

The Marriage of the Lamb

by Edwin H. Waldvogel

God's love for us is not just about saving us, but about having us as his own and revealing himself to us.

Duration: 42:36

Scripture: Ephesians 5:25

Topics: "Christian Life", "The Love of God", "Preparation for Christ's Return"

Description

Edwin H. Waldvogel emphasizes the profound love of God for His people, likening it to a marriage between Christ and the Church, the 'Marriage of the Lamb.' He shares personal anecdotes to illustrate how God desires a deep, personal relationship with each believer, urging them to recognize their worth as His chosen people. Waldvogel stresses the importance of being filled with the knowledge of God's will and the role of the Holy Spirit in revealing Christ to us. He calls for believers to prepare themselves as the bride of Christ, emphasizing that true fulfillment comes from a relationship with Jesus rather than worldly pursuits. Ultimately, he encourages the congregation to seek a deeper love for Jesus and to be ready for His return.

Transcript

Praise the Lord. I remember one of our faith home ministers, he had a pretty good voice and they called on him to sing in the meeting. So he got up and sang the song our brother Kenneth sang, but he said, I sing because I have to and not because I'm free.

That was John Robinson was his name. He had a very keen sense of humor and he was an Englishman on top of it and so that made it extraordinary, sort of. And he often entertained us in the meetings with that blessed gift the Lord gave him, sort of was the spice, you know, on the food that he gave us.

But I'm thankful tonight that God loves us, aren't you? And until we get that sight, why, we're going to perhaps fail and not take certain steps toward the Lord until he is able to show us what he has in mind over us, his great love toward us. That's why the apostle prays, oh God, fill my people with the knowledge of your will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. That wasn't to give them a big head, but that they might walk worthy of the Lord, that they might please the Lord, they might seek the Lord, understand what God had in mind for them.

And we still need that illumination today, don't we? At least I feel I do. And sometimes I think it takes me too long to get smart, as they say in the Pennsylvania Dutch, we get too soon old and too late smart. But

God doesn't want that.

He wants to fill us today with the knowledge of his will. He doesn't want us to wait until we get to be sages, but he wants young men and young women and all of us to be filled with the knowledge of his will. God loves us and he desires very greatly to have us for his own possession.

When I was going to Richmond Hill High School, I joined the camera club. I always liked to take pictures and enjoyed making pictures. We had a dark room there where we could work and enlargers and things that I could use that I didn't have at home.

And I used to develop my pictures under the stairs that went to the basement of the Faith Home. I sort of arranged for a little, cleaned it out, you know, and made a dark room in there. Put all kinds of cloth around and made it dark.

And there I sat without any ventilation, but I could sit there by the hour trying to develop pictures and then make enlargements. Oh, that was my great joy to do that. And another thing I liked to do was to go to Manhattan and look in the show windows of the camera stores.

I didn't have nerve enough to go into some of them because I didn't have any money at all to spend on anything, but you can feast your eyes on it, can't you? And so I would go over and stand on Nassau Street at that time. There was the New York Camera Exchange and after a while they moved uptown, many of those stores. But I would stand there just admiring the cameras.

I'd look at the used cameras and wonder if I could get one of those sometime maybe. I had an old camera, I don't know where I got it from, that made used glass plates and still had that to work with. And so here I was standing there and the subway train used to cost us a nickel, so that wasn't too bad.

And I would take the train to Manhattan one ahead of time, you know, and then I'd stand there and look at the windows. And then I'd be encouraged to go in and take these advertisements, you know, these little things that just explain the cameras and things. And I'd go out with my pockets full and on the way home I'd look at one after the other and then I would dream, a sort of daydream, you know, what I could do with that camera.

Oh, that just gripped me somehow. And one day I was standing there on Nassau Street, I remember looking in the window and here I was spending time again. I had made another trip to Manhattan just to look in the window and feast my eyes on my first love, you know.

And here I was watching, look at those cameras, and I thought, boy, what I could do with a camera like that. And then the Lord spoke to me. And he spoke to me on this passage where he speaks about Levi not having any inheritance in the land.

The Lord said, I want to be their inheritance. I want to be your lot. I want to be yours, your portion.

And I still remember how I stood there and I felt so badly in my heart. I felt so convicted. Teenager.

But you know, the Lord had talked to me and he said, I want to, you for myself. And you're interested in these cameras, you make trips over here and you look in the window and you covet all these things. And you've got something far, far better than any camera can ever be.

I want to come to you and I want to reveal myself to you. And it just made me stand there that I remember how the tears flowed and I said, oh Jesus, you mean that? You really want me? You really want me? You really want to be my portion? And it just gripped me somehow that Jesus wanted to come to me like that. That he loved me that much.

And I turned around and went back to the faith home. I remember that. I think it was one of the last, that was probably the last trip I ever took over there, just to look in the windows, you know, and admire cameras.

After a while, when I went to Europe, the Lord gave me a nice camera. I got it at the PX at that time. It certainly was satisfactory for the work we had to do.

And I got good pictures of that work. And after a while, I've gotten other cameras, but they don't interest me so much anymore. I still would like to have the very best, you know, real nice camera, but that doesn't bother me at all if I don't have one.

I have one that's really sufficient. Really it is. Does everything I want it to do.

Doesn't bother me. I don't need anything else. I don't think I will need anything else either.

But one thing that just took away that desire from me, I thank God for that. But on the other hand, the desire and to lay hold of the choice that God has made, that's the greatest thing that can come to you. Greater than anything this world has to offer, is that Jesus wants to come, and he came down to this world for that purpose.

He's seeking hearts, seeking hearts for himself. Sometimes we feel, well, he came to seek and to save the lost, and he saved me, and I'm happy, and I suppose he's happy. Well, that is just a part of the story.

He didn't only save us to save us from the hands of the enemy, but he wants us for himself. He wants a people. We read that the Lord said the Lord's portion.

We say Jesus is my portion. But then it tells us the Lord's portion is his people. When you read the prayer in Ephesians the third, the first chapter there, he tells us that he wants us to know what his inheritance in his saints is.

You see, that's the other side of it. Jesus has an inheritance. Jesus has a purpose for coming into this world.

And they're the Lord's people. The ones he has redeemed are his portion. And until that really gets into our hearts, we'll wander around, and we'll waste our time, sort of drift along.

You might make a success in this world, and then that'll pass away too. But God is looking for something for eternity, forever and ever. And we read so much about that in the Bible.

And this union with Jesus that we're called to, it's strange that we don't really catch hold of it easier. But I tell you why that is. The Holy Spirit has to make real to us our call.

He has to make Jesus precious to us. He's come to do that. That's his mission.

Jesus said when he's come, he'll guide you into the truth. I've got a lot of things to tell you, but I can't tell you now. But when the Spirit has come, he'll talk to you.

He'll take of the things of mine and show them unto you. And we need the ministry of the Holy Spirit. More and more we see that, don't we? We have a wonderful privilege of being saved, and we Pentecostal people, of knowing something about the touch of the Spirit in our lives.

And we like to think of the joy that the Spirit brings us. The fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace and these wonderful fruits that are worked out in our lives. But the Holy Spirit's great work is to show us Jesus, to make us to understand our heavenly bridegroom, and to make us to realize too how precious we are in his sight.

I like the Apostle Paul, when he talked to the Ephesian elders, he told them to feed the flock of God, which he purchased with his own blood. These people that you minister to, he tells them, they belong to the heavenly bridegroom, and he bought them with his own blood. That's how much he loves them.

The blood of God was shed for you, Peter. Did you know that? I'm glad you do. I know you do.

I know you love Jesus. Praise the Lord. And we all want to love him more, understand better how deeply he has loved us.

But he has loved us that he might have us. He might reveal himself to us, and his people are his portion. That's what he died for.

That's what he lives for tonight. When he prayed in John 17, he says, I'm not praying for the world. That was in that particular prayer.

Now don't forget, Jesus is the great high priest, and I believe he makes intercession for lost men and women, and goes after them, and he wants to find them. But his great purpose, he makes intercession for his own. He has invested his own life blood, and now he's drawn them to himself, and he wants them to know him, and love him, and find him.

We have in a psalm, is it 71 or 73, one of these psalms, one of the two where Asaph, it's a psalm that's sort of dedicated to him, and he writes about how he had almost fallen into a pit that the devil digs for all of the people of God. I saw the wicked person. I saw the worldly person.

I saw they prosper in their ways, how they get ahead, how they get this world's goods, how they really seem to be blessed in every way. And I thought, well what the world am I bothering myself about, trying to be a good boy, and a good girl, working so hard at it. What good does it do? And he said, I don't know, it doesn't seem to pay to serve the Lord.

He says, that's what I began to think in my head. Those thoughts came to me, and he said, I just about slipped. I just about fell into that pit that the devil had.

You know, a lot of people fall into that pit. They start out loving the Lord. They're filled with the Holy Ghost, and after a while you find that the things of this world have claimed their hearts, claimed their attention, and that first love is gone, and the fire of devotion toward Jesus is not there anymore.

They've listened to the tempter's voice, and they didn't get the sight that the psalmist got. He said, I went into the sanctuary. Ah, that's the place to go.

You're not going to know Jesus better watching TV, even if it's a religious broadcast. You're not going to get to know Jesus better by going out into the woods. Somebody told me that they could worship God just as well out in the woods as in church, and that's why they didn't come to church.

Well, maybe you can, but you don't. You can't kid me on that. I've seen too many people that have fallen away by all those excuses, but if you want to know the Lord, come into the sanctuary.

Come into his presence. Get into his presence. Get to church.

Get among God's people, and he said, I went into the sanctuary, and then I saw things from eternity's view. I saw his, the end of the wicked. Where does it all lead to? It's empty, and it leads to death, and then I said, Lord, I was as a beast before you.

No higher ambition than just to eat and drink and get fattened up for the slaughter, just like an animal. An animal doesn't pray, doesn't have any contact with God. Mr. Tennyson wrote, what is man better than sheep or goat that nourish a blind life within the brain, if knowing God they lift not hands of prayer, both for themselves and those who call them friend.

For so the whole wide world in every way is bound by chains of gold about the feet of God. What good is it? What difference is there in man who has been created, if he doesn't open up his soul to God? He's created for that, to have fellowship with God, and he said, I was just like an animal before you, the psalmist says. But then he says, I am continually with thee.

I like that. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there's none on earth that I desire beside thee. My strength faileth, he talks about it, but he says, you're my strength, the strength of my heart.

You are my life, and you are my portion forever. Praise the Lord. I'm so thankful for that.

We are called to know God like that, and to reach out for him. He loves us, and he's looking for a company of people, men and women, who make him their choice, who say, I will be yours. You know, we're talking about a wedding in the Bible, the marriage of the Lamb.

And of course, first of all, I get these notices from Germany every once in a while, wir verloben uns. You know what that means? We're getting engaged. And then on the card are the two names of the fellow and the girl.

Sometimes I'm shocked, sometimes I'm not shocked. Sometimes I know a little bit about it. But oftentimes it comes as a surprise to me.

But they promise, and they have their engagement party. And the family comes together, and I just got a letter from one of the mothers. We met the parents of the bride, and it seems their family fits into our family.

And you know how that goes. It's going to be okay all the way around. But we must make our choice.

You've got to make your choice. Jesus proposes to you, and you say yes to him. And oh, to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to what he wants.

He wants a bride that can be altogether his. A bride after his own heart. That's why he came to this world and became one of us.

That he might find a people that would be united unto him. The church, the Lord's portion, is his people. And when that light gets a hold of us, why we seek to know him better all the time.

There isn't one thing we would rather do than be with him. There isn't anything that could take his place in our lives. And God wants that love to be so real to you and to me that wherever I go, I don't have to try to love him and put it on, you know.

I know I ought to. But it's a love that he puts into my heart. He sheds that love abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost.

And Jesus becomes my portion. And it is not just a choice that I make, but day by day he reveals himself then more completely to me. That's our privilege to know Jesus better.

And if we are his bride, and if we belong to him, and we realize what he wants, why we will say tonight, I know him better than I knew him last year. I'm getting to know him better all the time. I'm getting to love him more all the time.

The bride gets to see the bridegroom, and we have it in the Song of Solomon. He's all together lovely. There's no flaw in him.

And the more we get to know Jesus, the more we say, oh Jesus, you are so wonderful. Sometimes in this world, when a couple gets to know each other a little bit better, why they break it off again, you know. They say, he ain't what I thought he was.

He said, she ain't the angel I thought she was either. And so they separate again. Well, you know, let me tell you something.

You don't find perfection this side of heaven. You may come to me and say, I found a perfect fellow. And I say, bless your heart, I hope so.

As perfect as they can be. And what young man wouldn't respond to real, a real love and want to be his very best. And that's the way it ought to be the other way around too.

But Jesus Christ is our wonderful bridegroom. And he has to create that bride and make that bride worthy of the bridegroom. We sing, he saw me plunged in deep distress and flew to my relief.

For me, he bore that shameful cross. You know, Jesus knew you and he knew me before he ever revealed himself to us and drew us to himself. He knew.

He knew our weaknesses. He knew our failures. He knew all about our natures, our faint heartedness, perhaps, or lack of real faith and faithfulness.

That character that ought to characterize the bride of Christ who gives herself unreservedly for the bridegroom. But the wonderful thing is that Jesus works in us and he changes us and he makes us what he wants us to be. And that's why I say when this light dawns on us, Jesus, you've saved me for yourself and you've called me to be yours and you want to be pleased with me.

That doesn't put me under a strain. Sometimes it does to people. They say, oh, I want to please the Lord and I just can't do it in my own strength.

Why, of course you can't. But the wonderful thing is that he can and his grace is sufficient for us. So he begins that work in us and he's given us this wonderful Bible that shows us his desire and shows us what that bride ought to be like.

He gave himself for the church that he might have a church that is without spot. Say, do you really want to be without spot before God? Not because, you know, you ought to be and people in the church might notice something wrong with you. No, that's not the idea.

The idea is to please Jesus and to be without spot before him in love. Oh, that's different. I might be able to hide a lot of things from my fellow man, but I can't hide anything from him.

And he can make me, we read, he's able to keep me from falling and to present us without spot before his presence with exceeding joy. Hey, that's going to be a great day, isn't it? That marriage of the Lamb. The bride will be filled with exceeding joy.

He is able. But oh, when that light shines into my heart, Jesus, you want me for yourself and you give yourself to me to make me what you want me to be. But that truth, as it comes into my heart, here I say, Jesus, the Apostle prays in 1 Thessalonians 5, that we might be sanctified wholly, spirit and soul and body.

For whom? For Jesus. To please him. And he comes and he wants to sanctify me wholly.

In German it says something better than wholly. You know, Brother Gardner with his holy tomato juice. When he talked, he would never say wholly, he'd say wholly.

I was in a restaurant with Brother Andrews one day and they ordered tomato juice. And sometimes you get a cocktail tomato juice. You know what that is.

It's a little sharper and they use it for cocktails. And he didn't know if this grape tomato juice had had just a little treatment or not. And so he said to the waitress, is this wholly tomato juice? And she looked at him and said, I don't know if it's been blessed or not.

So from that day on, he didn't say is it wholly, he said wholly. I don't think it helped the waitress any whether he said wholly or wholly. But he wanted to be sure it was only tomato juice, you see.

But God wants you to be, what shall I say, not only tomato juice, but free from any other things, you know, from anything that defiles us. He wants us to be holy and sanctify us wholly. Now the German Bible says durch und durch.

That means through and through. That's quite a statement, isn't it? But that's the way Jesus' blood makes us clean. And his word comes to us and the Holy Spirit works in us and we are cleansed in our thinking.

Oh, what a wonderful thing. But you know, he'll make us so through and through spirit and soul and body. Praise the Lord.

And when we see that, oh Jesus, you have a purpose. And one of these days we were singing tonight about seeing him in glory, seeing him over there. And sometimes people don't like to sing those words.

They kind of think you're thinking about dying now and moving out and pulling into the golden mansions. That should be the furthest thing from our thoughts. Heaven ought to be Jesus to us.

Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth that I desire beside thee. That's the thing God wants to put into my heart and yours. Oh, I want you, Jesus.

I can be with you now. I can please you now. I can have your fellowship now by the Holy Spirit and you working in me day by day.

And the way is growing brighter all along the way. And I don't want to try to get away with anything, Lord, but I want to be transparent before you. And oh, I'm so thankful that he is able to dig right down into the depths.

You know, there are a lot of people they don't like that. They have never seen the reason for it. And so they will come to church.

And if you touch certain things, boom, they'll fly off the handle. And I'm not going back to that place anymore. One day somebody in Germany called me a holiness preacher.

That was the furthest thing from my mind. He's a holiness preacher. I just pray that God will make me a holiness preacher and first of all make me holy and then make me to preach it.

Hallelujah. I want to be ready for Jesus, don't you? I'm so glad that he says, I want you as my portion. Hallelujah.

That's what I gave myself for. He gave himself for the church. You're a part of that.

And you cannot just say, oh, as we look at ourselves, we say, and as we look at Jesus, we say, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord.

Hallelujah. You're able, you're working, you're doing. And our greatest joy is when he speaks to us and when he cleanses us.

When he shows us something that doesn't please him, we don't get angry, but we say, thank you, Lord, because he does that to take it away from us and make our eternity that much brighter and more wonderful as we come. Oh, I believe it's time for his wife to get herself ready. Praise the Lord.

I, uh, I remember the day I got married the first time with my Edith. And I remember when I got married the second time, you know, those days you can't forget, but, um, I don't know if I slept too well the day before I got married. I may have been a little nervous, you know, suddenly there comes a time in a bridegroom when he suddenly awakens to the responsibility.

Maybe that's when the first bills come with some of the fellows. You get something from the gas company and it has your name on it. And you say, wait a minute here.

This is a, was such a honeymoon time. And here comes this, this gas bill. And then comes the electric bill.

And then the landlord comes. Oh, then you wake up. Hey, wait a minute here.

But I won't forget that day and everything was ready. And oh, praise God. God is wanting us to be ready, ready for the marriage of the life.

And unless we get that light into our hearts, as I said before, that we're loved, that we're called, that we have a wonderful bridegroom who is waiting for that day too, and has done all he can and is working to

prepare that bride for the wedding. Unless God is able to show us Jesus and all his glory, we're going to waste our time. But he doesn't want us to waste time.

We don't have time to waste, but we do have opportunities to get ready for the Lord. Now, do you think, do you think that the Pentecostal saints in general have that uppermost in their mind? Do you think so? I hope so, but I don't think so. I think we would never be satisfied with coming to church once a week, if we were really awakened to the love of God and the call of God.

I just got a letter the other day from someone who took a trip and went to church during the week time, a very large church, nice big church. Eight people showed up for the meeting, preacher and seven people. A place that probably has eight, nine hundred people on Sunday morning.

The rest, evenings, have to have some entertainment to get the people off. Now this, you may say, oh he's just criticizing. I feel this way about, I feel that we're not alert and not awake to our wonderful Lord and to what his purposes are.

Now I'm just speaking from one angle. You see the Lord wants people to be saved. He wants all men to come to him and he wants to fill us with the fire of the Holy Spirit that we can witness for him.

But I feel somehow that Jesus would like to awaken us all more perfectly and show us the glory of the call of God. And there may be many people who would love to attend more services. I don't know, I'm talking about the whole world, whole country, all of God's people, not you here.

You wouldn't be here if you weren't one of those that wanted to be here and meet the Lord. But there's a need in the world today and there's a need right along this line to understand, oh Jesus, you are getting a bride ready for yourself. And God help us, all of us, to love Jesus more.

Our great heavenly bridegroom, he says, my people are my portion. And then we can say, Lord, you are my portion. You're the one who has won my heart.

Hallelujah. And I'm thankful for all he's done for all of us here, all of you especially. But it's Jesus himself wants to become so precious to me.

And he doesn't want us to fear, condemn ourselves, be unbelieving, but he wants us to have faith. And that's why, I suppose that's one of the reasons we have a sign outside before speaking to anyone, talk to God on your knees. Now, I don't like that sign too well because I don't want you to start speaking to the one next to you after you get up from your knees.

It seems that that's what it says and you could interpret it that way. But I've seen sometimes strangers come in, you see this sign, and they drop on their knees right at the door there and make their little prayer and get up and come in. But I'd like to tell you something, that isn't the purpose either.

The idea simply is that we need to meet Jesus. We come to meet him because we love him. And in all of our meetings we come just to meet with him.

And that's why we talk to him. And I'm glad we can talk to him on our knees and say, Jesus, I really need to meet with you tonight. You've got a job to do.

You've got to get me ready. The Holy Spirit has to work in me. I need to be changed.

And I will not be changed unless you change me, unless you touch me, unless you lay your hand on me. And you know, as we come like that, in that faith, you will find that the Lord will work. He'll minister.

Hallelujah. And he'll prepare our hearts and change our hearts. We don't come to be entertained, but we come to meet with the bright.

Oh, we love you, Lord. We love you. And I'm thankful to God for all he's done.

But my prayer to him is, Jesus, I want to love you more. I want the Holy Ghost to make the truth more real to me than ever before. Fill me with the knowledge of your will.

Fill me with it. And that love for Jesus will make us his witnesses. We know how wonderful he is.

And our hearts will go out toward those that don't know him. And we'll say, don't you want to know him too? Don't you want to be in the company of the redeemed? And as we have that love flowing out from us, God will draw others through that love unto himself. Let's talk to Jesus for a moment.

And let's just ask him tonight to make us to see more clearly how much he loves us. He wants you to be with him forever and ever. He wants you to be clothed with those white robes and to be united to him, to be at the marriage supper of the Lamb, to be in that bridal company.

Hallelujah. Lord, we thank you that you loved the church and gave yourself for it, that you might sanctify it by the washing of water through the word, that it might be a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. And we pray, dear Lord, that you will fill us with such a deep, holy love for yourself, that wherever we are, we may look for you and love that fellowship with our heavenly bridegroom more than anything else.

We pray that other things shall lose their importance to us all together, and we shall love Jesus more than we've ever loved him. Grip us tonight, Lord. We thank you you brought us here with this desire in our hearts.

We pray that you'll deliver us from the things of this life, Lord, that would hold us back. Fill us with the Holy Ghost. We know you've sent your Spirit to us, Lord, to work in us and to prepare us for that day.

And we just pray, have your way for thy glory tonight. God bless my brothers and sisters. Let the Holy Spirit give us real light in our hearts that we may seek and find and love Jesus and be ready for Jesus, longing for him, looking for him.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30088.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/edwin-h-waldvogel/the-marriage-of-the-lamb/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net