



Berean Christian Fellowship

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Child of God, Bride of Christ

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready” (Revelation 19:7).

God uses many metaphors to describe the Believer, including “sheep.” Now, we aren’t actually sheep, but we can gain insights from this analogy. However, when God calls us His adopted children, this is not a metaphor, but a fact. We really are the adopted children of God. This foundation provides context for many complex spiritual concepts, such as Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, etc. Without this context, there can be confusion about what these concepts mean and how we relate to them. Another very important thing God calls us is the BRIDE of Christ (the collective Church in relation to His Son).

In Hebrew culture, a young woman would be betrothed to a husband. The actual Jewish word for the betrothal period (Kiddushin) means “sanctification.” Often, this happened while the woman was still quite young. Although now legally husband and wife, they could not yet live together until the wedding day. Between her betrothal and her wedding could be years of patiently waiting and enduring while her bridegroom was preparing a place for them to live, and she prepared herself to be his wife. Only once the girl’s father approved of the bridegroom’s preparations, did he set the date for the wedding, and the bridegroom could plan to come for his bride to take her away. Unlike today’s “engagement,” a betrothal was only annulled through divorce, and divorce is never God’s plan (Matthew 19:3-9).

Paul speaks of “betrothal” when explaining to the Corinthians the sacred nature of their church’s relationship to Christ: “*For I am jeal-*

ous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin” (2 Corinthians 11:2). Later, in Ephesians, He admonishes, “*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 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”* (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Paralleling Ezekiel 16 a little in its reference to how God saw Israel, we can perhaps gain some insight into how God sees us as both Children of God and the Bride of Christ. Prior to being saved, the Church was a child enslaved to the world and sin (Galatians 4:3; Romans 6:15-23). God sent His Son Jesus Christ to redeem and **justify** the Church (Titus 2:14, Romans 3:24), freeing her from attachment to the world and exempting her from God’s wrath (Romans 5:9), which will destroy her enslavers (Romans 2:5). Rather than making the Church His servant, God the Father adopted her as His own beloved child to be loved, brought up, and parented by His Holy Spirit (Galatians 4:1-7). But God wasn’t finished—He betrothed the unworthy Church to His worthy Son, Who loves her and **sanctifies** her by His Word. The Church is now enduring her betrothal period, waiting for her Bridegroom to return for her, and they will be united in marriage (Revelation 19:7), sharing His inheritance and **glory**. Jesus will take the Church away to the place He has prepared for her (John 14:3), that wherever He is, she will be also, and she will rule and reign with her Lord over the earth (Revelation 20:6). The wedding date is known only by her Father (Matthew 24:36). “*Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming”* (Matthew 24:42). Come, Lord Jesus!