

# Together by Design: God's Plan for His Church

Metaphor #4 "Bride"

May 30, 2021

*The church is where the Holy Spirit brings together believers in Jesus according to God's design.*

## 1. The problem

- a. The term "Bride of Christ" is found **0** times in the Bible  
Jesus, Paul, John re: weddings, bridegroom, bride
- b. The word picture is odd and distinctly **feminine**

## 2. The parable . . . *but I am talking about Christ and the church*

- a. **Exclusive** devotion to Christ (21-24)  
*as to the Lord* (22)  
*as Christ is the head of the church* (23)  
*as the church submits to Christ* (24)
- b. **Sacrificial** love of Christ (25)  
husbands love wives **just as** *Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*  
See also Rom. 5:8; Eph. 5:2
- c. **Purifying** attention by Christ (26-27)  
*to make her holy . . . and to present her to himself*  
See also Titus 2:14 and 3:5
- d. **Generous** provision from Christ (28-30)  
*feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church*  
See also Rom. 8:32; 2 Pet. 1:3-4
- e. **Joyful** hope with Christ (31-33)  
*but I am talking about Christ and the church*  
wait for it . . . not yet . . . Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2-3; 9-10; 22:17

## 3. The point Ask, "Do I love **my** church **as** Christ does?"

"We are the church. We *get* to be the church. And the glory of our collective story is sufficient to cause us to love Jesus's bride, however broken she may yet be. Because, by God's grace, he is making her beautiful."

Adam Mabry

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/for-the-bride-set-before-him>

"The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (2009, reprint)

<https://www.amazon.com/Life-Together-Exploration-Christian-Community/dp/0060608528>

"For all the negativity and bashing the church receives (mostly at the hands of its own people), the church is still the bride of Jesus. And if Jesus grabbed coffee with me, I believe he would spend more time telling me why he loves the church than what he believes is wrong with her."

Frank Powell

<https://churchleaders.com/outreach-missions/outreach-missions-articles/260434-8-reasons-love-church-will-never-give.html>

"The church is the bride of Christ, particularly loved by him, saved by his sacrificial work on the cross, exclusively devoted to him, and increasingly adorned in beauty for him, the Bridegroom."

Christopher Morgan

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/origin-nature-church/>

Psalms 45:13-15 (the beauty of the bride brought to the king)  
Song of Songs 4:9-10 (the beloved's love for his bride)  
Isaiah 61:10 (God clothes his bride in salvation and righteousness)  
Ezek. 16:4-14 (Yahweh's care for unfaithful Jerusalem)  
Hosea 2:19-20 (Yahweh's betrothal/engagement to Israel)  
Matt. 9:15 (Jesus as the bridegroom with his disciples)  
Matt. 22:1-14 (parable of the wedding feast)  
Matt. 25:1-13 (parable of the wise and foolish virgins)  
John 3:28-29 (John the Baptist refers to Jesus as the bridegroom)  
2 Cor. 11:2-3 (Paul speaks of presenting the church to Christ)  
Eph. 5:22-33 (Paul tells of marriage and Christ's love for His bride)  
Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2-3; 9-10; 22:17 (John writes about the "bride")