

Marriage supper of the Lamb

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[0 : 01] Let us now turn together to words which we shall find in the portion of scripture read. In the book of Revelation chapter 19.

And let us turn to verse 9. Revelation 19, verse 9. And he saith unto me, write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And he saith unto me, these are the true saints of God. Particularly these words in the middle of the verse.

Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. Blessed are they which are called unto the Lord.

Blessed are they which are called unto the Lord. Blessed are they which are called unto the Lord. You all know that the Bible abounds in figurative language.

[1 : 17] and perhaps no part of the Bible has such an abundant amount of symbolism and figurative language as this book of Revelation.

And the fact that the Bible uses symbolical language doesn't mean that what is symbolized is not true.

It is indeed true. And yet we must accept that there are parts of the Word of God which are to be treated in that way.

They are to be treated as allegory or symbolism. This was so much the case in the book of Revelation that John Calvin, the great Bible commentator refused altogether to write on two books of the Bible.

You will go through the many volumes of Calvin's writings. I think I have some 40 odd of these and there are more.

[2 : 45] You can go through all these volumes of his writings and you will find that Calvin was silent on two books of Scripture. the Song of Solomon and the Book of Revelation.

Now you ask, why was it that such a great mind as Calvin refused to write on these passages that have been such a blessing to the Church of Christ?

And the reason is that Calvin was unsure in his treatment of allegory and in his treatment of figurative language.

But here you have one of seven Beatitudes in the book of Revelation. Seven times the writer of this book sort of breaks off and says, Blessed are they.

He says it first in chapter 1 and at verse 3. You remember early on in the book he speaks about a blessed people in this way.

[4 : 03] He says in chapter 1 and at the third verse Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy.

And then in 14 and at verse 13 he says, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. In fact, there are seven of these Beatitudes in the book of Revelation.

And this is one of them. Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Now right from the Old Testament the idea of a marriage supper which would be shared between Messiah and his followers is our favourite theme.

Right throughout the whole of the Word of God you have this recurring theme of a supper that is to be shared at the end of time between Christ and his people.

And I want tonight to look at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Firstly, to look at the supper itself and the participants in the supper.

[5 : 29] Secondly, to look at the calling of those who are to share in the supper. Thirdly, to look at their blessedness.

And finally, to look at the basis which we have for calling them blessed. First of all, then I want us to look at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

It's obvious from the Scripture that the relationship between Christ and his Church are again and again resembling a marriage.

In fact, you know that generally speaking in the Church of Christ when it is our privilege to conduct a marriage service, very often it is stated in the marriage service that Christ and his Church have been resembled to a man and his wife.

This is one of the illustrations that Christ has given, one of the symbols that Christ has given for the union between himself and his Church.

[6 : 52] and the marriage supper of the Lamb is going to take place, my friends, at the end of this age, at the end of the world, when Jesus comes again.

Now, remember what we have here is the marriage supper. Christ already has a bride.

it's not at the end of the age that he's going to find a bride for himself. Christ has been sending out his messengers in the way in which Abraham sent out his messenger Eliezer.

You remember the story? He sent out his messenger Eliezer to find a bride for Isaac. And there was Eliezer going out and he was looking like the ministers of Christ are looking for a bride for his master's son.

Do you know that's how I've been sent out to preach the gospel tonight? I've been sent out to seek for a bride for my master's son.

[8 : 13] I've been sent to look for those who will come to follow Jesus. Those who will come to be his lovers.

Those who will come to be his followers in the world. That's the duty of God's messengers, of God's servants who go to preach his name.

We have been sent to look for those who will come and follow Jesus. Jesus. And the message that we've been given is so like the message that was given to Eliezer, the servant of Abraham.

He was sent and he was told that he must say to that girl that he would meet at the well, will thou go with this man? And my friend, tonight, I have to ask you in the name of Jesus, in the name of my Lord, will you go with the man Christ Jesus?

Will you leave all behind you? Will you come to follow him? Do you remember the words that we were singing in Psalm 45 tonight? They are indicative of the very same thing where the psalmist gave these words, O daughter, hearken and regard and do thine ear incline.

[9 : 39] Likewise, forget thy father's house and people that are thine, leave them behind you, my friend, because Jesus is seeking your soul and he wants your life and he wants your heart and he wants your allegiance and he wants your love.

And I wonder tonight, are there any in this congregation who will go to follow Jesus? My friend, this is the time of betrothal.

Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. Don't leave it off to the end of the world because if you do, you know my friend, you'll be too late.

Too late to come to Christ when you die. Too late when the knell of death is ringing, in your ears.

Too late when you have passed over to the other side.

Too late when the marriage supper of the lamb is spread and prepared. Because you see in verse 7 what the word says here.

[10 : 53] The marriage of the lamb has come and his wife has made herself ready. You know the bride of Christ is making yourself ready.

No. It's not something that is going to happen just at the end of time. This is the time for the bride to be making ready for the marriage.

You know, I was asking one of the couples that I married recently or someone who was connected with the wedding, how long it took to prepare for that wedding.

or they said it was a year since they started preparing. Well, the whole time that you have as a believer in the world is the time to be preparing for the marriage supper of the lamb.

The marriage supper of the lamb is going to go on for all eternity, but the bride is now to be making yourself ready. Oh, bride of Christ.

[11 : 55] Are you making yourself ready here tonight? Are you seeking the Lord for your soul? Are you walking after him? Are you walking in love towards the Lord?

This is the time. Do not put off till it is too late seeking for Christ. Now is the time to seek him.

Well, the bride at the marriage is none other than the church of Christ, washed in blood. And look at the lovely garments that the bride is wearing.

Look at verse 8. To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Oh, my dear people, are you arrayed in the righteousness of saints? Are you arrayed in the white linen that Christ's bride will wear when she comes to meet with the Lord at the end of time, where Christ and his people will be brought together at the marriage supper of the Lamb?

[13:18] Are you arrayed in the white linen yet? or are you still in the filthy rags of your own righteousness? Oh, isn't it time that you are seeking the bridal gown?

Isn't it time that you are seeking to be made ready to meet with Christ in death and in eternity? Isn't it time that you sought the Lord for your soul?

Of course it is. This is the bride of Christ. What a blessed experience it is to be married to the Lord Jesus Christ, to be united to him by faith and to be wearing the robe of his righteousness.

Oh, my friends, see the beauty of the bride of Christ. I was reading recently a sermon on this text by Mr. MacDonald who used to be in Greyfriars in Inverness.

And he was quoting in that sermon something that Robbie Duncan said. Robbie Duncan said this, there is only one thing, that there was only one person that he would long to see more than the bride of Christ when Jesus came again.

[14:48] And who was that? It was Christ himself, the Lamb of God. But apart from Christ, Robbie Duncan was saying he longed to see the church of God, the bride of Christ, when Jesus came again.

Well, my friends, Christ is tonight betrothing himself to sinners. Jesus Christ is receiving sinners and eating with them.

Jesus Christ is joining himself to sinners like you and I are. And he is inviting us to come because all things are now ready.

And that leads me to think for a moment of the bridegroom at this marriage. blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Christ is the bridegroom at the marriage. Oh, what a fair couple they are, Christ and his church. What a fair union this is between Christ and his church.

[16:02] You see, my friends, this union is so different to anything else. in the world. Because when a young man falls in love with his bride, that young man has seen something in his bride that attracts him to her.

There is something that qualifies that young lady to be the bride of her husband. There is some attractiveness in that young lady who will marry.

But not so in this marriage between this bridegroom and his bride. Oh, bridegroom, oh, Christ, what did you see in your church that made her attractive to you?

There was nothing in the church that makes her attractive to Christ. Nothing at all. She was lying in her sin.

She was lying like an ugly thing, lying in her sin. When Christ found this bride of his, it wasn't because of any beauty that was in her.

[17:29] To behold her, there was no beauty there. all she was, was sin when Christ saw her. And yet, this bridegroom loved his bride with an everlasting love.

Oh, yes, he loved his bride with an everlasting love. You know, my friends, this union is the result of sovereign mercy and sovereign grace and sovereign love and nothing else.

The marriage supper of the lamb, blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the lamb. The lamb saw his bridegroom and he loved her, though there was nothing in the bridegroom that made her worthy.

Do you know, friends, there is another way in which the text is speaking about this marriage. Because in the text, Christ is here talking about the blessedness of those who are invited to the wedding.

Those who are guests at the wedding. And there are two, there are two aspects in which the church of Christ is symbolised here.

[19:01] You see, the church is the bride, but the church is also the guest who is invited to the wedding.

And tonight, let me tell you that Christ is sending an invitation to this wedding, to you. And the invitation that he sends you to the wedding isn't an invitation because he expects anything back from you.

He expects you to receive his invitation and to accept it. But it's not because of anything that you can't give him. It's not because of the presents that you can't bring him.

That's not why he's inviting you to the wedding. He's inviting you to the wedding tonight because he has seen fit to love you.

I remember when I was a little boy, one summer in Graber, a schoolboy. I was there over the summer holidays.

[20 : 15] And there was to be a wedding in the village. And things weren't as ostentatious as they are today. Things weren't quite as a spatula, if I can say that word, as they are nowadays in respect to weddings.

And I remember that two or three of us youngsters were sent. We were called for to go to the house where the wedding was to be held. And we were told that we had to go round every house in the village.

And we had to tell them that there was an invitation to them to come to the wedding. And you know, I often look back on that incident in my own childhood.

And I often think that that's the way it is with me now as a preacher of the evangel, of the gospel of Christ. I've been sent to the homes and sent to the Persians of Shobost.

And I've got to be going round you four peer, Sabbath by Sabbath, in the preaching of the gospel.

And I've got to be inviting you to come to the wedding, to come to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

[21 : 37] Oh, friends, if you're going to fall short of the marriage supper, don't say that you haven't been invited. Don't say that Christ didn't send you an invitation.

Don't say that the Lord forgot you and he passed you by and he didn't care for you. The Lord's arms are outstretched to you in the gospel and he's asking you and he's calling you and he's pleading with you to come to the wedding.

Why is it, my friend, that you won't come? Why is it that you stay away from Christ? Why is it that you spurn his invitations when his arms are outstretched to you in the gospel?

Why, why, why will you stay away? Oh, friends, the marriage supper of the Lamb is being made ready. The bride is preparing herself and tonight the wonder of the grace of God in the gospel is this, you're being invited.

You know when we give the invitation of the gospel on a Sabbath evening or a Sabbath morning like this, in the preaching of the gospel, in the preaching of the word, we often feel that there are those of you who say, oh, no, no, that's not for me, it's for the person who's sitting beside me, but it's not for me.

[23 : 06] I'm not worthy to go to that wedding. Why would he call me? There's no relationship whatsoever between me and the one who's marrying his bride.

But tonight, let me tell you, my friend, you were created in his image. And God tonight, in his grace, is calling you and he's saying to you, come, come, for all things are now ready.

And the bride is preparing, and the wedding is soon going to be held. And oh, my friend, if you miss out on it, oh, what you're going to miss, what you're going to miss.

If you miss this wedding, you know that over the summer, I think it was Princess Diana's brother, who was getting married.

I don't know if the marriage has taken place yet, or is it sometime next month, doesn't matter. But the papers were saying over the summer about this wedding, that the wedding of Viscount Allthorpe was going to be the wedding of the year.

[24 : 16] Ah, well, friends, there are some that are called the wedding of the year. And there are some that are called the wedding of the decade. And there are some that are called the wedding of a century.

But you know what you could call the wedding to which I'm inviting you tonight, in the name of my master. This is the wedding of all eternity. There's never been anything like it.

And oh, if you fall short of it, my dear friend, what a shortcoming it is. If you end in hell, when heaven is spread, for sinners like you, what a falling short it will be for you.

The marriage supper is now ready. How can I get to it? Ah, well, listen to the way Jesus himself in his word, the way the Lord in his mercy talks about the preparations for this wedding.

you see, he says, in this mountain, I will make a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, well refined.

[25 : 37] You know, there's everything that your soul would need at the marriage supper of the land. Everything that would be of benefit to you for all eternity is going to be at the marriage supper of the land.

And you know, God's people, God's children, they're getting a poor taste of the marriage supper, as they are betrothed to Christ here in the world.

Now, the betrothal was quite different to anything we have in our customs. The betrothal was something more fixed than an engagement. You know that an engagement in our society can easily be broken, but it wasn't easy to break the promises of a betrothal at all.

And you know, my dear people, if you would be betrothed to Christ in this world, if you would be wedded to him, you would be under the most solemn promises.

And I'll tell you something, he won't break his promises to those who marry him in the world. He won't break his promise as men break promises.

[26 : 52] No, no. He is going to be sure and steadfast to his promise. He's not going to break it at all. Oh, my friend, you're invited tonight to the marriage of Christ and his church.

You're invited to Christ as his bride. What an invitation. And yet, would you say no to this invitation. And you see something else that is going to happen as Christ makes this marriage feast for his people.

In that mountain where he was going to prepare the feast, he says something else. In that mountain, I will take away the covering that covers the faces of all the nations.

See, the nations are, as it were, coming before Christ there with a veiled face. But you know that when the gospel of grace shines into the hearts of men, the veil is taken away and no longer is the gospel hidden from men.

He's going to take away the veil. And then there's one other thing that's going to happen in the marriage supper of the Lamb. And it's this, death is going to be swallowed up in victory.

[28 : 16] Death is going to be swallowed up in victory because Jesus is going to take the sting out of death for his people when they come at last to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Oh, have you got four tastes of this marriage in your heart, in your life tonight? Do you feel that it's coming closer for you and that soon you'll be acted and that soon the Lord will bring you into his near presence to be with himself?

Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Now the second thing that in the world, by his grace, through the gospel, he calls them by his grace through the gospel.

Know that there's nobody going to be with Christ in heaven, but someone who has answered the gospel call in this world by faith in Jesus Christ.

No one. And you are here tonight and you're wondering if ever you will be with Christ in heaven.

[29 : 34] How can you go to heaven? Well let me tell you that the first qualification for going to be with Christ in heaven is that the call of the gospel will reach you with power from on high.

And the call of the gospel will awaken you to follow Jesus in this world. blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And you know that the blessing is theirs before they ever reach the marriage supper of the Lamb. The blessedness is theirs when they are called by the gospel.

That's the greatest blessing you can know in the world to know the blessing of the gospel calling you effectually by the grace of God to the feet of Jesus.

That's the greatest blessing you can know. Oh you think that's not true. That's not true. I know there are people here who know that that's not true as far as they're concerned.

[30 : 45] There's something far better than that. I know there are those of you here who want to build houses and want to have land and want to have a name and want to have popularity and you see all these things more important than that you should get Christ for your soul.

Is that true? Is that true? Are there things in your reckoning more important than that you should get Christ for your soul? Are you telling me tonight that there are things that you see much more important than your soul?

Your eternal never dying soul? Are you telling me that tonight? Oh yes. What about you young fellows? You young girls heading out in life?

Are there things more important to you than that you should get Christ for your soul? Young man, young woman, do you want a home? Do you want a husband? Do you want a wife? Are you seeing these things as more important than Christ? I know that there are some of you and these things are so much more important to you.

[32 : 00] Oh yes, somewhere away down the list you'll put Jesus. Somewhere down the list you want to be saved before you die. You want to have an insurance policy for eternity, of course.

But you don't want Jesus. You know that there are things in this world, that you're striving for, that are far more important to you than that.

That's true. My friends, there is no greater blessing than to be called by the gospel of redeeming grace to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And it begins in the grace of God in the gospel. And you know when I pray for you, and when the Lord's people pray for you, every one of you here, what we want for you more than anything else is this, that you will receive Christ in your soul.

We have no greater regard for you than that, that you will come to know the Lord, who to know his life eternal. Just think of it.

[33 : 15] What's everything else in the moment of your death? What's everything else when you die? You're here tonight and you'll tell me, well I'm building up an ambitious profession, I'm getting on well in my work, that's so important to me, far more important to me than all this talk about getting Christ.

do you not realize that your ambitions are going to vanish? In one moment when you have to die and when you have to go to meet your maker, what will all your ambitions be to you then?

They'll be like, they'll be like powder that will vanish away in a twinkling of an eye in a moment.

They'll just be like powder. I remember a story that Virgin told in a sermon once about a man who was a gatherer, a collector of pearls in Russia in the days of the Tsar and he was reputed to have found the most valuable pearl in the whole of Russia.

and the Tsar coveted that pearl for himself and he said as only the Russian hierarchy the Tsar could and I'm sure there are equivalents in Russia today he said that he would hone that poor man out of his house and out of his land till he would get that pearl from him and the poor soul of a man went away out of Russia and he went to France and all he had was this one pearl and at last in France he made a bargain with the Duke of Brunswick that he would meet with him in a certain hotel in Paris and he would show the Duke of Brunswick who was another collector of pearls his pearl of great price and he would buy it and the man would start a new life in Paris he met that day in the hotel and he opened the box in which he had the pearls but as pearls sometimes do that burgeon the pearls had turned to dust with a different degrees and you know unconverted friend that's the way your ambitions are going to be if you die

Christless they're going to turn to dust your ambitions are going to be so empty when you go face to face with your maker oh how blessed it is to be called to the marriage supper of the lamb compared to your best ambitions they're all so empty if only you would have Jesus for your soul my friend if only you would have Christ the Christ of Calvary for your eternity if only you would have them in your heart what is it to be called then to the marriage supper of the lamb to be called by the gospel of God's grace but then there's another calling to the marriage supper of the lamb and it's the calling of death because we have to pass through that valley before we reach the marriage supper of the lamb and I'm sure there are some of you in this gathering tonight and you're saying well

[37 : 34] I'm afraid I'll never make it I'm afraid I'll never reach because the waters of death are swirling at times so close to you and they're so cold and they're so threatening and you wonder will you ever make it oh my friend if you lay hold on Christ you can't but make it if you're married to Christ if you're united by faith to Christ you can't but make it he will bring you there he will take you himself to be with himself forever yes blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the lamb to them that fear him truly near his salvation my friend he's close to you this

Christ who calls you to the marriage supper of the lamb and he's close to you and he'll be close to you forever he'll be with you forever oh what a blessing it is to be called but then I want to look at the blessedness of those who are called now the first thing that I have to say about them is this they are blessed in life oh greatly blessed the people are the joyful sound that know do you know the joyful sound of the gospel bells ringing do you know the joy bells of Christ's union with yourself in your heart do you know the bells that ring out for the wedding day of us all being born again ah well my friends I'll tell you this there's joy in the heart of a sinner who receives

Christ I remember time and again noticing this in the lives of my fellow believers in the world I remember people with such an empty face feeling forsaken and feeling that they would never find and then when the Lord Jesus came into their hearts the joy of eternity was over their face you could see it in their eyes you could see it in their very faces the joy that they came to know Christ as their saviour oh what a blessing it is in life to come to know him and they will be blessed in death now we're all going to die and you know it's one of the most wonderful things to read the deathbed experiences of some of the

Lord's people and the way they were upheld as they were going to be with Christ as they were going to be with Christ I remember reading something of the life and death of a great Scottish theologian called Thomas Halliburton for example and oh what a wonderful testimony that man made in his death Thomas Halliburton he was only a young man in his 30s or 40s when he was called to die and he had this testimony to make that the Lord Jesus Christ was so good to him in his deathbed he was wracked with pain going to die but yet there was something in his heart that upheld him oh my friend would you know that something in your own heart and in your own life when you come to die

I hope you will I hope you'll know him for time and for eternity I hope you'll know the blessing of Christ in your soul but then blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the lamb you know the blessings that they have in this world they're but poor tastes of the blessing that waits for them when they will go to be with the Lord himself when they will go to heaven to be with Christ which is far better oh my friend I wonder will you be there will we meet there sometimes when we go to our wedding we sit and talk about the ones who were there and the persons the people we met and the company we had at the wedding ah well my friend I wonder are you going to be in the circle that will meet at the marriage supper of the lamb if so you're going to be a blessed blessed person a blessed person to be in Christ and to meet with

[43 : 08] Christ when we all get to heaven oh my friend are you going to be there are you going to heaven are you going to heaven are you going to the marriage supper are you going to the reception I remember once being at a communion in one part of this island where I believe we experienced moments of the Lord's blessing and presence amongst his people and I remember that on the Monday of the communion when the minister of the congregation was giving thanks one of the things he said was he said if he said the engagement that we have had with Christ has been so blessed in this world if the experience we have had of Christ here has been so good what he said is the reception going to be light when we go to the marriage supper of the

Lamb my friend be married to Christ while you are here on earth close in with him in the gospel close in with his terms and close in with his blessings that you might go to be with him forever where we will sit down together at a table where there will never be heard the voice that says arise let us go ahead a marriage lasts for a few hours and there is joy and happiness amongst those who gather at the wedding and you're so thankful for these few hours when you rejoice with your friends at the wedding you're thankful for them but oh my friend this marriage supper is never going to end this is the blessing God commands life life that shall never end and how do I know what's my basis for saying that this is true surely it's this these look at verse 9 these are the true saints of God if it was only me that was inviting you to the marriage supper of the lamb if it was only me who were saying that the marriage supper of the lamb is waiting for you in heaven if you will come to Christ then you could well discount my invitations you could well discount my promises

I'm no prophet not the son of a prophet but I tell you my friend these are the true saints of God oh hence what awaits those of you who are in Christ I can't describe it my tongue would fail to begin to describe the beauties of the marriage supper of the lamb to describe the joy that is there I can't even begin because it belongs to heaven and we are here on earth but you know this I feel very sorry very very sorry for those of you who are not on the way I feel so heart sorry for those of you who have no Christ those of you who have no saviour those of you who don't know the Lord I can't but feel heart sorry for me when are you going to come to me when are you going to come to me so that you will be on the way to the marriage supper of the lamb for blessed the blood called to the marriage supper of the lamb this is the true sake of God let us pray gracious God may we be where the bride eyes not her garment but her dear bridegroom's face where we shall not gaze upon glory but on our king of grace not on the crown he gived but on his pierced hand where the lamb is all the glory or in Emmanuel's land oh make

Jesus our soul's desire make him our everything for the redeemer's sake Amen