

009 The Church as a Bride

We will need the help and inspiration of the Holy Spirit with this study. We need Him to really come alongside us as we progress, as we shall address some interesting as well as sensitive aspects.

To help us unfold this wonderful subject we firstly need to look at the Church as an organism.

Eph 1:18-23

18 I pray also that the eyes of your Heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints,

19 and His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of His mighty strength,

20 which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the Heavenly realms,

21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

22 And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be Head over everything for the Church,

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way.
NIV

Christ is the Supreme Authority in the Universe. All things in the entire universe, worlds upon worlds, galaxies upon galaxies, heavens upon heavens are under His feet, under His dominion.

The apostle Paul brings out in verse 22 “God has appointed Him (Christ) to be Head over EVERYTHING FOR the Church, which is His body.”

This is not a functional relationship; it is an organic relationship.

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The Oxford dictionary definition is: -

“Organized body with connected interdependent parts sharing a common life”.

The Church is not an organization ruled over by president Jesus – it is a living organism which is vitally connected with Him, having its source of life – in Him.

Lets go back to the beginning. Yes it Genesis again.

Gen 2:20

20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.

Amongst all the lower forms of life, there was not found anything that could be classed as a companion corresponding to Adam.

No other form of life partook of his nature, so God sent Adam into a deep sleep.

Gen 2:21-24

21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh.

22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man.

23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to His wife, and they will become one flesh. NIV

Now there was someone of his own nature and likeness who could enter into his plans, his ideals, his hopes and aspirations. One who could love as he loved and live as he lived, understand his heart and respond to that heart of love.

*23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man. 24 For this reason a man will leave His father and mother and be united to His wife, **and they will become one flesh.**"*

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Lets look at another verse or two.

1 Cor 15:42-49

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;

43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;

44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

45 So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.

46 The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual.

47 The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from Heaven.

*48 As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; **and as is the man from Heaven, so also are those who are of Heaven.***

*49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, **so shall we bear the likeness of the man from Heaven.***

NIV

Notice our theme here.

The first man - Adam.

The second Adam – Christ.

The prototype and the antitype.

Adam went into a deep sleep and from his side, his wife, his bride came – bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

Jesus entered the deep sleep of death and resurrection and from His wounded side came the Church, through faith – born of God as the bride the lamb's wife.

Rev 21:9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." NIV

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Again following on.

Eph 5:28-32

*28 That is how husbands should treat their wives, **loving them as parts of themselves**. For since a man and his wife are now one, a man is really doing himself a favor and loving himself when he loves His wife!*

*29-30 No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it, **just as Christ cares for His body the Church, of which we are parts.***

31(That the husband and wife are one body is proved by the Scripture, which says, "A man must leave His father and mother when He marries so that He can be perfectly joined to his wife, and the two shall be one.")

*32 I know this is hard to understand, **but it is an illustration of the way we are parts of the body of Christ.***

TLB

Here in verse 31 is the connection between Adam and Christ.

No one hates his **own** flesh, but nourishes it, cherishes it, cares for it. It is his own body and so is that of his wife because they have become one flesh.

This is the same with Christ and the Church. We are His body – by faith His flesh and bone. The Church is organically related to Christ – flesh of His flesh, bone of His bone, but this is also attributed in exactly the same way in relationship between Church as His wife.

Now I am going to interject something here that is going to stomp very heavily on some people's feet. What I am going to say now, I say with a sincere heart and all the love that Christ gives me, yet also with a little of the utter hatred that God has for this too.

In Adam and Eve Almighty God Himself put together a man and a woman as a picture of His own Sons relationship to the Church, His son's wife.

Satan has always tried to destroy everything that God has initiated and created. He started with tempting Eve in the garden and has never stopped his quest to obscure, defile, distort, corrupt and destroy Gods righteous purposes for one moment ever since.

When God looked for a partner for Adam in the garden, He could not find one to match and complement Adam, so He took the rib from Adams side and created a woman. He did not create another man.

Down through the centuries the devil worked to destroy the picture of the ultimate union of Christ and His bride – the Church by enticing men to have relations with men.

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We find Lot's story here. Lot was Abrahams nephew and he had gone to live in Sodom, but the evil that was in Sodom had risen up to God and God was about to Judge the cities.

Gen 19:1-10

1 The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When He saw them, He got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.

*2 "My lords," He said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning."
"No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square."*

3 But He insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate.

*4 Before they had gone to bed, **all the men** from every part of the city of Sodom — both young and old — surrounded the house.*

*5 They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? **Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.**"*

6 Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind Him

*7 and said, "No, my friends. **Don't do this wicked thing.***

8 Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof."

9 "Get out of our way," they replied. And they said, "This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We'll treat you worse than them." They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

10 But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. ...

...24 Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah — from the Lord out of the Heavens.

25 Thus He overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities — and also the vegetation in the land.

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God had had enough of the defilement of the family as He had instituted it. Now men were having sex with men – we call it homosexuality. It totally marred, distorted and

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destroyed the picture for His Beloved Son. – God was full of wrath so He obliterated the cities and the inhabitation off the face of the earth.

Over the centuries things began to become as bad again. The apostle Paul in His letter to the Roman Christians picks this problem up again and boldly states;

Rom 1:24-28

*4 **So God abandoned them** to do whatever shameful things their Hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other's bodies.*

25 They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.

*26 That is why **God abandoned them** to their shameful desires. Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other.*

27 And the men, instead of having normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved.

*28 Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, **He abandoned them** to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done.*

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In the Old Testament God obliterated those who practiced homosexuality and lesbianism. In the New Testament, He abandoned them.

This so-called lifestyle is demonic in its formation, demonic in its practice and demonic in its motive. It is to reverse, defile, distort and destroy God's glorious ideal and plan for His Son Jesus and His bride. This is why God hates it so completely.

Rev 21:8

*8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, **the sexually immoral**, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars — their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur.*

It is very significant that the day in which we live this evil has risen to such great prominence in our society, that it is all legalized and now man can marry man and woman can marry woman and if you discriminate in any way even in Church life against any of these people, then the tables have been so turned that you are now the criminal.

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It has been said that if God doesn't soon judge the cities around the world that not only uphold but also further the cause of homosexuality, He is going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.

But see the final judgment in Rev 21:8 is total eternal fire for those who practice this devil filled lifestyle.

Now these have been very severe words, and so they should be, because Light cannot associate with darkness and Holiness cannot co-exist with the demonic.

Now there are those who practice this lifestyle and call themselves Christian. They even have their own so-called Christian churches. But beloved I have to say, these folks are blinded, deceived and trapped by the deceit and lies of Satan.

Further, there is the area of couples living together unmarried. Again it is a distortion of God's wonderful truth and picture of His Son's relationship with the Church. God simply will not tolerate it. **ALL** who practice and live in immorality, homosexuality, including adultery, will have the same end. These are not my words they are God's.

1 Cor 6:9

*9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the **sexually immoral** nor idolaters nor **adulterers** nor male prostitutes nor **homosexual offenders***

Heb 13:4

*4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the **adulterer** and all the **sexually immoral**.*

NIV

1 Cor 6:18-20

*8 Flee from **sexual immorality**. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against **his own body**.*

*19 **Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit**, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;*

*20 you were bought at a price. **Therefore honor God with your body**.*

NIV

1 John 3:5-8

5 But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.

6 No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

7 Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

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8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil
NIV

I hope you can perceive now why God hates these practices with such intensity.

There is however a most important point to remember, as much as God hates and will eternally punish those who continue in this sin, He loves them and desires to **save** and **deliver** them from the kingdom of darkness and translate them into the Kingdom of the Son He loves, and for them to become part of His Bride.

Now I hope you can understand my comment at the beginning of this interjection, that I say this with a sincere heart, because I do not want to see anyone abandoned by God nor see them in fire for eternity. But I trust you can see why the Father hates this so passionately and cannot let it go unpunished.

If you are struggling with these evils, then Jesus is the great deliverer and healer and He can set you free if you ask Him. If maybe you know someone who practices these lifestyles, pray earnestly for them that they may see God's glorious light shine into their darkness and they too be set free. Love them – don't judge them – but hate their sin and not allow their sin to even come under your roof.

As we move back into the mainstream of our subject, you will see even more of the Father's love and design and want to see people free from their perversion.

Father desires an eternal companion for His Son.

We are going to read some scripture here.

Col 1:16-17

16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

John 1:3

3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Heb 1:3

3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

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1 Cor 3:21-23

*So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours,
22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present
or the future — all are yours,
23 and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.*

Rom 8:28

*28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him,
who have been called according to his purpose.*

Rom 8:32

*32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he
not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

The center word here is “All Things”.

Jesus Himself was ‘before’ all things. When there was nothing, Jesus was with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

At the Father’s desire, Jesus ‘made’ all things. Every single thing in the universe was created and made by Jesus, God’s Son.

All things He created are now under His total control and He regulates it all Himself.

Because of this fact, He Himself causes ‘all things’, the entire universe, the sun and moon, things visible and invisible, angels, principalities, powers, kingdoms, kings, rulers – ALL things – and what don’t you understand about the word ‘all’ – He causes all things to work together – to cooperate – to the ‘good’ of those who love Him and are part of His eternal purposes. A companion – a wife for His Son whom He Loves. He gives ‘all things’ to us as His wife – one flesh.

Beloved, all this is going on, every molecule of the entire cosmos is there to serve and nurture, refine and purify, (although the devil hates it, even he is used to test and thus strengthen us), the Bride getting ready for the wedding day.

Rev 19:7-8

*7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has
come, and his bride has made herself ready.*

*8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the
righteous acts of the saints.)*

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Rom 8:18-22

*18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory
that will be revealed in us.*

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*19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.
20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope
21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.
22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.
NIV*

Creation has no other aim or purpose. Before the foundation of the world until the dawn of eternal ages, the Father has been working towards one grand event, one supreme end – the Glorious Wedding of His Son, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

If you want to shout Hallelujah right here you are free to do so!!!

Here we go again, back to Genesis.

*Gen 1:26
26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule..."*

We are created in His image and after His likeness.
Through Christ Jesus, we have been made, bought, accepted as God's family.
We are: -

- 1 Blood bought brothers of Jesus
- 2 Bona Fide son's of God
- 3 Members of His body
- 4 Spirit of His Spirit
- 5 We are His next of kin

Rees Howells puts it in one of his lovely hymns,

*"So near so very near to God
I cannot nearer be
For in the person of His Son
I am as near as He."*

Ps 8:3-6

*3 When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, The moon and the stars,
which Thou hast ordained;
4 What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou
dost care for him?
5 Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than **God**, And dost crown him with glory
and majesty!*

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*6 Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet,
NASB*

And yes it is God “Elohyim” (not angels as some translations put it.) in the Hebrew for verse 5.

This is staggering to the point of almost being unbelievable. We are just a little lower than God – Elohyim.

It is into humanity that He came. ‘He visited us’ Emanuel “God with us” so that He could take us back to His Father’s house to be eternally wedded to Him.

1 Cor 2:7-9

7 No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.

8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"—

Eph 1:18

18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can see something of the future he has called you to share.

TLB

1 Cor 6:17

17 But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit.

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Eph 3:14-16

14-15 When I think of the wisdom and scope of his plan, I fall down on my knees and pray to the Father of all the great family of God—some of them already in heaven and some down here on earth—

16 that out of his glorious, unlimited resources he will give you the mighty inner strengthening of his Holy Spirit.

TLB

1 John 3:2-3

2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

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2 Peter 1:4

4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

NIV

1 John 5:1

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

NIV

1 John 5:18

18 We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.

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1 Peter 1:3-4

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you,

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1 Peter 1:23

23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

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1 Cor 6:2-3

2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?

3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!

Eph 2:15

15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,

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He that joins himself to the Lord is one Spirit with Him. Through the new birth we become bona fide members of the original cosmic family – actual generated son's of God. Partakers of the divine nature, begotten by Him, infused, permeated with the seed of

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God and bearing His heredity. Thus through the New Birth we become the 'next of kin' to the trinity.

This out ranks all other order of created beings. No companion found for Adam, his bride came from his side, of his substance. It is the same wonderful and miraculous creation from the spear driven side of the Savior.

Don't you know that we are going to judge the world, judge and reward the very angels in heaven?

Here is a completely new, unique and exclusive order of being. The apostle calls it the "New Man", destined through new birth, to be the aristocracy of the universe, a new exclusive royalty, and a new ruling hierarchy who will be the bride, the wife of the Lamb of God.

This order is divinely designated to be co-ruler, co-sovereign, co-administrator, and delegated equal partner on the throne of the universe by virtue of redemption and wedlock with the King of Kings.

Luke 12:32

32 "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

Rev 3:21

21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Lastly, the picture of the bride is something Glorious.

Rev 19:7-8

7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

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Rev 21:9-11

*9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "**Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**"*

*10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and **showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.***

11 It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

NIV

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This is the Bride, Pure, Refined, Beautiful and with no spot or blemish, sharing in His Glory, Brilliant in her character, Beautiful in her Holiness.

This is our goal, our purpose, and our inheritance.

No wonder in Rev; 22.17 the Spirit and the Bride call to her husband “Come quickly” and in verse 20 He lovingly responds “I am coming quickly”.

I get so excited when I reflect on such an amazing grace that has been showered upon us. Time for another Hallelujah don't you think?

See you next study.