



# LOVING THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

THE CHURCH | WEEK 6  
AMANDA BEGGS

## **Ephesians 5: 21-32**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

→ The more we learn to love what Jesus loves, the more deeply we experience His love for us.

**Marriage is the framework God uses to explain His covenant love—promised, faithful, binding love.**

### ***THE FIRST RELATIONSHIP***

#### **Genesis 2:24-25**

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed

### ***THE COVENANT***

#### **Exodus 19:5-6a**

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

## ***FAITHFUL GOD***

### **Isaiah 62:5b**

For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

## ***UNFAITHFUL ISRAEL***

### **Ezekiel 16:30, 32**

“How sick is your heart, declares the Lord GOD, because you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen prostitute,... Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband!

## ***PROMISED NEW COVENANT***

### **Jeremiah 31:31-34**

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

**Forgiveness is not the end but the enabler. God forgives us so that we can KNOW Him.**

## ***JESUS THE BRIDEGROOM***

### **Matthew 9:15**

And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

→ Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

## ***THE WEDDING***

### **Revelation 19:7**

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;

**The Church is the bride Jesus purchased with His own blood.**

## ***JESUS LOVES US SACRIFICALLY AND EXCLUSIVELY***

### **Ephesians 5:25**

Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

## **JESUS IS MAKING US BEAUTIFUL**

### **Ephesians 5:26-27**

that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

## **JESUS CARES FOR US**

### **Ephesians 5:29**

Nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church.

## **JESUS IS FOREVER UNITED TO US**

### **Ephesians 5:31-32**

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

→ The more we receive the love of Jesus the more we will love who and how He loves.

For as long as the Church has existed, so has church hurt.

→ Paul doesn't deny the Church's failures. But he also refuses to redefine her by them.

## **As long as the Church existed, it's been Christ's bride.**

*There is no safe investment. To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket—safe, dark, motionless, airless—it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable.*

- C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*

### **Hosea 11:7**

“My people are bent on turning away from me.”

God's people weren't just breaking His rules, they were breaking His heart.

### **Hosea 2:19-20**

And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD.

Will you have this man to be your husband...and, **forsaking all others**, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

→ Exclusive oneness, come what may.

*He is coming back for a bride who gives herself to Him the way He gave Himself for her.* - John Bevere

When we say “yes” to Jesus, we are promising that come what may, we will forsake all others and pursue a deep oneness with Him forever.

### SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. **On the list of things you love, where does the Church rank?**
2. **Do you go to church expectant to experience Jesus' love? What gift(s) did you receive this week as His bride?**
3. **What blemish is Jesus washing clean in you currently?**
4. **Who or what has your time, and affection? Where do you look for affirmation? Are you looking to other things or people to give you what only God can give?**

