

Rev 22:17 ESV **The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come."**

There are several ways the bible describes the relationship between Christ and the church

- Building and Foundation...Vine and Branch...Shepherd and Sheep...one is **Husband and Wife**

This was expressed in the OT

- Isa 54:5 ESV **For your Maker is your husband, ...**

This was expressed in the NT as John identified Jesus as the Bridegroom

- Joh 3:28-29 ESV [*John the Baptist*] said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.' 29 **The one who has the bride is the bridegroom.** The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete.

When people are saved it is as if they have been engaged/betrothed to Christ

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have **betrothed you to one husband**, that I may **present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.**

- Betrothal in biblical times was a formal, legally binding agreement signifying a serious commitment to marriage. It involved a period of preparation, the couple communicated through a 3rd party, was expected to remain faithful

Christ is now preparing his bride

- Eph 5:25-27 & 32 ESV Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might **sanctify** her, having **cleansed** her by the washing of water with the **word**, 27 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.....**32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.
- Glorious - transformation from imperfection to one of reflecting His own glory - fit as a bride for Jesus

But the bride has a role as well - "His bride has made herself ready"

- Rev 19:7-9 ESV 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**; 8 it was granted her to clothe herself with **fine linen, bright and pure**-- for the fine linen is **the righteous deeds of the saints**. 9 And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage **supper of the Lamb**." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

Teaching from Allegory (a story that symbolizes broader themes) is a valid biblical teaching form --In Galatians 4 Abraham had two sons one by a slave, one by a free woman, it is an allegory for those who want to be under the law vs under grace. He calls it an allegory "These Women are 2 Covenants"

In Genesis 24, Abraham, 140 yrs old, sends a trusted servant to his homeland to seek a wife for Isaac

Would She Be Willing? - so much of our walk with the Lord is centered in this

Gen 24:5-8 ESV The servant said to him, "**Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine**

What would be some reasons a person might not be willing?

Willingness = prepared to do something, → involves acceptance of discomfort, fear, or emotional challenges

- It is a journey of 500-600 miles and at 20 miles per day would take just over a month
- Content with life...fear of unknown...safety concerns...marry a stranger...change of life, home, friends
- (willing precedes obedience) Isa 1:19 If you are **willing** and obedient you will eat the good of the land

She was beautiful → his focus was her heart revealed by actions - White Linen

Upon arrival, he prays, "O Lord, let the young woman to whom I say, **'Please let down your jar that I may drink,' and who responds, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'--let her be the one you have appointed for your servant Isaac.'**

15 Before he had finished praying, he saw a young woman named Rebekah coming out **with her water jug on her shoulder**. She was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Abraham's brother Nahor and his wife, Milcah. 16 Rebekah was very **beautiful** and old enough to be married, but she was **still a virgin**. **She went down to the spring, filled her jug, and came up again.** [SLIDE] 17 Running over to her, the servant said, **"Please give me a little drink of water from your jug."** 18 **"Yes, my lord," she answered, "have a drink."** **And she quickly lowered her jug** from her shoulder and gave him a drink. 19 **When she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll draw water for your camels, too, until they have had enough to drink."** 20 **So she quickly emptied her jug into the watering trough and ran back to the well to draw water for all his camels.**

She was interruptible, kind and compassionate

She responded QUICKLY to meet a need

She went the extra mile and get water for the camels - when he only asked for himself

- Level 1 Servant - She went for the water for her family
- Level 2 - she gave some to a stranger, meaning she will need to get more
- Level 3 - she gave water to all the camels -
CAMELS CAN DRINK 25 GALLONS OF WATER WHEN THEY STOP FOR AN OASIS x 10 camels = 250 GALLONS - 3 gallons per jug (25lbs) 83 trips - **just over a ton of water**

21 The **servant** watched her in silence, wondering whether or not the LORD had given him success in his mission. 22 Then at last, when the camels had finished drinking, **he took out a gold ring for her nose and two large gold bracelets for her wrists.** 23 "Whose daughter are you?" he asked. "And please tell me, **would your father have any room to put us up for the night?"** [SLIDE] 24 "I am the daughter of Bethuel," she replied. "My grandparents are Nahor and Milcah. 25 **Yes, we have plenty of straw and feed for the camels, and we have room for guests.**" 26 The man bowed low and worshiped the LORD. 27 "Praise the LORD, the God of my master, Abraham," he said. "The LORD has shown unfailing love and faithfulness to my master, for he has led me straight to my master's relatives."

- She was hospitable
- **Sharing straw and feed** - For 10 camels per day, you would need approximately: Grain or Pellets: 30 to 40 pounds. Forage (Hay or Straw): 200 pounds
- **Sharing room for guests** (could have been up to 20 people with him) 5-10 to handle the camels, 2 to 5 armed guards to ensure security, a few additional people to manage logistics, food, and other needs.

They spend the night with Rebekah's relatives and in the morning, gets permission for her to marry Isaac, and is getting ready to leave...they ask for 10 days...he says he has to leave now...they said, let her decide -willing to leave everything behind - for faith

58 So they called Rebekah. **"Are you willing to go with this man?" they asked her. And she replied, "Yes, I will go."** 59 So they said good-bye to Rebekah and sent her away with Abraham's **servant** and his men. The woman who had been Rebekah's childhood nurse went along with her. ...66 **Isaac loved her deeply**

Prepare a heart suitable for the bride of Christ, willingness, kindness, compassion, sharing

Pro 21:2 ESV Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but **the LORD weighs the heart.**

1 Sam 16:7 "People judge by outward appearance, but **the LORD looks at the heart.**"