1Thess #96

The bride of Christ seeks her wedding ceremony.

Our recent study about the Rapture of the church has touched on the aspect of the unique calling of this dispensation. A uniqueness, especially in relation to marriage.

We will go into Ephesians chapter five today so please open up there.

I want to give a very straight forward message that ensures you understand that you are the bride of Christ.

The words of Jesus HIMSELF, referenced a unique union related to marriage for this CA dispensation we live in!

/Mat 9:14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but **Your disciples do not fast?”** 15 And **Jesus said** to them, “**The attendants of the groom cannot mourn as long as the groom is with them,** can they? But the days will come **when the groom is taken away** from them, and then they will fast.\

Jesus is using the example of groom in reference to HIMSELF.

HE also uses the term - *attendants* pointing to everyone in view at that moment of time.

This is the end or period of the interruption of the dispensation of Isarel. It was about to be a CA dispensation opening up at the Cross. Jesus is stating that HIS presence as a groom can be enjoyed by all BELS – the bride herself is not introduced at this point of time.

What did John the Baptist say about TLJC during the end of his own ministry?

/Jhn 3:28 “You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, **‘I have been sent ahead of Him.’** 29 “**He who has the bride is the groom;** but **the friend of the groom, who stands and listens to him**, rejoices greatly because of the groom’s voice. So this joy of mine has been made full.

John the Baptist was the last O.T. prophet. The CA dispensation began after the Cross of Christ. \

This is why it is vital to understand why Jesus and John the Baptist made these types of statements.

John the Baptist understood what was about to occur.

Now in Ephesians chapter 5 we see the Apostle Paul was able to dive deeper into mystery doctrine.

Paul had personally stayed in Ephesus early in his ministry for about 3 years.

This was written later on as prison epistle and a circular letter, to be read at several churches. A teaching tool for the plan of GOD in this new CA dispensation.

Eph 5:22 Wives, *subject yourselves* to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

This is written in a Greek present tense speaking to a continued attitude of subordination.

The term - *your own husband,* really points to a singular man in the Greek context.

Ladies this means - your very own husband is the right one and the authority.

The only other authority above the husband is TLJC.

All other men are just background noise wives…there is one!

/[Eph 5:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/23/s_1102023) For the husband is the head of the wife, **as Christ also is the head of the church,** He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.

The comparison is now opening up. The church is the bride and she must be under HIS authority. \

There is only one authority over the church – Jesus Christ. The pastor is under that, and his job is not to replace your husband ladies. Nor is the pastor to be your final authority men.

The pastor-teacher is under the authority of the WORD and called to teach…you have to grow up and absorb what GOD is telling you, through that teaching.

The church is called the body of Christ, the bride of Christ and the branch of the vine - who is Jesus Christ.

All of those terms are to highlight a unique union the CA Bels have.

[Eph 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/24/s_1102024) But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

OT saints are called the family and children of GOD. Yet never the deeper intimate calling of a wife and husband in relation to the CA union with Christ.

Notice – subject…IN EVERYTHING!

/[Eph 5:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/25/s_1102025) Husbands, love your wives, just **as Christ also loved the church** and **gave Himself up for her**,

To submit to authority knowing it pleases God, is much easier than laying yourself down in a Christ-like, selfless manner every day. \

This is why marriage is so serious, yet few really understand how GOD aligns the principles of marriage for Bels.

The man has to hit maturity, because he is called into impersonal, unconditional godly love, that is from the nature of Christ.

The CA Bel is called to respond to the plan of God and submit to the mind of Christ in this temporal life.

The wife is usually – not always, but usually, in a role of a responder.

She is also in the role of submission under the authority of the husband.

The analogies are very easy to discern so, we will not embark on a deeper set of principles of marriage in this series. Just note the similarities of what the Apostle Paul is teaching.

/[Eph 5:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/26/s_1102026) so **that He might sanctify her**, having cleansed her by the **washing of water with the word**,

The CA Bel is set apart at salvation and entered into a Royal Family and marriage contract which has never occurred in prior dispensations. \

40 grace gifts are bestowed at salvation. The washing is at salvation and habitually there after by the WORD – the mind of Christ is the only cleansing agent against sin and evil.

The water of the WORD is the baptism of the HS which happens at salvation, it will be the WORD that continues to change a Bel and wash every Bel.

/[Eph 5:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/27/s_1102027) that **He might present to Himself the church in all her glory**, having no spot or wrinkle or any such  thing; but that **she would be holy and blameless.**

Christ is our Groom, whom we have entered into a covenant of marriage with at salvation. \

[Eph 5:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/28/s_1102028) So husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;

Again, we see a Greek present tense – husbands keep on loving your wife no matter what, with virtue love.

The Apostle Paul is masterful in weaving these concepts of Christian marriage and our relation to Christ in marriage into an incredibly powerful message.

[Eph 5:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/29/s_1102029) for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church,

/[Eph 5:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/30/s_1102030) because **we are parts of His body.**

Christ has a unique relationship with CA Bels, as a part of HIS body, as a bride becomes one with the groom. There is nowhere in the OT we see this level of intimacy.\

[Eph 5:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/31/s_1102031) FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.

This is the command for the intimacy of marriage given in Gensis chapter two.

/[Eph 5:32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/32/s_1102032) **This mystery is great**; but I am speaking **with reference to Christ and the church.**

Mystery Doctrine is in view – this aspect of the mystery is related to our intimacy with Christ. This marriage analogy was never opened in any other dispensation except the Church Age. \

Because of this mystery, we now understand how the groom returns for HIS bride and we have a future wedding ceremony.

[Eph 5:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/5/33/s_1102033) Nevertheless, as for you individually, each *husband* is to love his own wife the same as himself, and the wife *must see to it* that she respects her husband.

The two areas both husband and wife must understand is virtue love and respect.

A successful Christian marriage is dependent upon these two – especially for the wife to honor and respect the husband even in his failures.

Men it is our call to love our wife as our own bodies no matter what – to operate in virtue love even when she may be acting unlovely!

/The bride of Christ must learn both virtue love (impersonal, unconditional) and respect. The key will be respect toward the mind of Christ first, which will lead to virtue love for HIM. This puts building blocks in place for personal love to flourish. The deeper this respect and love grows and feeds off of each other the more your LOVE relationship flourishes not only in CHRIST, but in your temporal marriage. \

Jump over to Matthew 25 and we will close in the gospel of Matthew today.

This clearly is teaching us our earthly marriage between husband and wife is just as important and intimate as our marriage to TLJC.

These are learned skill sets – this respect and love is not going to come from just wishing or praying about.

Emotional, personal love, does not have the ability to teach you respect, honor and virtue love.

Emotions such as attraction, or personal love are dependent upon feeling good.

These are emotional waves that come and go, and with no foundation in BD they will fail you and fail your relationships over time.

 REPEAT

There is clear teaching not only from Jesus about our marriage, but the Apostles emphasizing what they learned about mystery doctrine.

/2Cor 11:2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for **I betrothed you to one husband, to present you *as* a pure virgin to Christ.**

Rev 19:7 “Let’s rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, **because the marriage of the Lamb has come**, and His bride has prepared herself.”\

/The cosmic system version of marriage is skewed and in recent years has been completely destroyed and twisted. God’s design was one man and one woman who were pure of body and positive toward HIS word. They come together under HIS authority and HIS word to guide their life. Anything that differs from this divine design, will struggle immensely to find any level of success.\

The reason divorce is at its highest rate is because GOD’s plan and God’s word are ignored.

We do things are way and the only way to turn it around is give everything over to GOD to fix our mistakes.

Which by the way, takes time and effort and both parties participating.

This section of Matthew 25 we will look at, has a future reference to the coming Tribulation.

Jesus is speaking with a reference to the 2nd Advent, yet there is much deeper principles here.

It has a dual meaning related to accepting TLJC as savior before and after the Rapture as well. Jesus is teaching about not only the CA about to open up, but the Tribulation as well.

Let’s close with the words of TLJC during HIS earthly ministry;

Mat 25:1 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom.

The bride’s friends have to wait outside, they are not permitted in until the bride comes, that was an ancient tradition.

The ceremony or banquet of the wedding cannot officially begin until the wedding parade arrives with the bride and groom.

Ten bridal lamps were also a common Jewish tradition for a wedding party.

/[Mat 25:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/2/s_954002) “**Five of them were foolish**, and five were prudent. 3 “For when the foolish took their lamps, **they did not take *extra* oil with them**;

The opportunities to fill your soul (lamp) with the anointing oil of God the HS is available right now as well as in the Tribulation. \

The Tribulation Bels will become part of the family of GOD, yet we who are CA Bels are the Bride of Christ.

So, there is a strong analogy of the coming Tribulation period.

There is also a touch of an analogy of the end of the CA as well.

As most times within prophecy there is several layers there for us to learn from.

[Mat 25:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/4/s_954004) but the prudent ones took oil in flasks with their lamps.

/Oil in scripture is often used for healing and anointing. God the HS is sometimes the reference for anointing oil in scripture. The lesson within in this for both the current dispensation of the CA or the Tribulation period is that we have to have the baptism of God the HS (faith alone in Christ alone). Without that, we are never entering into a wedding ceremony with Christ in any age! \

/[Mat 25:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/5/s_954005) “Now **while the groom was delaying**, they all became drowsy and *began* to sleep. 6 “But **at midnight**there finally was a shout: ‘Behold, the groom! **Come out to meet *him.*’**

The time for both the Rapture and the 2nd Advent will not be available for human viewpoint to pinpoint and make assumptions about. \

The shout comes from the pulpit accurately handling the word of GOD. That is your wake up call.

Mat 25:7 “Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps.

The lamps represent what we put in our soul structure.

You can not play games with God. You can not disregard your own personal responsibilities because the day will pop up suddenly and you will be held accountable.

/[Mat 25:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/8/s_954008) “But **the foolish *virgins* said to the prudent ones, ‘Give us some of your oil,** because our lamps are going out.’

Your free will and responsibility will be what you will be held accountable for in the end. Either at the time of the Rapture or end of the Tribulation, no one is responsible for your free will decisions except YOU! \

[Mat 25:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/9/s_954009) “However, the prudent ones answered, ‘*No,* there most certainly would not be enough for us and you *too;* go instead to the merchants and buy *some* for yourselves.’

It comes down to our own responsibility – even in marriage a wife or husband can not force the other spouse to believe upon TLJC. Or, even push them to grow in HIS grace and knowledge.

/[Mat 25:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/10/s_954010) “But **while they were on their way**to buy *the oil,* **the groom came**, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and **the door was shut**.

There will be a definitive, finality both at the Rapture of the church and the end of the Tribulation. \

[Mat 25:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/11/s_954011) “Yet later, the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’

[Mat 25:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/12/s_954012) “But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’

[Mat 25:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/25/13/s_954013) “Be on the alert then, because you do not know the day nor the hour.

No pastor, theologian or scholar knows exact times or dates in relation to end time events.

In fact, several details in relation to the end time events are not available for human consumption.