

Life By Design
(Introducing the Bride of Christ)

- From Genesis to Revelation God's story, the Scripture, is about a marriage.
- Since the culmination of all things begins with a wedding celebration, shouldn't we focus on and prepare for that event?
- We **must remember** that our redemption is about relationship!

I. God's Mission Statement:

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." **Revelation 19:7**

A. The Lord's guiding motive from eternity past and through eternity future...

1. To provide an equally yoked Bride that is suitable for the Son!

2 Corinthians 6:11-18 (NIV)

11 We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. **12** We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. **13** As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also. **14** Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? **15** What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? **16** What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." **17** Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." **18** And, I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

2. We have been selected, prepared, and trained to be equally yoked together with the Bridegroom!

Ephesians 1:3-4 (NIV)

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. **4** For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

3. Look at where we are going and what it “looks like”!

Ephesians 5:27 (NIV)

27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

4. Because HE DESERVES IT!

B. We are the center of all of God’s creation!!

1 Corinthians 3:18-23 (NIV)

18 Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become “fools” so that you may become wise. **19** For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness”; **20** and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.” **21** So then, no more boasting about human leaders! All things are yours, **22** whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, **23** and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

1. The intercession of the Spirit is working things out for our good!

Romans 8:26-28 (NIV)

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. **27** And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God. **28** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

2. We can only understand and interpret history based on the Bride and Bridegroom paradigm!
3. Unbelievers have no way to understand and interpret the pains and sufferings of life!
4. Unbelievers see a pointless and hopeless existence! The Believer’s purpose is marriage to the Lamb!

II. Redemption: God's Romance! Remember, we are called the **Bride of Christ!**

A. From the beginning and the end!
Revelation 22:17 (NIV)

17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

2 Corinthians 5:20 (NIV)

20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

1. God created for us!
2. Gave us His authority!
3. Expressed intimacy to us!
4. We get to live in a new existence with Him forever!
5. All are invited to fulfill our purpose!

B The Bride analogy is a description of God's love toward us!

1. We can't be separated from His desire for us!

Romans 8:35, 38-39(NIV)

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? **38** For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, **39** neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. We are and will be forever "with Him".

Ephesians 2:4-7 (NIV)

4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. **6** And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **7** in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

3. We are betrothed or engaged to the Lord, waiting for the consummation of this relationship together in heaven!

Ephesians 5:32 (NIV)

This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church!

- C. Jesus desires EVERYTHING for us!!

John 17:24 (NIV)

24 “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

1. Becoming equally yoked with the Bridegroom is a process!
2. We can’t possibly imagine the depths of this relationship!

1 Corinthians 2:9 (NIV)

However, as it is written:

“What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived”—
the things God has prepared for those who love him—

3. This life is a process toward what is to come!
4. ONE DAY.....

John 17:22-24

22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.