

That The World May Know – The Life and Ministry of the Messiah – Session 4: No Greater Love

Jesus' Relationship with His Bride—the Church

Jesus often used the metaphor of the marriage relationship to describe His love for His church.

1. In first-century Israel, a bridegroom's family agreed to pay a bride price (usually a large sum) to compensate the bride's family for the loss of their daughter. What price did Jesus pay for you?
1 Corinthians 6:19 – 20
Galatians 3:13 – 14
1 Peter 1:18 – 19
2. An engagement in first-century Israel was as serious as marriage. Breaking an engagement required a divorce. After the families agreed on the bride price, the couple drank a glass of wine together to indicate their life commitment to each other. How does this engagement custom enhance your understanding of Jesus' ministry?
Luke 22:20
3. After his betrothal, the husband-to-be returned to his father's household and, supervised by his father, prepared a place for his bride by adding on the family homestead. Where is Jesus, our Bridegroom? What is He doing?
John 14:1 – 3
4. The bride-to-be remained at her parents' home preparing for her wedding and learning how to be a wife and mother. After the couple went to their new home and consummated their wedding, a lengthy celebration followed. How and when will Jesus announce His arrival?
Matthew 24:36 – 39
1 Thessalonians 4:16 - 17

Where Did Jesus Minister?

Many different types of people—religious and nonreligious, Jews and Gentiles, farmers and merchants—populated the area around the Sea of Galilee. Despite His diverse audience, Jesus always tailored His messages to the beliefs and practices of people in the areas in which He ministered.

1. Where was the “headquarters” for Jesus' ministry?
Matthew 4:13 – 16
2. Where did Jesus perform most of His miracles? What was the result?
Matthew 11:20 – 24
3. As Jesus demonstrated His miraculous power among the Zealot population, what unusual request did He make?
Matthew 8:1 – 4
Matthew 9:27 – 30
4. Why did many Jews in the Decapolis believe that demons lived around Gerasenes?
Mark 5:1 – 13
5. What did Jesus tell the healed man to do?
Mark 5:14 – 20
6. On the southwestern shore of Galilee, Jesus challenged religious leaders to answer whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. How did the Pharisees respond?
Mark 3:1 - 6

Jesus Presents His Battle Plan

For centuries, the people of Israel had longed for the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of God's kingdom. So when Jesus taught that the kingdom of God had arrived, many people listened carefully. Their idea of what it should be and how they should participate in it differed greatly from what Jesus taught. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount was Jesus' blueprint for kingdom living. He was willing to become God's sacrifice in order to usher in God's kingdom.

1. The How did God give his law to Israel?
Exodus 19:1 – 3
Exodus 20:1 – 17
2. How does the Torah compare to the Sermon on the Mount?
Matthew 5:1 – 12
3. The twelve tribes of Israel received five building blocks: the Old Testament books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. What were Jesus' building blocks for His followers?

Matthew 5 – 7: Foundation for right living
Matthew 10: Commissioning His disciples
Matthew 13: Parables about the Kingdom
Matthew 18: Life in the Kingdom
Matthew 24 – 25: End of the Age
4. How did Zealots and Pharisees respond to Jesus' teaching?
Matthew 5:5?
Matthew 5:9?
Matthew 5:43 – 47?
5. How did the Sadducees and Herodians respond to Jesus' teaching?
Matthew 6:91 – 24?

Those Who Refused Jesus' Message

Many people near the Sea of Galilee followed Jesus, witnessed His miracles, listened to His words, and became disciples. But others turned away. Jesus gave them a strong warning.

1. What caused Jesus to denounce the cities of Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum?
Matthew 11:20 – 24
2. What were some of the sins of Tyre and Sidon?
Amos 1:9 – 10
1 Kings 11:33
1 Kings 16:29 – 32
3. Which sins did the people of Sodom commit?
Genesis 19:1 – 13
Ezekiel 16:49 – 50
4. Do people commit the same kinds of sins today? What are some contemporary examples of these sins?
5. Why was the penalty Jesus pronounced for Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum more severe than that for Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom?
Matthew 11:21 – 23
6. Can you find people today who have heard all about Jesus and are not saved?

References

Genesis 19
Exodus 19
Exodus 20
1 Kings 11
1 Kings 16
1 Kings 17
2 Kings 4
Ezekiel 16
Amos 1
Matthew 3
Matthew 4
Matthew 5
Matthew 6
Matthew 8
Matthew 9
Matthew 10
Matthew 11
Matthew 12
Matthew 13
Matthew 18
Matthew 23
Matthew 24
Matthew 25
Matthew 26
Mark 2

Mark 3
Mark 4
Mark 5
Mark 7
Mark 13
Luke 12
Luke 15
Luke 22
John 4
John 6
John 14
Acts 10
Acts 11
Acts 16
Romans 16
1 Corinthians 6
Galatians 3
Ephesians 2
1 Thessalonians 4
1 Timothy 3
1 Peter 1
Revelation 19
Revelation 21
Revelation 21

Jesus did not come to improve your life, a little tweak here and a little tweak there. Jesus came to transplant a new way of thinking into your mind, a new way of living into your soul. Once we join Jesus and pursue God's vision for this world, everything changes. You will go places you never thought you would go.. You will ask God for what you need and trust God to provide. And you may find there is not as much need to worry.

Action Points

Review the key points you explored today, then write action steps that you will commit to as a result of what you have learned.

In order to communicate His deep love for us, Jesus described His love in terms of a family community—terms that His audience clearly understood. Jesus compared Himself to a bridegroom who chose a bride (the church); who paid a steep price for her (His death on the cross); who has gone to prepare a place for her in His Father's house (heaven); and who will come again to take her home.

This metaphor was familiar to the people of Jesus' day because a bridegroom customarily left his fiancée to build a home for her, then returned to get her. Likewise, Jesus will one day return to take His followers to His home in Heaven, where we will experience joyous community with Him forever.

In what ways are you, if you are a beloved follower of Jesus the Messiah, preparing for His return?

Which specific things will you do this week to better prepare yourself to be Jesus' bride?

How will you seek to live differently in order to carry out that part of the battle plan?