

“Recognize Great Themes of Scripture”

Special Presentation

Various Scriptures

The Rev. Matt Kail

August 5, 2022

Matt: Well, good morning, gentlemen. I'm hoping to get through the material. I've thought okay, we've got an hour to fill. But I'm learning that at Brave Men there's a 20-minute build-up. And so thank you, Ted, for your introduction and for bringing the prayer concerns to the people. And I think that one reason why the numbers have dwindled is because since I've pastored a few churches I've seen this. It's similar to Brave Men. It's a discipline, as Ted said. But it's also a habit. People were in the habit of coming, and then COVID struck. And people got out of the habit and they filled their lives and their Friday mornings with other activities and haven't made their way back yet. But we're here and God is in our presence; He is in our midst. So let us begin with a word of prayer.

Gracious Lord Jesus, we do thank You that You are sovereign, that You are ruling over all, that You are the great Physician and nothing is impossible for You. So we pray that You would bind up the wounds of these United States. We pray that You would turn the hearts of citizens and leaders alike unto Yourself, that we might be drawn closer together, that the ties that bind us together might be stronger than those that tear us apart. And I do say a prayer for the still suffering addicts who are out there, who need to know You, Lord Jesus, as their Higher Power who can restore them to sanity.

Lord, today we lift up some of the Brave Men. We appreciate the music and the levity of Don Maurer. We pray that You would be with him, that he would be victorious in his fight against COVID. And we thank You that Sig has come through his surgery, that the doctor was able to save the kidney and believes that they got all the cancer out. We pray that You would be with Sig, that You would strengthen him and encourage him and Nancy during this chapter of their lives.

I lift up Matt as he and his wife are concerned with their son and the biopsy that took place last week. We pray that the doctors will have found whatever issues there are and might be instruments of healing in Your hands. And we thank You for the leadership, the guidance and direction from many years that Bruce Bickel has provided for the Brave Men. And we pray that You would be with Bruce. Be with Becky as Becky is recovering from her back surgery and as Bruce continues to battle Parkinson's disease. And we thank You for the witness, the testimony of this man and this woman throughout all the years.

And we do lift up our brother Kevin Cohn as he battles cancer. We pray that You would be with him and guide him, that You would ease him of all his anxieties. He continues to fight the good fight, to run the race. We pray that You would keep him in the faith.

And Lord Jesus, we pray that You would be with us this day, that You would allow us to know the wisdom of the ages. And so I now pray a prayer that was first spoken by John Calvin. *“Grant, almighty God, that as we set up against Thee so many obstacles to the depravity of our flesh and natural disposition, that we seem as it were to be designedly striving to close up the door against Thy goodness and paternal favor, oh grant that our hearts may be so softened by Thy Spirit that the hardness which has hitherto prevailed may be so corrected that we may submit ourselves to Thee with genuine docility,*

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especially as Thou dost so kindly and tenderly invite us to Thyself, that being allured by Thy sweet invitation we may run, and so run as not to be weary in our course, until Christ shall at length bring us together to Thee, and at the same time lead us to Thee for that eternal life which He has obtained for us by His own blood.” In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Matt: So gentlemen I invite you to take out the outline for the teaching today. And I’m going to say that one way to study the Bible is to consider the great themes. The Bible is most incredible; it is a unique book and the most incredible in all the world—66 different books written across several centuries. And yet there are themes that run through the Scriptures showing us the unity of God’s wisdom and of His grace.

So one of those themes comes under the rubric. You know where I learned the word *rubric*; it was last week. (*Laughter*) So under the rubric of allegories, similes and metaphors, and another category of types, and we’ll speak about that soon—one of the themes is the Lamb of God and Jesus as the Lamb of God. J. Sidlow Baxter, a great preacher from a previous generation, wrote *The Master Theme of the Bible*, that speaks of Jesus as the Lamb of God. And then of course we know of spiritual warfare, fighting the good fight, David and Goliath, the occupation of the land, including the aspect of the Israelites going into captivity and being released by the strong, steady and outstretched arm of the Lord God Almighty. We think of the full armor of God in Ephesians chapter 6, and the war in heaven that we read about in Revelation, to remind us that we are the church militant. The church triumphant is those who have gone before us into glory. But while we’re in this world there still continues to be a warfare, and we must be armed for battle.

And today our study is on the theme of the church as the bride of Christ. There are so many prefigurations or types of this. The whole book of Ruth is worth the read, and I’m hoping that all of you had a chance. It’s only four chapters, a couple of pages in most Bibles. But the book of Ruth is about Ruth going north to Moab and her coming back. Her husband dies and her father-in-law dies. And she is going to be with Naomi in Israel once the famine has ceased. She comes there and Naomi thinks that she has no hope because the hope was bound up in the descendants and the sons and the daughters and the children of the household, that the house would continue throughout the generations through the legacy of the children.

But then Ruth has an encounter with Boaz; it’s a wonderful scene. But Boaz is the kinsmen-redeemer. But he’s close enough, and they practiced Levirate marriage in those days. If the brother died then his younger brother would marry the wife, because the wife had no children yet. And Boaz is within the family structure and is able to marry her.

And the Kinsman-Redeemer for us, for the church, is the Lord Jesus Christ who laid down His own life in order to win His bride. Of course it’s challenging language for us men because we want to be strong; we want to be resilient; new want to be macho. And yet all members of the church are the bride of Christ. Individually we are sons of God. Even women are sons of God because they get the inheritance, though I would tend to say sons and daughters of God.

But the theme then is also caught in Hosea chapter 2, verses 16-20. And I’ve asked Gary to go ahead and read that for us today.

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Gary: *“And in that day, declares the LORD, you shall call Me ‘my husband,’ and no longer will you call Me ‘my Baal.’ For I will remove your name of the Baals from the mountains, and they shall be remembered by name no more. And I will make with them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the gall, the sword and the war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. And I will betrothe you to Me forever; I will betrothe you to Me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betrothe you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD.”*

Matt: Thank you, Gary. So, you see, the beauty of that imagery is that He is the lover of our souls. And as Christians we speak of this being Jesus, the prefiguration of Jesus Christ who was to come, and also the promise of eternal life with Him.

Then the next thing that I want to bring up is Ephesians 5, verses 31 and 32, which is the most specific reference in the New Testament to this typology of Jesus Christ being the husband or the bridegroom, and of the church being the bride of Christ. So David, would you read Ephesians 5, verses 31-32?

Ted Wood: Matt, could you just slow down a minute so we can catch up? We’re finding our Scripture passages.

Matt: Okay, thank you.

Ted: I was just trying to catch up to Ephesians.

Matt: I suppose I should look it up myself. And once I find it I know everybody has it. So if you look at the head of that, wives and husbands is the 22nd verse, so that’s a lot of Scripture. So do you think we’re caught up, Ted?

Ted: Yeah.

Matt: Okay, great. And so Dave, if you could just read Ephesians 5, verses 31 and 32,--

David Miller: *“‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This is a great mystery, and I speak concerning Christ and the church.”*

Matt: Thank you: Christ and the church, husband and wife. He left His Father in heaven and came and bound Himself to us. But then He went home to His Father to prepare a place for us.

Now I saw a documentary which really sparked my thinking. And so I don’t want to be accused of plagiarism, but I watched something called “Before the Wrath.” And I heard many of the ideas that were represented here, but some I heard in that documentary for the first time. And the point that they made is that all of Jesus’ initial disciples were from Galilee. And Galilee is contrasted with Judea. Galilee was the rustic area, if you will. So you kind of see the contrast today between rural and urban America. It was the same sort of thing in the Israel of Jesus’ time.

And they had wedding customs that were common throughout the Middle East, and particularly towards the Jewish faith. But in Galilee the father of the bride and the groom would negotiate a bride price. Now that was common, and I imagine they would do it in private and then come to the public square. They would meet in the gate of the city, and there they would have witnesses because remember that at the gate of the city a lot of court actions took place. And they would meet there and they would negotiate in front of all the people and arrive at a bride price.

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But what was unique according to this documentary about the Galilean tradition is that the potential bride—the one that the man is seeking to woo—has the right to reject the wedding proposition. He is going to pour a glass of wine and hand it to her. And if she takes the wine and drinks it she is accepting the proposal. And then there is much joy and dancing. And this is the bulk of the ceremony; this is the ceremony for the wedding.

But then it’s a two-part wedding. There is the process whereby the bride price has been reached. The bride has now accepted the betrothal offer. And then the groom is going to prepare a place for his bride. And the place will be on the father’s homestead. Now I’m going to ask about it later here. But Don, can you read John 14, verses 2 and 3 at this time?

Don Rimbey: Will you let me know when to begin?

Matt: Yes; John 14:2 and 3; thank you for reminding me of the timing. And you’ll want to keep close to that because we’ll be looking at Matthew later on in this.

Don: Okay. John 14:2 and 3: *“In My Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am.”*

Matt: So those were the words that the groom would say to the bride. After the bride price is agreed to she drinks the wine. He says those things. And of course Jesus’ words are recorded in our Scriptures in the Upper Room, on the night in which Jesus was to be betrayed. And He is telling them. And it’s not homosexual ardor; it’s nothing like that. It is that this is God in the flesh—Jesus Christ, the Son of God—wooing His disciples and speaking about the marriage that had been contemplated since before the foundations of the universe. And He, our Lord, has gone to prepare a place for us. And having gone to prepare a place for us He will come back to bring us to be with Him, that where He is we might be also.

And you remember that there is all that confusion in Luke chapter 2—the great Nativity story—where she is betrothed and they—Mary and Joseph--haven’t had intercourse yet. But then it speaks of him being the husband. The first stage of the ceremony has already been completed. Joseph would have been a carpenter. He has gone to his father’s home to prepare a place. And then he gets word that Mary is large with child.

And now what does he do? That’s a tributary, but that’s part of what the dynamic is that’s unfolding there. And so he is going to go to prepare a place, and it’s in his father’s house. And my guess is that was the NIV from which you read. And the NIV speaks about many rooms because we cannot understand the King James Version when it says, *“In My Father’s house are many mansions.”* Well, how do you have a mansion inside a house?

But in Korazin there is a kind of an evangelical triangle. This is in Galilee, north of Lake Galilee or the Sea of Tiberias, the same body of water. And Jesus would minister in Bethsaida in Capernaum; that is where He would set up shop, and Korazin. And Christ exposed it, and it’s the same thing in Matthew and Mark. It’s not a kind word regarding Korazin. But the reason I mention it today is because archaeologists in the latter part of the 20th century found what is called an *insula*. And what it is, it’s a home, a homestead. And although it’s two thousand years old, we can compare it to row houses. And the

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father, the patriarch, would build a house. And then when one of the sons was engaged he would come back and he would build another house next to it similar to a row house.

And then this is what we call hyperbole. You look at this and it looks like a simple, humble abode, with house built upon house upon house. *“In my Father’s house there are many rooms.”* But they’re not exactly rooms; they’re independent living areas. And then the hyperbole is that *“in my Father’s house there are many mansions.”* The grandeur, the glory that is to be revealed in heaven is to try to use imagery from this realm to speak of the eternal and glorious realm that we’ll enter into at the end of the age.

And so the archaeologists uncovered this in Korazin. And I thought it was significant. This again is pointing to that documentary “Before the Wrath.” But I thought it was interesting that when I was in seminary I just heard that the house was the estate. And you’d build another house and you’d have many buildings on the same plot of land. But toward the end of the 20th century they found this. And I want to say that if these things are being unearthed and being uncovered now, we’re approaching the end of the current age.

So I’m going to go down to D. The groom’s father determines when the home is ready to receive the bride. So at the betrothal the bride asks the groom, “When are you coming back?” And Chuck, if you could read Matthew 24³⁶--

Jim Hamilton: It’s Jim.

Matt: Jim, okay. But you have 25:1-13, don’t you?

Jim: Yes.

Matt: I’ve got Chuck for 24:36. But mark your Bibles because we’ll be going there. Go ahead, Chuck; thank you.

Chuck: *“But concerning that day and hour no one knows—not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.”*

Matt: So Jesus is saying that only His Father knows. Just as the groom would say to the bride, “When are you coming back?”, “only My Father knows.” It’s the Father who will determine when the place is ready. He’s gone to His Father’s house to build a new mansion next to the house. And then He comes back when the Father says that all is ready.

Then point E. When all is ready the son is sent to his bride’s home to bring her into his own home. It always takes place at night. And so if you’re still in Matthew 24 you’re very close to Matthew 25. And I’m going to ask Jim to read that passage.

Jim: *“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with the lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.*

“At night the cry rang out. ‘Here is the bridegroom; come out and meet him.’ When all the virgins woke up, they trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’

“‘No,’ they replied. ‘There may not be enough for both of us.’ They said, ‘Go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’”

Matt: So there is Matthew 25:1-13. And could you read another verse there?

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Jim: Sure. *“But while they were on their way to buy the oil the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went with him to the wedding banquet, and the door was shut.*

“Later the others also came. ‘Sir, sir,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’

“But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.’ Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”

Matt: So that is the nature of this. This is Jesus in the 24th chapter of Matthew; we’re getting close to crunch time. And Jesus is teaching in Jerusalem. And the question is, when are all these things going to happen? And Jesus in that passage in 24 is speaking both about the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in 70 A.D. in the tearing down of the temple. And then in 25 He is speaking about His return at the end of the age.

And you see the imagery. And there are other times when Jesus speaks about weddings in His parables. There is the one about the wedding. And the person comes into the wedding but he doesn’t put on the robe, and he’s not dressed properly for the wedding. And then that person is banished out to the place of wailing and gnashing of teeth.

But the wedding was the central event for the secular life of a community and of a village, because of course it’s speaking about the generations to come, that the hope of a marriage, then the offspring and the faith and the seed will continue. And of course throughout the Old Testament there is the anxiety about the seed continuing.

But the Seed of the woman is going to crush the head of the serpent. And the Seed was Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. And if you look in Luke in the genealogy, descended from Adam, the Son of God. And so here in the final throes of the Passion Week Jesus is saying that He is going to be coming back, and that people need to be ready for when it happens.

And I’ve always wondered, well why is He coming at night? I mean, I’ve been a pastor; I’ve conducted weddings at 1:00, sometimes 3:00, or actually 1:30 and 3:30. There’s the whole thing that’s it has to start with the hands going up. (*Laughter*) I don’t know. But at any rate, why would it be at night?

The reason was because it was to be a surprise. Yes, we know that the day is coming. But when it arrives no one knows the day or the hour. When it arrives it’s going to be a surprise. But everyone has to be ready for when it arrives.

And this meant that as the groom has gone to prepare a place, the bride has been preparing herself with whatever loose ends. For instance, if the groom is from another town she’s going to be leaving her present home and going to live in her husband’s household, in the household of her father-in-law. And so she has to finish up all her details and tie up loose ends.

But the most significant thing is that she is preparing her wedding gown. And she wants to be beautifully arrayed on the day of the wedding. But actually the wedding—the ceremony, the exchange of vows—has already taken place about a year before. But now she’s going to the consummation. And there’s this big train of people that comes.

And as they’re coming, the father says to the son, “Go get your bride.” And the son rounds up his wedding party, and they go out with the best man. And the party is shouting. “The day has arrived! The day has arrived; the great wedding day has arrived!” And the groom is blowing the ram’s horn, the *shofar*. It’s trumpeting in and announcing to everybody that the day has arrived.

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And only those who are looking forward to that day, anticipating the day, are prepared when the day comes. That’s why the bride sleeps in her wedding gown because she doesn’t want to miss the party. Some people say, “You’d miss your own funeral.” Well, she doesn’t want to miss her own wedding. She wants to be prepared for when the groom arrives.

And then once they arrive at the house, the bride and her bridesmaids come out, and they’re going to be escorting. And the role of the bridesmaids is that they need the lanterns because it’s at night. They need to light the way for the bridal procession.

And this documentary “Before the Wrath”{ said that in Galilee they had this tradition where the woman, the bride, was placed on a *livit*—you know, one of those little conveyances. And she would sit down. Two people—one in the front and one in the back—would lift her up and convey her to the father’s house—now the groom’s house. And so she wouldn’t have to walk, that being too pedestrian. That’s a turn of phrase. Anyway, she wouldn’t have to walk there because she was being elevated; she was being honored. She was being given the honor bestowed upon her so that she doesn’t have to walk. She is carried away joyfully by that litter.

And as I said, only those prepared for the event get to join in the parade. And we’re going to compare this with 1 Thessalonians 4, verses 16 and 17. And Dave, could you read that?

David Wessel: *“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*

Matt: So the Bridegroom has come for His bride. This is the hope, the blessed hope of the Christian, that we’re longing for His arrival, for His appearance. And we need always to be prepared for the day that He arrives.

And then there is the Biblical view of the glorious day of consummation. And this is in Revelation chapter 19, verses 7 and 8. And Bob, I know that you’ve looked ahead. I’m going to wait for others to catch up so they can read this as well.

Bob Busted: Okay, so we’re going to read Revelation 19:7-8. *“Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory, for the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”*

Matt: So this is the glorious work. And then if you could read another verse there. I only said 8, but if you could read the next verse, Bob,--

Bob: *“Then the angel said to me: ‘Write! Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb.’ And he added, ‘These are the true words of God.’”*

Matt: Oh, I see. So this is a different translation. And I see my little brackets here in Revelation 19 verse 8; that’s why we all had to have the chance to turn to it. In the NIV version, *“Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”* And then in brackets, *“Fine linen stands for the righteous acts or deeds of the saints.”* We are arrayed.

There are different manuscripts, and we’ve been learning how to study the Bible. So when you see those brackets there it indicates some ancient manuscripts. The NIV translators decided that this is a text that was perhaps put in the margin. Remember when Jeff Stivason said that sometimes things were written in the margins and then they would

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get incorporated into the text itself. So this must be what the NIV translators thought had taken place.

But I want to underline that the fine linen which stands for the righteous acts of the saints is that we are going to be arrayed in the things that we do. We're not saved by our works, and it's not works righteousness. But rather the things that we do, or that Christ does through us, are going to adorn us unto eternity at that great and final day.

And so I'm going to be moving down. And I didn't realize that 25 after was the time, so I've been moving a little bit quickly today. But last week we were reminded of what Bruce Bickel says: that whenever we get a lesson from the Scriptures, one thing we need to ask ourselves is what are you going to do with what we just learned? And one thing that we're doing, as I've been underlining, is that we need to get ready; that's back to the Matthew 25 passage.

And there's a line. I'm not sure if it's original with C. H. Spurgeon. But when I looked it up on the Internet it was credited to him. *“Heaven is not the default destination for every human being who ever lived. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.”*

We are preparing ourselves for His arrival. The things that we do in this lifetime are going to have ramifications unto eternity. And we are arrayed in the acts that we've done, or the acts that Christ has done through us. That is what is going to be our glory. Of course we receive glory, and then cast all our crowns at the foot of Jesus Christ on that great and final day.

And then I have a quote from Irenaeus of Lyon. In order for a husband and wife to be married to one another they have to be similar. And the husband and wife need to be able to communicate in a common language, or at least learn to do so. And they're of the same type, that is to say, they're human beings.

And of course there is all this talk that marriage is under assault in America. And I believe that it's because there is a band of people who do not want the glory of the Lord to be shown forth in marriages between godly couples, so that everybody and everything can be married to each other. But it is an image of husband and wife that is an image of Christ and His bride.

And also we are preparing ourselves for that great day. We're preparing for it. But we have to be similar to Christ. Look, this is almighty God. How can we be at all like almighty God? And there's a famous statement from Irenaeus of Lyon. *“He became as we are so that we might become as He is.”*

And Todd, I got here before 25 after; the Lord is good. Please read 1 John 3, verses 1-3.

Todd: *“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. 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. All who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure.”*

Matt: Amen and Amen. Now brothers, of course I've changed the metaphor from bride of Christ to children of God. God the Father is not our father-in-law; He is our Father. So metaphors don't catch every image that the Scriptures bring forth. So there is a

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variety of metaphors that are used as different facets of the jewel so that we can see the beauty that God has prepared for us since before the foundation of the world.

Now I was going to have Don play “I’ll Fly Away.” I don’t know if you’re familiar with it. We were going to start with that. But without Don’s excellence on the keyboard I thought we would skip that. And then we were going to sing “The Church’s One Foundation.”

Now I am not a good singer. So the invitation is to you all. Who knows this song? Would you be able to sing it *a capella*? I’m hearing no. Do you want to sing it? Yeah, sure.

Transcriber’s Note: The men sing:

The church’s one foundation

Is Jesus Christ her Lord.

She is His new creation

By water and the Word.

From heaven He came and sought her

To be His holy bride.

With His own blood He bought her,

And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation,

Yet one o’er all the earth.

Her charter of salvation

One Lord, one faith, one birth.

One holy name she blesses,

Partakes one holy food;

And to one hope she presses,

With every grace endued.

‘mid toil and tribulation

And tumult of her war,

She waits the consummation

Of peace forevermore.

Till with a vision glorious

Her longing eyes are blest,

And the great church victorious

Shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union

With God the Three in One,

And mystic sweet communion

With those whose rest is won.

O happy ones and holy,

Lord, give us grace that we

Like them, the meek and lowly,

On high may dwell with Thee.

Amen and Amen. So let’s close in prayer. Does that fall under your rubric, Ted? Or should I close us in prayer?

Ted: Go ahead.

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Matt: Okay. Lord, we just thank You for the majesty of Your word, the mystery of Your word, and indeed the simplicity of Your word. We pray that we might not merely be hearers of Your word but doers of Your word as well. And I pray for each of the Brave Men here, or who is listening on the Internet, that You might bless them greatly, that they might realize the blessings that they receive all come down from You, and that there are greater blessings to be revealed in the life that is yet to come. So we pray, O Lord God Almighty, that You would watch over each of us and all of us as we are absent one from the other. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen. Thank you. *(Applause)*