



PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

WORKSHOP: The Bride of Christ

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PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: God has faithfully prepared us for our role as a bride. Jesus is the Bridegroom, and in the fashion of fine and ancient Jewish tradition, He will come for His bride, the Church. For now, we wait, but upon His return, our relationship, and our very beings, will change and we will grow into full intimacy with our Redeemer. This workshop will explore the cultural concepts of a Jewish wedding which shed light on the relationship that God desires to have with us as believers.

INTRO:

Proposal video for Katie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF94G95Yvus>

POINT 1: The Proposal

shidduch- time of courtship (traditionally, for an arranged marriage)

God has taken upon Himself to woo you into a love relationship, win your heart, and make you His forever.

- **Jeremiah 31:3** (NIV) *The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, I have drawn you with lovingkindness.'*
- **Isaiah 62:4-5** (NIV) *⁴No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah, [my delight] and your land Beulah [married]; for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married. ⁵As a young man marries a young woman, so will your Builder marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.*

God made a way. His Son Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6). This is His proposal to you. His proposal is for life, for a FOREVER relationship.

ACTIVITY 1: The Ultimate Proposal

Work with a partner or in a group of no more than four people. Your leader will assign a Scripture passage (below) to your small group. Read the passage and answer the questions. You will have the opportunity to share your findings with the whole group.

1. What is the "proposal" in this passage of Scripture?

2. To whom does this proposal apply?

3. What impact does this proposal have on you as an individual?

- **John 6:44-47** ⁴⁴ "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from him comes to me. ⁴⁶ No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.
- **John 15:12-16** ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.
- **Ephesians 2:4-7** ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
- **1 John 4:15-19** ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷ This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us.

POINT 2: The Engagement/Betrothal

kiddushin- Jewish betrothal. Literally "sanctification;" comes from the same root word as *kadosh* ("holy"). Betrothal made the woman a legal wife and her status could only be changed by divorce or death. Betrothal was usually accomplished by the groom giving a coin or ring to the prospective bride and her acceptance of the token accomplished *kiddushin*. (www.Chabad.org)

In the *kiddushin* ceremony, the groom would stand in front of his bride with a glass of wine and say, "This is a new covenant in my blood." During the last supper, Jesus stood and used those very words (Luke 22:20)! When we receive Jesus as our Savior, we enter that same covenant vow.

If we choose to enter into this covenant/contract with Almighty God, made possible through the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ, then we are "sealed."

- **Ephesians 1:11-14** (NIV) ¹¹*In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,* ¹²*in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.* ¹³*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,* ¹⁴*who a deposit is guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession— to the praise of his glory.*

The Jewish bride often spent a year or longer preparing for her wedding. We also have quite a bit to do while we prepare for our heavenly Bridegroom. We must get to know our Intended, we must invite others, and we must be watchful and wait.

Discussion: What are the kinds of things that you would do in the engagement period (Western culture)? Let's make a list.

ACTIVITY 2: Gallery Walk

We are going to take a gallery walk to read Scriptures that apply to this waiting or "engagement" period that we are in. Mark which verse(s) resonate with you the most. Jot a note to yourself about why you chose the verse(s); you'll have the chance to share out if you would like to.

- Anticipate!** Psalm 27:14 _____
- Tone Up!** Isaiah 40:31 _____
- Choose a Dress** Isaiah 61:10 _____
- Wedding Invitations** Matthew 28:18-20 _____
- Dream House** John 14:2-3 _____
- Know your "Man"** John 17:3 _____
- Hope Chest** Galatians 5:5 _____
- Home** Philippians 3:20-21 _____
- Say You're Sorry** 2 Peter 3:9 _____

POINT 3: The Wedding/Nuptials

- **I Corinthians 15:51b-52** *...we will all be changed- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

nisu'in- Second part of a Jewish wedding. Also means "to lift or carry." Traditionally, the bride was lifted in a chair or carriage above the officials and guests.

chuppah- Canopy held up by four poles, under which the marriage ceremony takes place. It is believed that the glory of God rests on the bride and groom under this covering.

- **I Thessalonians 4:16-17** ¹⁶ *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.* ¹⁷ *After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*

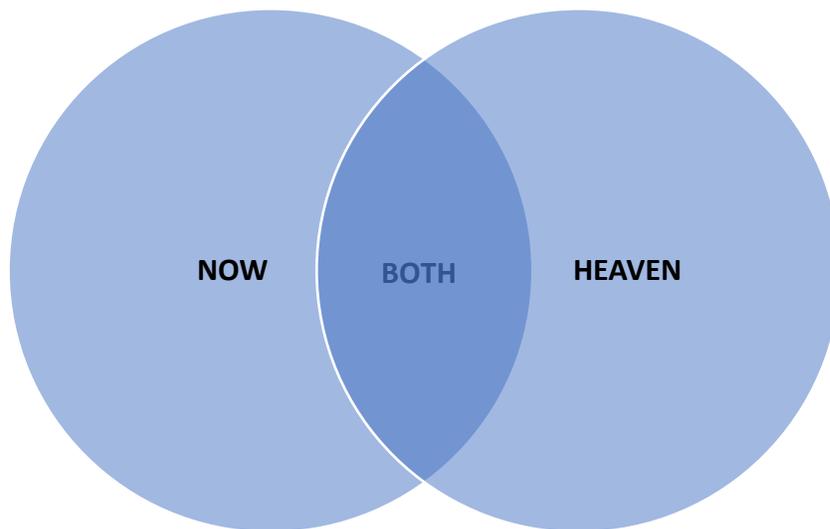
ACTIVITY 3: The Wedding and Marriage

We live in a time between the now and the not yet, between the “betrothal” (engagement) and the “marriage.”

- **1 Corinthians 13:12** *For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.*
- **1 John 3:2** *Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

Directions: Work with your partner or small group to come up with at least 3 Post-it Notes to place on the large Venn Diagram in the front of the room. On the left side, we will put statements that are true about our relationship with Christ NOW. On the right side, we will put statements that are true about our relationship with Christ in HEAVEN. Where the circles overlap in the middle, we will put statements that are true for BOTH. You may write as many Post-its as you would like but try to have at least one for each of the three categories. Go ahead and place your Post-its on the Venn Diagram when you are ready.

Our Relationship with Jesus Christ



APPLY IT TO LIFE:

Our study of the Bride of Christ throughout Scripture begins and ends with JESUS.

- **Ephesians 1:3-4** *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.*
- **Ephesians 1:9-10** *he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.*

And what about you? It's true that the Church is the Bride of Christ as a whole, but you as an individual are also The Bride of Christ. You are loved and cherished. You are known and honored. Jesus Christ longs to be with you, just as a young man would long to be with his fiancé. The God of the universe is calling you, drawing you, wooing you into a love relationship with Him. Will you allow yourself to be claimed? Will you accept the fact that you are deeply and thoroughly loved, exactly as you are right now?

Take a moment to receive this for yourself. A beautiful engagement awaits you. Use this time to breathe deeply and to allow your heart to be touched by your Bridegroom.

Resources for further study:

- www.Chabad.org
- *The Jewish Way in Love and Marriage*, by Maurice Lamm
- https://blogs.bible.org/engage/gail_seidel/why_wait_-_waiting_and_waiting_on_God
- *Restore My Heart: God's Passionate Love for His Bride*, by Denise Glenn