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# **Here Comes the Bride**

**# 933-B**

**Series: Living the End Times:  
Once the King Has Come**



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# Here Comes the Bride

How many of you got an invitation to the wedding? You didn't? Yes, you did! You have been cordially invited. You're invited, in fact, to attend the wedding of all weddings—the most exciting, the most enjoyable, the most beautiful wedding ever performed. It will be the best attended, too. And unlike most weddings, if you've had one or you've participated in one, this one will be perfect, no hitches. The Father of the Groom, you see, is making all of the arrangements, and He is perfect. His Son, the Groom, incidentally, is also perfect. He'll be on time. You can count on that. And He will be perfectly prepared. The Bride, meanwhile, is guaranteed to be beautifully clothed in garments prepared by the Groom's Father, paid for by the Son. She, too, upon her arrival, will be made perfect. You are invited to attend.

Most of your friends will be there. In fact, what I am inviting you to, is your own wedding. One day, believe it or not, not too far down the road from now we trust, Jesus Christ and His Church will be pronounced one for all eternity. And if you are a Christian, you, with all of the other saints of the ages, will participate in this, the most incredible wedding ceremony ever to take place. The Apostle Paul will be there. Stephen will be there. Dwight L. Moody will be there. Billy Sunday will be there. That precious grandmother who prayed for you all those years will be there. All of your relatives who know Christ as their Savior will be there. It will be the happiest, most significant event of its kind ever to take place.

In fact, every wedding held since the beginning of time, from God's perspective, has been held with *this* wedding in mind. So, all the symbolism, all the customs and all the patterns of weddings, that have been so meaningful to Christians through the years, came into existence to portray *this* wedding—the pattern for all weddings, for all marriages, for all time.

Isn't it strange, then, that we talk so little about, think so little about and anticipate so seldom, this magnificent event with all of its splendor, and all of its excitement? You are invited to attend the Marriage of the Lamb. You say, "Well, I'll be there."

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Yes, you will, if you're a believer. When will it be held? Where will it be held? Why will it be held? Those are some questions we hope to answer in the next few minutes, as we continue our series entitled, "Once the King Has Come!"

Today's outline, very simply is:

I- The Affirmation

II- The Explanation

III- The Illustration

IV- The Application

Our study has two objectives. The first is to focus on the event itself, and then to focus on the symbolism involved, where marriage is concerned. As a by-product, perhaps we can get another little sparkle of sunlight, if you will, to help illuminate us personally about the magnificence of the love of our God.

### THE AFFIRMATION

Well, let's look first at the affirmation. The question everyone asks is, "Is this unique wedding really going to take place, or is this a figment of someone's theological imagination?" Does the Bible *really* say that one day, maybe very soon, the Church of Jesus Christ, that's us, will actually celebrate with a ceremony every bit as real as your wedding, the marriage to Jesus Christ? If Scripture teaches us that this ceremony and all that it involves is real, wow, what an impact that ought to have on our lives.

Now, what does the Bible say about our marriage to Christ? We're going to take a journey this morning, through the land of the parables, into the hillsides of Ephesus and then on to the book of Revelation to see what the Scripture says about weddings, and this one particular wedding, specifically.

Weddings, of course, didn't originate in the New Testament. The first wedding, was a wedding which was intended to be God's demonstration of both the purposes and the portrait of marriage. This wedding took place in the chapel of the Garden of Eden. It was conducted by a very special Minister, the same Pastor, incidentally, who is going to conduct the wedding of weddings, which is yet to come. His name was Jehovah; the couple's names you know as Adam and Eve. They were destined for an eternal honeymoon until a rather unexpected visitor came upon the scene, an uninvited guest. And he challenged the basis for a

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perfect marriage, which was the sovereignty of God, and still is. The result was conflict, a communication breakdown, and eventually, spiritual ruin. You see, God gave us, in marriage, two basic purposes: spiritual unity to overcome loneliness; *it is not good that man should live alone* (Genesis 2:18); and physical unity to magnify the image of God by multiplying His creation on earth. Both would have worked perfectly if it hadn't been for that three-letter word called "sin", which entered the scene and marred the image.

The Bible is a book of interesting marriages, isn't it? There is that wedding in Genesis 29—you could write a good TV story about that one—the bridegroom woke up the next morning and he had married the wrong girl. Then, there is that touching wedding story that began in a barley field outside of Bethlehem that you read about in Ruth 2. Then there is a tragic wedding between Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jezebel, this godless Baal worshipper, which ended up with the ruin of a whole nation. And then, that beautiful wedding in Cana of Galilee where the God of gods and King of kings demonstrated for the first time on earth, His authority over the elements, by turning the water into wine. But all of those weddings were pictures. They were designed to show us what "The Wedding" would be like.

Let's take a look through the Scriptures now, first of all in Matthew 22.

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables [as He often did] and said:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king [it can be typified by the story of a king] who arranged a marriage for his son,

and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they [had other plans] were not willing to come. [It was a no-show. They opened the doors to the church and nobody came.]

Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; [a wedding feast; they're going to miss a great deal; we're going to have a real feast] my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding."

[They thought it was a joke. This guy got no respect.]

But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. [It was a big joke.]

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And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.

But when the king heard about it, [and on a scale from one to ten, he was about an eleven—loose translation] he was [wroth, uptight, angry] furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city [judgment].

Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, [we're going to have it] but those who were invited were not worthy.

Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.

So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good [or both Jew and Gentile, accurately]. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. [They had a full house at the church house.]

"But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. [He was improperly attired for the occasion.]

So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. [He had no answer.]

Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' (Matthew 22:1-13 NKJV)

So here, in a few verses, Jesus portrays Jehovah the King sending forth His servants into the world to invite them to the most auspicious occasion in history, the marriage of His Son. He describes the rejection of those who were originally invited, the Jews. He goes on to illustrate the truth that God was going to have the wedding anyway, and having found those He planned it for, who were willing to attend, He opens the doors to whosoever will, Jew and Gentile alike. The wedding would go on.

So, the wedding was filled with guests. But there came one who was not properly clothed; that is, graphically portraying one hoping to be at the wedding, but not clothed in the righteousness of the Son. That one who was not properly clothed was sentenced to an eternity in outer darkness, with the horror of eternity for those who cannot in proper attire come to the wedding. So, this parable is a clear illustration of that wedding which is to come and the terms of the arrangements the Father has made.

In Matthew 25, you read of the parable of the ten virgins

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who went forth to trim their lamps and to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise and had oil in their lamps, and they were ready. The other five had no oil in their lamps, so at the last minute they tried to rush to the store, but alas, they missed the bridegroom and missed the wedding. They had waited too long.

Then in Luke 12, starting at verse 35, we read this:

Let your waist be girded and your lights burning;

and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, [the marriage feast] that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately [you'll be waiting for Him].

Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. (Luke 12:35-37 NKJV)

This story tells about an anticipated, but unannounced visit from the king. And it talks again, about this distinct, specific occasion described over and over in Scripture as a wedding.

In II Corinthians 11, Paul begins to give it real significance, to make sure we don't misunderstand the symbolism of the parables.

For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you [you are engaged] to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

(II Corinthians 11:2 NKJV)

Then in Ephesians 5, not only does Paul clearly paint on the canvas of life this portrait, but he begins to boil it down and remind us of the picture that's involved in why marriage is what marriage is. You know the passage. Some of you don't like it. Most of us don't like it, and even when we do like it, we sometimes don't talk about it. But it does say:

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Husbands, love your wives, [by choice] just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, [the role is defined; husband/wife, Christ/church]

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that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

(Ephesians 5:22-27 NKJV)

“For this reason [for this cause, here is the reason for marriage] a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”  
[What cause? Why?]

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

(Ephesians 5:31,32 NKJV)

This is the reason for marriage, to illustrate the mystery. It's a portrait on earth of a wedding in heaven. So, marriage was given to us as a natural illustration of a supernatural truth. That truth is, there is going to be a wedding someday, and Christ is the Bridegroom and you are the Bride. We are engaged to Jesus. And the wedding hasn't taken place, but it will.

Revelation 19 is the next passage we want to look at beginning with verse 5.

Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” [Whoever you are, stop and praise God!]

And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, [the choir began to sing] as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

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.”

And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”

(Revelation 19:5-9 NKJV)

So, if you will, we have been told by John that the marriage of the Lamb is not only symbolic, it's real. The Lamb is Jesus. The bride is the church arrayed in fine linen, the righteousness



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of God. That is the affirmation. The Scripture clearly affirms that this event will happen, and you will be there if you are a Christian. It's not a word picture; it's a literal event. You say, "Well, maybe it's just symbolism." Well, beloved, if this is symbolism, then what about the New Jerusalem? What about the final destruction of Satan? These truths are all predicted throughout Scripture and affirmed in the book of Revelation, and they will come to pass, beloved. The wedding will take place. It will go on!

### THE EXPLANATION

Well, what about the explanation? What about the facts? "Just the facts, ma'am. Just the facts." Well, let's ask ourselves. Who is the host going to be for this magnificent wedding? The host will be the Groom's Father, Jehovah. He is the one who sent out the invitations. Remember?

The second thing we know is who the Groom is. The Groom is the host's Son, the Lamb without spot or blemish, slain from before the foundation of the world. Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom! John the Baptist said in John 3:

You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I am sent before him.'

He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, [that's me] who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.

He must increase, but I must decrease.

(John 3:28-30 NKJV)

Jesus identifies Himself as the Groom in Luke 5, when He answers a question of the Jew's. He says:

And He said to them, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them?"

But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days."

(Luke 5:34,35 NKJV)

Thirdly, we know where the wedding will be. It will be someplace in heaven, just before the Lord returns with us to rule and to reign. There are some scholars who think the celebration referred to in Revelation 19, will be held on earth during the millennium. Either way, it's fairly certain that it will take place at the Father's house, and that's all that matters to us.

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The next question is, will there be guests? The answer is, yes. Who will they be? The answer is, we don't know. A lot of people seem to think that they may be the believers converted prior to Pentecost, and after the Rapture. We don't know. The guests can't be the church because we are the Bride.

The fifth question is, who is the Bride? And, of course, we are, the church, according to Ephesians 5, and we are clothed in a garment of holiness given to us by our Groom at great personal expense to Him. So, we must wear it with honor and dignity. We have been given an engagement ring, the seal of the Holy Spirit, which is our guarantee that He *will* come for us and the wedding *will* happen.

The sixth thing is that He expects us to be ready. Our lamps are to be trimmed. Our hearts are to be in a spirit of anticipation.

So, there is a lot we don't know about the ceremony, but what we do know—wow, is it exciting! We know that God the Father, has given us to God the Son, as a Holy Bride. One day soon, probably in heaven, just before the return of Christ to earth, He will present us to the Son once and for always, and that which has been pledged on earth will be real in heaven.

Somewhere, about that time, there will take place a wedding celebration such as the world has never known. The host will see to that. It is a well-known fact in Jewish tradition, that the length and the magnitude of the wedding celebration was proportionate to the wealth of the father. It is also well-known that the Father who is preparing our wedding, and our feast, and our eternal home owns the cattle on a thousand hills, and owns the hills themselves. Many scholars conclude that the whole millennium will be one gigantic wedding feast. We don't know, but wouldn't it be just like our Father to give us a feast of such splendor? What a wedding! What a celebration! What a Bridegroom! What a Father! What a promise! What a God!

### THE ILLUSTRATION

So much for the affirmation and the explanation, what about the illustration? What is God trying to say about marriage through this picture, and what is He trying to say through marriage about eternity? We will look at both sides of the coin. We don't have a lot of time, so we will do it quickly. First, we'll look at the customs of marriage as they were in Jesus' day and what

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they tell us about salvation, because we have to learn to make the “spiritual switch.” God painted this portrait in Scripture, of our salvation and our relationship to our Savior, so that we could see everything that is yet to come. And if we don’t look at the “spiritual switch,” we will miss the point.

So, what we are going to do, is look at some of the aspects of a Hebrew wedding in Jesus’ day and apply them to our relationship to Christ.

### Three Stages of the Jewish Wedding

There were three stages:

- 1- The Betrothal Stage
- 2- The Presentation Stage
- 3- The Celebration Stage

### The Betrothal Stage

First of all, New Testament marriage contracts were initiated in the following way. The couple was very young. The groom’s father would sign an enactment before the judge, pledging his son to a chosen girl. The father would then offer the proper dowry payment. So, even though the bride had never seen the groom, she was espoused or engaged to him. So, that stage included the selection of the bride and the payment of the dowry.

Ephesians 1, describes our selection; and I Peter 1, describes the payment that Christ made on our behalf. Now, here is how it went. Once the purchase price was paid, the marriage covenant was established. At that moment, the man and woman were considered husband and wife, even though the wedding had not yet taken place. Once the covenant was established, the bride was declared to be set apart exclusively for the groom. You see the picture? Then they drank from a cup to symbolize that a covenant had been established even as we do, as we await that wedding day.

Then the groom would leave the bride and return to his father’s house just as Jesus did. He would stay there for a long time, physically separated from his bride to be, having paid the price for our redemption. That’s what Christ has done.

Now, during this time of separation, this is what happened. The bride gathered her wardrobe and prepared for the wedding. The groom went back to his father’s house and prepared a place

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for her, even as Christ has done for us.

### The Presentation Stage

Then came the Presentation Stage. After this separation had run its course, the groom, the best man and his other male escorts left the groom's father's house, usually at night. And there was a torch light procession to the home of the bride, just as one day, very soon perhaps, our Groom, the Lord Jesus, will leave His Father's house, accompanied by an angelic host and return at last for His Bride.

Now, the bride knew for certain he was coming, but she never knew when. So, she waited with a spirit of expectancy. The bride's role was to be ready at any time. Now, she didn't know for sure when he was coming, so usually, when they appeared outside her house, there would be a shout, even as Christ when He returns for us will greet us with a shout and the blast of a trumpet.

Then, the father of the groom would take her hand and place it in the hand of the groom signifying at last that they were one.

### The Celebration Stage

Then came the celebration. It was a joyous occasion, this marriage supper that began at that moment. It was the same kind of occasion as when Jesus turned the water into wine in John 2. Now, I don't know about you, but as we said earlier, the length of the celebration depended upon the magnitude of the wealth of the groom's father. So, I have a feeling we are in for a real celebration.

Now, marriage customs have changed. But, the outline of the wedding in Jesus' day was a perfect portrait of our relationship with Christ and the wedding, which is to come. Let's take the "spiritual switch" one step further. If this is true, and these pictures are true, how should our weddings—those of our children and our grandchildren, and those of you who are single, your own—how can they best typify this wedding which is to come? Because that's what marriage is, isn't it? It's a picture so the world can see what's fixing to happen.

### Wedding Portraits

Now, the next part of this lesson is called assassination city, and I'm taking a risk. I have a bullet proof shield up here for those of you who are about to have children be married someday

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soon. The tomatoes have all been taken up, I think, so you can't throw them. So, I would like us to just look at some wedding portraits, and I would like to make some suggestions about how God's picture book of spiritual marriage applies now to real marriages of believers—portraits, wedding portraits.

1- Engagements, according to the Scriptural portrait, are serious things. They shouldn't be entered into lightly. It was a commitment that was as binding as marriage in that day. Now, we are not His Bride. We are engaged to Christ and He'll never leave us or forsake us. We are guaranteed to be at the wedding. But, in our generation today, marriages are not binding, so engagements are taken no more seriously than "going steady" was. That dates me, I guess; well, whatever they called it a few years ago. Our young people today, need to be aware of the fact of what an engagement typifies in the mind of God, and what it demonstrates to the world.

2- The need for the parent's approval ought to be a foredrawn conclusion, not because parents are omniscient—I know, I *are* one; but because an omniscient God has determined to use parents as His seal of approval. We need to return to the day when the parents are expected to approve. Now, we don't have to return to the day where they choose the mate; I don't think we can handle that. But this portrait refers again, also to the fact that believers must only marry believers. And if you're a parent, and you don't want to offend your children, or damage them, or whatever it is, if you have control, you don't let them date an unbeliever, because the only purpose for dating in Scripture is marriage. And there is no basis for marriage between a believer and an unbeliever. The Scripture is clear. What fellowship could righteousness have with unrighteousness (II Corinthians 6:14). The world has white-washed that. It must be greatly important to us as Christians.

3- Engagements can't be too long, but they can be too short. You see, the engagement, Scripturally, has a purpose, and when you bypass that purpose you can short-circuit the marriage. I've heard it so many times, I can quote it in advance, a couple plans to get married a year from now, in June, but they just "can't wait." Chances are if they can't wait, they should. The engagement is supposed to be a time to develop a relationship which takes time, and if either parents or pastors say, "Not yet," then children should say, "Not yet."

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4- Engagements were never meant as times for a couple to be physically intimate. You see, the relationship deepens through spiritual and emotional oneness first. The physical relationship was only designed by God to consummate the marriage. The symbolism is destroyed, as well as God's seal of approval, when young people take liberties during their engagement period. Just as we are to be presented to Christ as a chaste virgin, Christian couples who are engaged must understand the importance of the holiness of that relationship. It does not mean that we need to be pure to be married to Christ. He makes us pure with His blood. But He expects the physical symbolism on earth to be carried out in pre-marital fidelity as an absolute. It ought not to be an oddity. Well, if there are any of you left...

5- The wedding itself. Now, these are way out, and I know that most of you are not going to pay any attention, but I'm going to do it anyway because I need to get it off my chest. Okay? I'm not suggesting you return to Hebrew customs, but if you're a young person thinking about marriage, or you're a parent with a young person thinking about marriage, at least consider some of these possibilities, so that, the marriage might better typify the portrait of Christ and the church.

a) Why not let the groom's father send out the invitations? It was our Lord's Father, who invited us. Okay—total silence.

b) Why not observe the Lord's supper as a part of the service for everybody at the celebration? Or, at the rehearsal dinner, or at an engagement party? Silence—okay.

c) Let the groom come down the aisle with his wedding party half-way to meet the bride, the way Christ will come half-way to meet us in the air. He doesn't just stand there. He comes for us. More silence—okay.

d) Why not make the bride and her whole wedding party be clothed in white, symbolizing not only her desire for holiness, but the fact that they have all been clothed in the holiness of God? Should not the bride be bathed in light, a reflection of the light of the world? More silence—okay.

e) This will really get you! Shouldn't the gown be paid for by the groom? See, I can tell by the nods whether these are parents of...okay. The symbolism is that the garments of righteousness we will wear on that wedding day will have been paid for at an incredible price, that fits, by our Groom, the Lord Jesus.

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f) Shouldn't there be a shout or a trumpet blast when the groom comes for his bride? More than silence—rejection. Okay.

g) For the sake of symbolism, should not believers come to a wedding in proper attire. Now, I know that varies from generation to generation, but it's not presumptuous to assume that this is an occasion that represents an occasion that will one day take place when we will be clothed by the Father, Himself.

Just as an aside, shouldn't small children who would interrupt the proceedings be left at home? Sorry about that.

Most of all, remember, God intended marriage to be entered into as a once for all relationship. I think it's so terribly important that we realize marriage is symbolic of salvation. The rise of the divorce rate in our generation says to the world among Christians—our portrait of it says—salvation may not last. And that's a lie! Divorce indicates either Christ may change His mind, or somehow, we might lose our salvation. That is a lie!

So, I believe young people need to take longer to prepare for marriage, but once the covenant is made, they must come to realize that “for better or for worse” and “until death do us part,” are not just vows they made to an imperfect partner, but a vow they made to a perfect God. Our marriage to Christ which is to come, ought to reinforce as never before in this age of uncommitted marriages, that God's original intent was a contract that typifies His contract with us, which will stand.

So, I plead with you this morning, if there is even one person listening, who may be contemplating a divorce, *that is not the perfect will of God*. You say, “Well, I got no bargain when I married.” Neither did God when He got you. But still He remains faithful. He said, “I will never leave you. I will never forsake you, no matter what.” Because you deserve it? No! Because He loves you. And because He keeps His word.

### THE APPLICATION

Well, so much for the affirmation, the explanation and the illustration. Finally, we have the application. And we will leave with these three basic thoughts about marriage and *the* marriage that is to come.

This lesson ought to affect our commitment to godly marriages. We ought to realize that nothing is more critical in God's physical demonstration of His spiritual story of salvation, than weddings

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and marriages. The wedding symbolizes something particular—our relationship to Him; its permanence, its perfectness and its preciousness. So, if you are counseling with people who are contemplating divorce, and they are believers, encourage them to do whatever it takes to get counsel, to fast, to pray, to sacrifice and do whatever is necessary to make that marriage endure, because a pattern of holiness is at stake. You can't control what your mate may do. What ultimately happens is beyond your control. But your part, you can control. Remember, marriage is God's negative, which when exposed, reveals a picture of our relationship with Him.

Secondly, remember, this study ought to affect our commitment to Christ. We ought to be reminded of the price Jesus paid so He could have us as His bride. Greater love hath no man than this. Even today, He ever lives to make intercession for us. No matter how unworthy we may be, no matter how few crowns may await us, He has gone to prepare a place for us, a place fit for the child of a king. He's preparing that place so that He can come back again for us and take us to be with Him, and be married to Him. Oh, what love, and how unworthy we are.

The third thing we ought to be reminded of in closing, is how important it is, that you and I as believers, are to be committed to expecting the return of Christ. You see, if we're thinking in eternal terms, beloved, you can endure a stormy marriage if you know there is a marriage to come that's perfect. You can endure singleness if you know it's only temporary because one day you are going to be married to the King, and live in royalty. You can endure hardship in this life; you can endure loneliness in this life, and persecution in this life, if this life is just a shadow of that which will one day come to pass.

We don't talk much anymore about heaven. Heaven is where it's at! Beloved, one day soon, the heavens will open and Jesus will sweep us up into glory. One day soon, we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the crowns He has prepared for us, the more with which to cast at His feet and worship Him. One day soon, Jesus Christ will be joined together for all eternity in a beautiful marriage ceremony with His church. Beloved, that wedding is to be followed by a celebration to end all celebrations, where years of joy and worship will await us together. If all these are certain, what else matters but Christ?



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Beloved, this world is passing away quickly. The days are numbered, but you and I have a new earth, a new heaven, new bodies—wow, we need that—and a life that will never end. In the light of these promises, how can we allow ourselves to get sidetracked in our pursuit of holiness?

You and I have been called on, in the light of such an incredible promise, to go out as servants of the King, this morning, and invite men and women to come to the wedding; their wedding, if they'll but come to Christ. The banquet table is set. I'm sure of that. The angels have prepared the special music. You can all but count on that. The service has been finalized. The Father is waiting patiently to perform the ceremony. And, how patiently the Groom waits, so He can one day come with His angelic host to sweep us off our feet, into the cathedral of eternity for the wedding we have all been waiting for.

I believe, beloved, any minute now, the orchestra of heaven will begin the prelude. The angelic chorus will rise up in unison as they see the Groom descend to call us to be with Him. I believe they will sing in harmony, "Here Comes the Bride! Here Comes the Bride, at last!"

### HERE COMES THE BRIDE

Here comes the bride!  
What a day it will be  
When angels shout in unison  
As Jesus' bride they see.

He's planned the perfect wedding,  
Each detail is in place.  
And oh, what grand excitement  
When we look upon His face.

And know that as the anthems ring  
And as the trumpets blast,  
The wedding will take place and then  
We will be His at last.

Here comes the Groom, our Savior,  
Such patient love, He's shown,  
And now at last we'll know Him  
As even we are known.

Here Comes the Bride

Here come the guests, the multitudes  
Who in God's sovereign plan,  
Have come to witness this event  
That stuns the mind of man.

Here comes the Bride, what glory!  
In garments pure and white,  
No sin to mar those garments;  
She's covered with His light.

Here comes the celebration,  
All grief and sorrows gone,  
We know this celebration  
Will yet go on and on.

For Jesus and His Bride will be  
Forever now as one;  
We are the bride, beloved,  
Engaged to God's own Son.

So, every time the organ plays,  
Or wedding bells do chime,  
Dear Christian, pray, "Lord Jesus, come!"  
Please hasten, Lord, the time,"

"When in the light of Your great plan  
The ties of earth You'll sever,  
And at the wedding of the Lamb  
We will be Yours forever!"

Here Comes the Bride

Let's pray.

*Our Father and our God, thank You for preparing the wedding, for making the plans, for paying all the expenses.*

*Forgive us, Father, for not being in a sense of expectation; for often being brides who forget that any moment the Groom will come. Father, may we never forget, that apart from You we could never be clothed in righteousness and accepted at the feast. But, oh, dear Father, You have come and washed us in the blood of Your Son, and now You see us holy and pure.*

*There may be even one here, this morning, Father, who has not yet accepted his or her invitation to the wedding. May even this moment, they say yes to the person of Jesus Christ and be born again. There may be others whose own marriages are desperately in a state of struggle, and maybe the thoughts of divorce or retaliation run through the minds of one or the other, or both.*

*Father, remind each one of us, this morning, of the beautiful portrait that is ours in marriage, and the beautiful purpose that is Yours in marriage; to portray that relationship we have with You which is eternal. Take us from this place with a sense of expectancy and excitement, that one day soon, the wedding will take place.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen.*

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