

Understanding the Bridegroom Message

I. WHAT IS THE BRIDEGROOM MESSAGE? INTIMACY WITH GOD

- A. The Bridegroom message is a call to intimacy with God by encountering His heart and walking in partnership with Him in a spirit of abandonment. The Spirit reveals to us the deep things of God's heart—His emotions and commitments—and empowers us to respond in wholehearted love.

¹⁰*The Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God...¹²we have received...the Spirit...that we might know [experience] the things that have been freely given to us by God. (1 Cor. 2:10-12)*

- B. ***His emotions for us:*** It starts with experiencing Jesus' heart—His emotions and affections for us.

1. ***Affections:*** Jesus feels the intensity of love for us that the Father feels for Him (Jn. 15:9). He loves us with His all, and He wants this from us. We are empowered to walk in “fullness” by encountering Jesus’ love (Eph. 3:18-19). How could Someone as glorious as Jesus love someone as weak as I am? Why would someone like me not fully love Someone like Him?

⁹*“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.” (Jn. 15:9)*

¹⁸*...you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹to know [experience] the love [affections] of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:18-19)*

2. ***Gladness:*** Jesus’ heart of gladness surpasses everyone in all of history (Heb. 1:9). But much of church history has viewed God as mostly mad or sad in His relationship with us. ⁹*God has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.* (Heb. 1:9)

3. ***Generosity:*** The tone of Jesus’ relational style is generosity, joy, delight, and pleasure. *“I do not want to simply live the Christian life; I want to love living it”* (Sam Storms). ¹¹*In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.* (Ps. 16:11) ⁸*And You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.* (Ps. 36:8)

⁴*The Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble... (Ps. 149:4)*

4. ***Delight:*** Jesus delights in relating to His people. The biblical vision of the Christian life is a lifestyle of enjoying God with confidence that He delights in relating to us (Ps. 18:19; 27:4; 36:8; 37:4; 149:4). The Bridegroom message highlights how our love moves Jesus’ heart.

⁴*You [see your name here] shall be called Hephzibah...for the LORD delights in you...*

⁵*As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. (Isa. 62:4-5)*

¹⁹*He delivered me because He delighted in me. (Ps. 18:19)*

5. ***Cherishing:*** The Church is cleansed by experiencing Jesus’ cherishing heart (Eph. 5:26-29).

6. ***Jealousy:*** Jesus is jealous that we enter into the fullness of our relationship with Him.

¹⁴*“You shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.” (Ex. 34:14) ⁴*Whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God...⁵The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously? (Jas. 4:4-5)**

7. **Zealous:** Jesus, as the Bridegroom, is zealous for our safety, and honor, etc. (Zech. 1:14; 8:2). In His zeal, He will destroy all that hinders love. Jesus intervenes to fight against that which injures His Bride. He rescues, protects, and vindicates His Bride.

¹"I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her." (Zech. 8:1)

- C. Jesus is a Bridegroom King—He is a King with power and a Bridegroom with desire. *Bridegroom* describes the essence of who He is and what His personality is like. By nature, He is a Bridegroom; by position and function, He is a King.

- D. **His beauty:** Jesus possesses indescribable beauty that fascinates our hearts. God created us with a longing to be fascinated and filled with wonder—this happens most in our relationship with God.

1. The Spirit will emphasize Jesus' beauty in the generation of His return (Isa. 33:17). The Spirit escorts us on a divine treasure hunt into Jesus' beauty. This is glorious, divine entertainment.

¹⁷Your eyes will see the King in His beauty. (Isa. 33:17)

2. Without a sense of awe in our relationship with God we will live spiritually bored. A spiritually bored believer is weak and more vulnerable to Satan's tactics. A fascinated believer who is preoccupied with God's beauty is spiritually strong and equipped to stand.

- E. **His secrets:** Jesus will share the secrets of His heart with His Bride (Ps. 25:14). We can know and be known by Jesus *in a similar way* to how He knows the Father (Jn. 10:15).

¹⁴The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him. (Ps. 25:14) ¹⁴"I know My own, and My own know Me, ¹⁵even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father." (Jn. 10:14-15)

1. Intimacy with God involves His loving knowledge of us that has no fear of shame in it.

*¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment...¹⁸There is no fear [of shame] in love; but perfect love casts out fear.
(1 Jn. 4:17-18)*

2. We are known by God in the sense of God seeing and valuing what others do not see in us.

⁹But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements [of this world]...? (Gal. 4:9)

- F. **His commitments to us:** He will share His heart, home, throne, secrets, and beauty, and He works all things together for our good (Rom. 8:28), being committed to our eternal success and greatness.

⁷You have crowned him with glory and honor." (Heb. 2:7)

- G. **Partnership:** Jesus wants us to be “with Him” and to work “with Him” in building the kingdom. Pray that you “see” what He sees and that you “feel” what He feels when He looks at you.

⁴"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am." (Jn. 17:24)

1. We work *with* Him, not just *for* Him. He wants to talk with us every step of the way.

²¹To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me [Jesus] on My throne." (Rev. 3:21)

2. Jesus took Peter, James, and John to be “with Him” in His sorrow (Mt. 26:38).

³⁷*And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee...³⁸Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful...Stay here and watch with Me.” (Mt. 26:37-38)*

- H. Jesus engages in an intimate relationship with His people—He rejoices with us in celebrating our triumphs and weeps with us in the sense of sharing our pain in our failures, losses, troubles, etc. He has knowledge of our love, victories, passions, sacrifices, pains, struggles, and dreams.

¹⁵*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses. (Heb. 4:15)*

1. ***He sees all:*** He sees our *costly sacrifices* as we seek to walk in faith and obedience to love Him. He knows our *sincere intentions* to love Him, our *heart passions*, and our *deepest dreams*. So much of our life is unknown, unnoticed, and misunderstood by others. To be fully known without shame and to be free of the fear of being left alone is exhilarating.

- I. ***Our response to Him—abandonment:*** Jesus desires exclusivity and abandonment in our love for Him. The Bride’s response is to give her wholehearted, obedient love to Him.

³⁷*“You shall love the LORD...with all your heart...³⁸This is the first and great commandment.” (Mt. 22:37-38)*

- J. A bridegroom and his bride desire exclusive love, partnership, and mutual respect. They bring their “all” into the relationship. The King desired the beauty of His Bride’s commitment and love when she left her father’s house and left all that might get in the way of loving Him (Ps. 45:10-11).

¹⁰*Listen, O daughter...and incline your ear; forget your people and your father’s house;*
¹¹*then the King will desire your beauty. (Ps. 45:10-11)*

- K. Jesus boldly called His people to “take up their cross,” and “hate their father and mother.” He was speaking as the Bridegroom God, calling for loyal love. By taking up our cross, we begin the journey to become *equally yoked to Him in love*. When we deny ourselves because of our love for Him, it moves Him deeply, because this is the only way He loves us.

²⁴*If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross.” (Mt. 16:24)*

²⁶*“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother...and his own life, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷And whoever does not bear his cross...cannot be My disciple.” (Lk. 14:26-27)*

- L. ***Wholeheartedness:*** The highest reward of true love is found in possessing the ability to love more (Song 8:7). This response moves His heart and protects our heart. If we have nothing to die for, then we have nothing to live for. We are created to be wholehearted and to love without reservation.

⁶*Set Me [Jesus] as a seal upon your heart...for [God’s] love is as strong as death...⁷If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised. (Song 8:6-7)*