

October 31, 2010
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
Selected Scriptures

**“The Local Church Part Twelve:
Metaphors of the Church – Part Four”**

- I. Memories of the Early Church – 2:41-47**
 - A. Metaphors of the Church**
 - B. The Body of Christ**
 - C. The Bride of Christ**
 - 1. The Love Of The Bridegroom**
 - a. **The Extent of Love**
 - b. **The Expression of Love**
 - 2. The Response Of The Bride**
 - a. **Love! 1 Jn. 4:19**
 - b. **Submission! Eph. 5:24**
 - c. **Fidelity! 2 Cor. 11:2-3**
 - 3. The Future Union (2 Cor. 11; 1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 19-22) – The Glorious Church Triumphant!**

Oriental practice of marriage consisted of three stages: 1) Betrothal; 2) Marriage; 3) Marriage Supper

Commitment / Response:

- 1. To the Groom - Love the Groom, Jesus Christ! (Submit, respect, obey, wait, be ready)**
 - **Who gets us ready?** (Rev. 19:7; 2 Cor. 11:2; Phil. 1:10; 2:16; Col. 1:28; 1 Thess. 2:19f; 1 Jn. 2:28)
- 2. To the Bride – Love Her!** Join Him in working to make her beautiful! Membership, prayer, instruction, one anothers, mentoring, forgiveness, forbearance, sacrificial giving... Make Her your priority! Passionately serve Her! Give to Her! Reach out to other true churches! Expose false churches! Help plant more churches!
- 3. To the Watching World** – participate with the Groom in reaching others to become a part of His Church / Bride!

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the “Bride” of Christ? Is it you individually? Is it the local visible church corporately? Is it the Universal invisible Church? Is it all three? What biblical support do you have for your answer?
2. If it refers to the Universal Church what are the implications of the metaphor? What are the implications for us as individuals and for us as local churches? What responsibility do we have to the Universal Church? What does this say about the typical approach of “competition” between local churches in a given city? How might we better participate with true churches in our area to carry out the Great Commission?
3. Read 2 Cor. 11:1-3. What is Paul’s concern for the Corinthian church? What might keep the church from being a “pure virgin”? What are some specific ways Satan deceives the church and keeps it from simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ? What must we do to overcome these temptations?
4. Read Rev. 2-3. What problems did Jesus point out in the churches? What praises did He point out? Which two churches only received positive comments? What was the focus of those churches? What lessons can we learn / apply from this?
5. When and where do the three stages of an Oriental wedding take place between the Church and Jesus? What stage are we in now? What stage(s) are still future? How does thinking about this motivate you to live differently?
6. Read Rev. 19-22. What is the ultimate future for the Bride of Christ? How does she look? How did she get that way? What is the Groom’s part in getting the Bride ready? What is our part in getting the Bride ready? What is all heaven’s attitude toward the Bride? What should our attitude be toward the Bride?
7. Do you LOVE the Church, the Bride of Christ? How are you demonstrating your love to your local church? How are you demonstrating your love to other local churches in your area? How are you demonstrating your love to churches around the world?
8. What specific things are you going to think, say, and do differently as a result of this study?