Covenant (Gen. 12:2-3; 13:14-17; Gal. 3:29; 4:7)
 - Through the covenant that God made with Israel through Abraham, physically,
 - He also made with you spiritually
- b. The Church (II Cor. 11:2)
 - 1. She is unified with Christ
 - 2. She is to be faithful
 - 3. She is to be pure
 - 4. She is to be submissive (Eph. 5:23)
 - 5. She is to be holy (Eph. 5:26)
 - 6. She is to be sanctified (Eph. 5:26)
 - 7. She is to be blameless (Eph. 5:26)
 - 8. She is to be ready (Matt. 25:1-13)
 - i. Be watchful (recognize & discern the times)
 - ii. Be prepared (yourself & others)
 - iii. Be faithful (in what God has assigned your hands to do)

Questions to Ponder

How does your perspective change when you view yourself as the bride of Christ? Are you living a life that is faithful, pure, submissive, holy, sanctified and blameless before God? Are you guilty of spiritual adultery? How will you daily prepare yourself to meet your bridegroom?