

# Pictures of the People of God

## *Seeing ourselves through God's Eyes.*

### Pt 4: The Bride of Christ:

*Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>*

**REFLECTION:** Our Perspective is shaped by our Perception. Our Perception can be poisoned by deception! Lies that are believed have great power over us. (2 Cor 4:4) That's why it's important for us to see ourselves (and others) through God's eyes! (2 Cor. 4:6,7) God uses many different Parables and Pictures in order to help us better understand how he sees us. Over the past few weeks we've learned that God sees us as: A Buried Treasure (Mt 13:44); A Precious Pearl (Mt 13:45,46); And Clay in the hands of a master Potter. (Jer. 18:1-6; Is. 64:8)

**DIRECTION:** This morning we're going to look at another facet of our relationship with God. Part 4 God uses Marriage to describe our relation to Christ. Eph. 5:22-33 31 *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church!"*

This symbolizes both the Intimacy and Permanency of our relationship to Jesus.

## Jesus sees us as His Bride!

Is 62:4-5 *"thou shalt be called Hephzibah, (my delight) and thy land Beulah: (married) for the LORD delighteth in thee... and shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, ... and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."* (See also Mat. 25:1-15 Rev. 19:7; 21:9)

2 Cor. 11:2 *"I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."*

## How is the Church like a Bride?

### Our relationship develops through stages.

#### 1. Dating: Jesus initiates the relationship.

A. HE Pursues us! Jer 31:3 *"I've loved thee with an everlasting love: ... with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."*

Hosea 11:4 *"I drew them ... with bands of love"* 1 Jn 4:19 *"We love him because he first loved us"*

B. The focus is gaining "information" (about each other.) Mt. 11:28,29

1) This "knowledge" becomes the basis of our faith. (2 Pt 1:2)

#### 2. Engagement

A. Begins with a Proposal! Jn 3:16 *"Whosoever believeth on him"* **pisteuō: to entrust, commit!**

1) Our response is based on our Faith/Trust in Him! Ro. 10:10 *"With the heart man believeth ..."*

B. Involves a "Price". Jn 3:16; Ro. 5:8

1) The Practice (Ex. 22:16,17; Deut. 22:28,29) *"He shall surely endow her to be his wife... he shall pay the money according to the dowry (mohar: bride price) of virgins."*

a) Paid by groom to the Bride's family based on the perceived value of the girl.

b) Why does Jesus have to "Buy us"? *Because we belong to another!* Eph 2:1-4; Jn 8:44

2) The Price: Jn 3:16 *"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son"* (1 Pt 1:19; Col. 1:13,14)

C. This makes the relationship "Permanent" (Legally Binding)

1) Mary became Joseph's "espoused wife" Lk 1:27; 2:5

2) They were legally "espoused" and could only end the relationship through divorce. Mt 1:19

3) They were to remain mutually committed yet sexually pure until the wedding night.

**D. Preparation: A time for Building the relationship (in Preparation for a future together!)**

- 1) The Groom would prepare their home. Jn 14:2 *"I go to prepare a place for you"*
- 2) The Bride prepares herself! Rev. 19:7 *"His wife hath Made herself ready"*  
(Hetoï'mos: Adjusted, prepared) How does She Prepare? By making some adjustments in:
  - a) Her attitudes: (Thinks Differently) 1 Cor 13:11-13; 1 Cor 6:19,20
  - b) Her Actions: She Acts Differently.
    - (1) She removes or avoids temptations. (Jms 4:4-8; 1 Pt 2:11
    - (2) She adds some things to her life. Mt. 6:21,21 (Remember "Hope Chests?")
  - c) Her Wedding Dress! Rev. 19:7, 8

**Conclusion:** Engagement involves a: 1) Proposal! 2) Price 3) Permanence 4) Preparation

**This is the current stage of our relationship!**

2 Cor 11:2 *"I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."*

That's why God describes our unfaithfulness to him as spiritual "Adultery!" James 4:4

*"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?"*

**While Dating is a time for gathering "information"** (about values, integrity, goals, compatibility)

**The Engagement period is a time for Building and Binding our hearts together!**

Mal. 2:13-16 *"she is thy companion, (haber'et: from hābēr': knit together)  
and the wife of thy covenant."* berît: compact

**Application:** This is our time to prepare for eternity by Building / Binding our relationship to Christ! Like the fiancé we're to prepare by:

- 1) Remembering our Commitment to faithfulness. Ro. 12:1 *"Present your bodies a living sacrifice..."*
- 2) Resisting the pressure to conform to this world. Ro. 12:2 *"Be not conformed to this world"* Jms 4:4
- 3) Renovating our minds for Him and his purposes vs 2 *"be transformed by the renewing of you minds..."*

**This is mutually done.** 2 Cor 5:20 *"be reconciled to God"* (Katallassō: to change Mutually)

➤ Jesus' part: Eph. 5:26-27 *"sanctify and cleanse it (us) with the washing of water by the word,*

➤ Our Part: Cooperating with him through confession and cleansing. (1 Jn 1:6-9)

**Example of this mutual partnership:** Rev 19:7 *"His wife hath made herself ready! To her was granted*

*that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness (Dikai'oma:*

*Righteous deeds, decisions) of saints."* (hagios: sacred, consecrated!)

**What if we've not made ourselves Ready?**

1 Jn 2:28-29 *"And now, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence,  
and not be ashamed before him at his coming. (Aischyn'omai: disgraced!)*

28 *If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."*

3:3 *Everyone that hath this hope... Purifyeth himself, even as He is pure."*

**Have you responded to His invitation?**

Rev. 22:17 *"the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

**Are you making adequate Preparation for your "Wedding Day?"** Rev 19:7

*"the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."*

Rev 22:12 *"I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."*