

### **Luke 5:33-39**

Sacred Scripture provides us with so many rich titles for Jesus. He is Savior, Redeemer, Lord, Bread of Life, Beloved Son, Son of the Living God, King of Kings, Son of Man, Good Shepherd, Lamb of God, Word, Messiah, I AM, King of Israel, and Christ. Today, we hear one of my personal favorites: Bridegroom.

I am currently working my way through a little book called *Love Basics for Catholics: Illustrating God's Love for Us throughout the Bible* by Dr. John Bergsma. It is a fascinating little book! Dr. Bergsma takes the reader through salvation history in the Bible by looking at how God works through married couples and family. Basically, there is peace and harmony where God's plan for marriage is lived, and chaos and division where it is not.

In Sacred Scripture, God is presented as a bridegroom in the prophets such as Isaiah and Hosea. Israel is presented as an unfaithful bride, oftentimes breaking its covenant with the Lord by seeking other gods.

In the New Testament, it is no accident that in John's Gospel Jesus' first miracle is done at a wedding! The Messiah-Bridegroom arrives on the scene, turning water into wine, a symbol of the Holy Spirit and new life. With Jesus as Bridegroom, the Messianic era has arrived!

Today, we have another hint of Jesus as Bridegroom with our Lord's question, "*Can you make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?*" John the Baptist, the Bridegroom's best man, had a very different kind of ministry with his disciples. They fasted often and offered prayers.

In referring to His disciples, Jesus calls them "wedding guests." Our Lord picks up on the long thread woven throughout Sacred Scripture of the Lord's self-identification as husband and Bridegroom and Israel as wife and bride.

Jesus adopts the long-standing imagery of God's nuptial union via the covenant (think wedding vows) with His chosen people. As the Messiah-Bridegroom, Jesus has come from the wedding chambers of heaven (His Father's house!) in search of a bride, His beloved Church. My favorite metaphor for the Church is the Bride of Christ.

As Catholic Christians, baptized and united with Jesus, our Spouse, we always look to do something beautiful for Jesus, our Bridegroom. This attitude is a lovely way to begin your day – "Lord, help me do something beautiful for you today." May the good Lord, our Bridegroom, bless you and help you do something truly beautiful for Him today. ☺

~St. Thérèse, pray for us!