

The Beautiful Bride

Revelation 21:9-27

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Investing in marriage in 2027 has me thinking a lot about weddings
Or maybe because I'm going to my cousin wedding next weekend
Or maybe because it's Karin's and I 9 year anniversary next month
Or maybe it's because of this passage that I have been preparing.
Read Rev 21:9 "Come I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb" (Tonight's spotlight is on the beautiful bride and her amazing groom)

So I want you to imagine a groom standing before his bride on their wedding day. He takes her hands in his, looks into her eyes, and says, "My love, I want to spend the rest of my life with you. I want to prepare a home where we can live together forever. I've inherited 3 properties, and I want you to choose the kind of home and life you want us to have. I want you to be happy. So tell me, my love, what would you choose?"

**** "I could give you a fortress. It has enormous stone walls, towering gates, and guards standing watch day and night. No danger could reach you. You will never have a sleepless night or a nightmare again. I promise that you will never experience fear or pain ever again. You will experience **perfect and blissful peace**.

"But there is a cost. I will need to spend nearly all my time protecting this fortress. I can guarantee a **peaceful** life, but we will have very little time together.

"Or, I could give you the most beautiful land imaginable. "Imagine mighty mountains, breathtaking valleys, cascading waterfalls, forests filled with wildlife, fields carpeted in flowers, and vibrant gardens more beautiful than anything you have ever seen. Every morning will bring a new wonder. Every evening will increase your joy. I promise that you will never experience shame, depression, or boredom ever again.

"But there is a cost here, too. I will need spend all my time tending the land, preserving its beauty, and making sure it remains a place of wonder for you. I can guarantee a **joyful** life, but we will have very little time together.

"Or there is a third option. I could give you a little cottage. It is modest and ordinary-Nothing impressive. There are no towering walls to keep you safe, no spectacular views to take your breath away. "We could sit together at the end of a long day. We could laugh until we cried. We could walk through the difficult seasons of life hand in hand. When you were frightened, I could hold you. When you were grieving, I could wipe away your tears. We would face the highs and lows of life together.. "I can't guarantee it will be the most **peaceful** or **joyous** life that we could live. But we would be together."

What should the Bride choose? What would you choose? A guaranteed life of peace? A guaranteed life of joy? Guaranteed life of companionship? Hallmark movies would probably tell us to choose option three. Give us the person we love, and we can make a home anywhere.

But this is what makes Revelation 21 so breathtaking. When John is shown the New Jerusalem, he sees a city with enormous walls and gates, a city radiant with the glory of God, a city adorned with precious stones and streets of gold. It is secure and peaceful beyond anything we have ever known. It is more glorious and joyful beyond anything we could imagine. And the most wonderful thing of all is that God Himself will dwell with His people. You won't have to choose one of the housing arrangements! God has prepared all three in one!

Now, the angel calls this city "the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." And notice what that means. Revelation 21 is not primarily about real estate. It is not merely a description of a beautiful destination we hope to visit someday. **The city is the bride. The city represents the people of God. John's vision reveals the final state of God's redeemed people.**

The very things we long for most deeply—safety, honor, wholeness, joy, and unbroken fellowship with the One who loves us—will finally be ours in Christ. Jesus completes His salvation arc by bringing His bride home to live with him forever.

******The people of God are safe, glorious, and perfect because Jesus is a protective, generous, and purifying groom. We should honor our groom by cleansing ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit.**

******** Would you please stand with me for the reading of God's Word? (6 Slides for Rev 21:9-27)

a. You may be seated-Heavenly Truths; Dealing with text thematically. We will cover all the verses

II. ******The Bride is Safe.** God's people are securely safe

“...[an angel] spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God” (Revelation 21:9-10) (just as we imagine a bride coming down the aisle...)

a. **City Imagery-** Cities represented safety. A place to retreat to when invaders would pass through

i. ****** A city is only as solid as its foundation. This Cities foundations are stable**

14 had twelve foundations,

19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. (high quality materials)

ii. **The Walls are tall and strong**

12 It had a great, high wall,

17 [the angel] also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. **18** The wall was built of jasper

i. ********216 feet tall; 20 story building (1.3x taller than 1-74 bridge) (4-10x bigger than walls in Egypt or Babylon)

I. 216 feet thick; ¾ of a football field; (10x bigger than Babylon)

iii. ******The Gates are guarded**

12 It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels

I. Angels guard the presence of God (garden of Eden, the Holy of Holies)

iv. **Streets are illuminated and safe**

21....and the street of the city was pure gold,

25 ... there will be **no night** there....**27**...nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false

b. **The Bride is Safe Because Jesus is a Protecting Groom**

i. ********He has prepared a home/refuge/safe place for us (John 14:1-3)

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

i. Jesus has Protected us from our greatest dangers:

I. Jesus has paid our debt and defeated death (**penalty-** O Death, where is your sting?)

II. Jesus has broken the bondage of sin (**power-** Devil cast into lake of fire; internal grip)

III. Jesus has purified the world-no more corruption; safe streets. (**presence**)

******Romans 8:35 Who [or What] shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?...38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

ii. Jesus has and will eternally secure his bride- Praise God!

c. **Now church, Do you know this protecting groom personally?**

i. **Do you possess an unshakable Inner Peace?** (Jesus sleeping on the boat during storm; inner sense of security)

I. When you have been anxious, have you experienced the mental protection from the Lord?

II. ********If God can protect from external threats, can He help with internal threats? Anxiety, Intrusive thoughts, hypervigilance, PTSD – invite you to hear from many at CR (25 yr, Habits, Hurts)

ii. **Do you have a buoyant Hope?** (like a beach ball, because you know the strength of your deliverer)

I. October is domestic violence awareness month- Maybe your own home is not safe for you right now. What a perversion of the gospel to make your home unsafe and for a groom to be dangerous!

II. Seek help with a safe person; expose evil deeds done in darkness; Let others model this protection to you

iii. **Do you have an emerging Boldness to do what is right?** (Integrity when no one is watching, Evangelism)

I. **Romans 8:31 If God is for us, who can be against us?**

****The people of God are safe, glorious, and perfect because Jesus is a protective, generous, and purifying groom. We should honor our groom by cleansing ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit.

III. ****The Bride is Glorious. God's people are honored (Glory theme)

a. **Jewels/Rare & Precious Stones** (expensive and radiant)

11 [the city] having the **glory** of God, its **radiance** like a most **rare jewel**, like a jasper, clear as crystal

18 The wall was built of **jasper**...

19 The foundations....adorned with **every kind of jewel**...

23 And the city has no need of **sun or moon to shine on it**, for the **glory** of God gives it **light**, and its **lamp** is the Lamb. 24 By its **light** will the nations walk

****(Imagine a kaleidoscope; rainbow; high priest connection with God; note about jasper)

b. ******Gold** (extravagant and shiny)

15 And the one who spoke with me had a measuring **rod of gold** (utensils)

18 while the city was **pure gold**

21 and the street of the city was **pure gold (the dirt of heaven)**

c. **The size/scale** (global and incomparable)

16 The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal.

- i. ****1400 miles/side; 9.8x larger than all developed land worldwide (2025);
- ii. 6830 sq/ft for 8 billion people just on the ground floor....
- iii. Reference the map on the screen- (if Pastor's Brian's house was the center of New Jerusalem....)
- iv. The expansion of the Holy of Holies (a small cube) to a world-wide cube (including the nations)

24...the kings of the earth will bring their **glory** into it....26 They will bring into it the **glory and the honor** of the nations.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve **pearls**, **each of the gates made of a single pearl**.

- v. Pearl trivia (41,500 times an average pearl (1/4") ...what does that say for heaven's oysters? 216ft)

b. **The Bride is Glorious because Jesus is a Generous Groom**

- i. ****Ezekiel 16; The Lord's delight and exalting love (royal and doting groom)

8 ...I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord God, and you became mine....10 I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with fine leather. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk.11 And I adorned you with ornaments and put bracelets on your wrists and a chain on your neck. 12 And I put a ring on your nose and earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. 13 Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen and silk and embroidered cloth....You grew exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty. 14 And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendor that I had bestowed on you, declares the Lord God. (Clothing to adorned city, expanded to the nations; gates on every side)

- ii. Jesus is the Glorious and Glorifying Groom- Praise God!

- iii. Do you hear how kind the Lord is to his Bride?

Eph 2:7 so that in the coming ages [the Father] might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

- iv. Is your image of God as a taker? A harsh taskmaster who is always asking for more output with less materials? Always asking for more sacrifice? (idols) He doesn't need your gifts, your sacrifice...He lays down his life for you....whatever you give to him, He transforms for your sake.

c. **Church, Do you know this generous groom personally?**

- i. **Does my generosity with others reveal that I have access to heavenly riches?** (Eph 1:3)

- I. Do you live with a Scarcity mindset? Do you exhibit this generosity to your spouse? Family?

- ii. **Do my prayers reflect that I believe Jesus is greater than all his gifts?**

- I. Am I asking for the equivalent of dirt of heaven? Am I asking to delay my reunion with God?

- iii. **Do I spend more time looking at my performance or his grace and goodness?**

- I. Imagine winning the lottery and crying about because of your great debts.

- II. As you spend more time focused on Jesus, it eliminates failure, shame, despair, boasting

******The people of God are safe, glorious, and perfect because Jesus is a protective, generous, and purifying groom. We should honor our groom by cleansing ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit.**

II. **The Bride is Perfect. God's people are made perfect**

a. Perfect in Purity (morally excellent)

- i. **Bride/Lamb** (2 pictures of innocence, dressed in white)
- ii. **Holy city that nothing unclean enters**
- iii. **Clear/Transparent** (repeated 3X; no hindrance to God's glory; no defects, deformities, impurities)

b. **Perfect in Completion** (whole; in its entirety; (8 references to #12's speaking to the fullness of inclusion)

12... on the gates the names of the tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—

14... on them were the names of the apostles of the Lamb.

i. God has completed his dwelling place for all of His people (Jews and Gentiles)

22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

I. Closure: Darkness and Evil Conquered/Peace on earth/reunited with God (Salvation completed: Happily ever after)

c. The Bride is Perfect because Jesus is a Purifying Groom

- i. Purification via Water (washing, baptism) vs Purification by Fire (offerings)
- ii. ****Jesus will purify the world by destroying all evil and evildoers (Mal 4:1)

"For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.

- I. Good news- God is destroying all evildoers...producing the utopia in this chapter
- II. Bad news – We are all evildoers according to God; Romans 3:23;10
- III. For those who are "not that bad"- (arrogant; none who seek God; 1st command)
- IV. The same fire that consumes dross refines gold.

ii. **Jesus will purify his people with Refining fire (internal evil) (Mal 3:2-3; 4:2-3)**

2 But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord

2 But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

iii. How do you know if you will be consumed by judgement or refined for glory?

- I. Do you belong to Jesus?-A son of Levi?
- II. Do you fear His name? Focused/centered on Him? (Is your name written in the Book of Life?)
- III. Only one, Jesus, can bring you through this purifying fire. Jesus is the way, the truth, the life...no one comes to the Father, but through Him. All others perish. Only Holy things in heaven... only spotless and blameless people.

Is 43:1-3

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

When you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

3 For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

You cannot save yourself or withstand God's judgment through your own goodness. (that's arrogance!)
Only Jesus can reconcile you to God. Will you humble yourself and ask to be purified from your sins?

Gospel invitation: Confess your sin, trust in Jesus Christ as the only one Redeemer who can forgive you, purify you, and bring you safely into his eternal kingdom. You can make that choice today, starting a new life-united to Jesus. Please don't leave today without making that decision.

iv. Direction for Believers

****16....For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,
“I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people. (2 Cor 6:16)

-Jesus is will protect, glorify, and purify his people.

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit,
bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. (2 Cor 7:1)

Brothers and Sisters, let us honor our Groom by joining in the work of purification/sanctification

- I. What priorities or partnerships are competing for my time and attention?
(slowly/subtly leading me away from Christ?)
- II. What would Jesus prioritize at my Job?
- III. What would Jesus have my family be focused on, currently? (more than survival)
- IV. What persons in my life would He be loving on?
- V. Do I bring my tribute, my homage, my life to praise the Lamb, today? (lifestyle worship)

v. Celebrate that Jesus is purifying you throughout your lifetime and until you meet him face-to-face.

Eph 5:27 so that he [Jesus] might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any
such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

1 Thess 5:23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body
be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

III. Conclusion

- a. ****The people of God are safe, glorious, and perfect because Jesus is a protective, generous,
and purifying groom. We should honor our groom by cleansing ourselves from every defilement
of body and spirit.
- b. Prayer-worthy of it all. Praise for protecting, glorifying, and purifying us. Ask that he help us
cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit.