

Baptism: A Public Display of Affection

The Scriptures portray a beautiful analogy of the plan of salvation through the union of two becoming one.

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body. ...31) For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32) This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

We find this analogy scattered here and there throughout the Bible and when brought together they paint an amazing love story with a happy everlasting ending. We first read about this covenant of love in Exodus where the Lord proposes to Israel.

Exodus 19:3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4) Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5) Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

We would not automatically see this as a marriage proposal if we weren't familiar with the following verses. The everlasting covenant vow was first made to Abraham, the father of Israel. When God covenants or vows, it is not conditional. His vows are eternal, everlasting, but as we shall see the conditionality lies with His bride. His love is everlasting and He changeth not, His promises will be fulfilled.

Genesis 17:7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Hosea 2:19 And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.

Jeremiah 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

Isaiah 54:5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall He be called.

Isaiah 62:5 For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

Jeremiah 32:40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

Psalms 89:34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Ezekiel 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 26) A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27) And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. 28) And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Hebrews 8:6 But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. 7) For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8) For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 9) Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10) For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Israel believed they could keep His commandments in their own power without that intimate relationship where two become one.

Exodus 20:18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19) And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

What does God mean when He says, “Behold, the days come” as in Hebrews 8:8, or “After those days”, as in Hebrews 10:16, when He “will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah?” Is it simply time related or does it have to do with relationship? I believe it is relational. It is only when we come to realize that we cannot without Christ keep His covenant of love, that we “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Christ confirmed this everlasting covenant of His unconditional faithfulness to His marriage vow by a “public display of affection” by shedding His blood on the cross for everyone to see, not just then but even now. It is this “public display of affection” that draws us to Him and obedience is simply the fruit of this union.

Hebrews 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21) Make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

1 John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10) In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

When a couple fall in love they are anxious to tell the world and desire to have a wedding publicly displaying their affection for one another. So it is with Christ and His church. Christ first displayed His affection and His bride also will display her affection for Him by baptism, for we love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). Baptism, a "public display of affection," represents being crucified with Christ.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2) God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3) Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

Just as Christ died and was raised a new creature, speaking only of His glorified body, so our baptism represents dying to sin and rising up a new creature. Baptism represents the death of the old man just as being immersed under water prevents us from the ability to breathe.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection:

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

We know that dead men do not sin, and we also know that the carnal or sinful nature must die in order to become a new creature in Christ. This can only happen according to our faith but it **can** happen when we believe it to be possible. If we enter into that everlasting covenant and recognize that we can do all things through Christ which strengthen us (Philippians 4:13), who covenanted that He could keep us from falling (Jude 24), then we become that new creature.

Romans 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7) For he that is dead is freed from sin.

If we become that new creature in Christ Jesus, we can be assured of eternal life for without holiness no man shall see God (Hebrews 12:14).

Romans 6:8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him:

As Christ was tempted in all points yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15), and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death (James 1:15), death hath no more dominion over Him. So likewise we should reckon (believe it to be true) ourselves dead to sin, and therefore sin shall no longer have dominion over us because we are under grace, the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16, 17). Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

Romans 6:9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. 10) For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. 11) Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13) Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14) For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Colossians 2:12 Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Baptism represents a quickening, a resurrection, a new creature in Christ Jesus, the everlasting covenant, the promise that God will give us a new heart and put a right spirit within us and we shall be His people and He will be our God.

Colossians 2:12 Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Ephesians 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.

2 Peter 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

The Scriptures warn us of the suffering we shall endure if we choose to enter into this everlasting covenant with our Maker. Therefore before making this commitment to love, cherish and worship the true God, the Creator of all, we should count the cost. It isn't easy to mortify our carnal, sinful natures and allow God to work in us His good will and pleasure, but should we choose to do this, we are sure of eternal life with our Heavenly Husband.

Romans 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Hebrews 2:18 For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.

Mark 10:38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

Luke 24:46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

Acts 5:41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

Acts 9:16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2 Thessalonians 1:5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

When we believe His covenant promise that He can do for us what we apart from Him cannot do, His covenant of love will be finally accomplished and we can look forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb!

Colossians 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Revelation 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. 8) And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 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 sayings of God.

Prepared by Cindy Robinson