



## LESSON 5: Here comes the bride! Esther 2:12-18

Teacher: Beth Seifert

©Copyright Naomi's Table 2014

Read John 3:22-20.

Who does John refer to as the “bridegroom”?

Who, then, is the bride?

During this time in history, when a man sought to marry a woman, he would go to the father of the woman decide on the “terms” and they would become betrothed. In essence, they were already considered married, but the groom would then go back to his father’s house and would prepare a home for himself and his new bride. Then, the groom would return for his bride, the party would begin, and he would then take his new bride home with him.

Read John 14:1-3. As Jesus speaks here, what is He implying about His relationship with His disciples?

Read Ephesians 5:22-30. Just as the husband is the head of the wife, who is Christ the head of?

Who submits to Christ, just as a wife should submit to her husband?

Make a list of the things that Christ did for the church from verses 25-29. (I count 5, depending on your translation)

Why, according to verse 27, has Christ done these things? (Two reasons)

What does that tell you about the state of the bride (the church) without Christ’s efforts?

Re-read verses 22-24. Because of what Christ has done for us, how should we, His bride, respond?

Numerous times, all throughout Scripture, God describes His relationship with Israel as one of bride to groom. (Most often, though, He is using this relationship as a way to get them to

understand how shamefully they have treated Him, committing adultery with other nations, false gods, and material possessions.) For more on that, read through Jeremiah 3 and Ezekiel 16, and the entire book of Hosea.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. What is “all from God” referring to in verse 18?

How did God reconcile the world to Himself?

What does He no longer count against us?

Look closely at verse 21. What did God “make” or attribute to Christ?

Did Christ deserve that?

What did God make us become as a result of what He attributed to Christ? Did we deserve that?

Ladies, as you spend time with God today, consider the truth that God created marriage to point to His relationship with us before He even created the world. This was all set out in His plan before time began. Praise Him for His intense love for you that He would provide all that you needed to be His bride, because you couldn't provide it for yourself, but you had to be clothed in righteousness to become His. His holiness required the justice of payment for your sin; His mercy looked on His Son and accepted His sacrifice as that payment. Spend some time and just ponder how we treat God and how, when we sin and turn away from Him, we are committing adultery. Consider how, in your own life, you have done that very thing (turning from God and committing adultery against Him) and ask Him to forgive you and to help you to be faithful to your true love, your Father in heaven.

(A children's book that I highly recommend that helps us to see why Christ's sacrifice was necessary is “The Priest with Dirty Clothes” by R.C. Sproul. Although it is written for children with beautiful illustrations, the truths therein are profound and worthwhile for all ages.)