

The Wedding of the Lamb

Revelation 19:1-10

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, November 19, 2023

If you would, please go to the Lord with me in a word of prayer. The reason I'm praying so much before these sermons on Revelation is because I never really feel adequate to preach. I think if you feel adequate to preach, you should find another job. But Revelation just really humbles me to the dust. Every time I stand up here, there's always something I couldn't get my mind around, and it's a very humbling thing. So would you just go to the Lord in a word of prayer before we begin this morning?

Heavenly Father, we are blown away by the Word of God, just how powerful it is, how encouraging it is for us as believers, and just how we can never quite get our minds to the bottom of it. Every time we study it, we can study it all week, we can study five verses all week, and we're never quite, our minds are never quite into everything that's being expressed. So Lord, as we're talking about the marriage of the Lamb, this is just something that's unfathomable. Really, God like You would want to be with people like us in this way, is just beyond us. So Lord, I pray this morning, as we talk about this, there would be a deep sense of reverence to us. There would be a sense of worship and joy, as we approach it. I pray I'd preach it that way. I pray that our people would hear it that way. And we pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

Well, as you've seen in your bulletins, our sermon this morning is entitled "The Wedding of the Lamb" and to begin to let me just say, there is something beautiful about a wedding. Such a gathering has to be one of the most joyful occasions on Earth. I don't know when the last time you were at a wedding but at a wedding, everyone's dressed up and they look their best. And they are well behaved and they act their best, and they're full because they eat their best. All in all, it could not be a more pleasant affair. Your wedding day has to be one of the happiest days of your life. I remember when Katie and I were married 17 years ago, my family came from Tennessee, they drove about eight hours to get to the place where we're getting married, and her family came from another planet. It's called Georgia. They say that when you marry someone from Georgia, you don't get a family, you get a posse. And you get in-laws and outlaws all at the same time. There's some southern humour for you. But even so they were still on their best conduct. And we all got along because they were too excited to fight to the point that one of our relatives showed up early to decorate the place with flowers and candles and lights. And another one got musicians for us violins and that type of thing to play. We call them fiddles in the South before the service began. And another one got a church building, helped organize a ceremony where the pastor preached a sermon and gave us a blessing, and he said, "I now pronounce you husband and wife, you may kiss the bride." At which point all the rednecks just went nuts. And they started whooping and hollering and all that because it's a wedding! It's not a funeral where everyone's sad and depressed. It's a marriage where they're over the moon.

And I mention that because that's the scene the apostle John paints for us this morning in the book of Revelation. As you come to the final chapters of the book, the Bible doesn't sound like a funeral, you would think it would. If you've read through the book of Revelation, it's one sad thing after another; but when you get to the end of it, the excitement is so high, they're about to blow the roof off the place. And to show you what I mean, open your Bibles to the book of Revelation chapter 19, if you haven't already turned there. That's the passage we're looking at this morning. Revelation chapter 19.

And before we look at the whole thing, I want to draw your eyes to one verse in verse seven, there it says this, it says, "Let us rejoice." See that there? You know what that means? It means let us rejoice, let us celebrate, let us be happy. Why? Because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and her bride has made herself ready. The book of Revelation comes to an end not all the way to an end, but it's wrapping up and coming towards an end with a wedding. Who's the Lamb here? That's Christ. Who's the bride? That's you, that's me. That's everyone who has been saved during the Church Age. Because after all the horrors that we've seen in this book, the time has finally come to give you something positive. And that's the consummation of our union with the Lord. The Bible says, we're already united with the Lord. We're already one with Him when we believe, but this is where the union is made official, if you will, in the courts of heaven. In heaven, Jesus will resurrect you and turn you into something new. And when He does, He will marry you so you can be one with Him forever.

Which will, cause, I want you to see this, it'll cause the host of heaven, the thought of it, the anticipation will cause them to go wild with joy. If you look in verse one, it says that they say, "Hallelujah, salvation and glory and power belong to our God." And then in verse three, they say it again. "Hallelujah." And in verse four, "Amen, and hallelujah." You get the point. Verse six, we're not done yet. "Hallelujah." The Hallelujahs are jumping off the page in this passage. They're everywhere. It kind of makes me stop and think have you ever done this before? I mean, is the thought of your salvation ever gotten you so excited that you just say, "Hallelujah!" That's the atmosphere here. They're not saying this because they have to; they want to. If you're not ready to say, "Hallelujah," Heaven might be a little bit of a shock for you. When these people die, and they go into the presence of God, their mind is fixed on one thing, and one thing only, and that is the excitement and pleasure of His glory. They just want to worship. When you think about their circumstances, these people, you realize, some of them have had it pretty rough in the book of Revelation. By the time you get to chapter 19, a number of them have gone through the Tribulation, they've been martyred, some have been tortured. Others have lost their friends and family, but they don't sound like it because of Christ. They're rejoicing because they get to be with the One they love. And that's all that matters in the end. You guys know what this is like when you were married. You didn't care if you suffered when you were first married. A little bit of a problem now. When you were first married, you could live in a shack, you could wear rags, you could eat bologna sandwiches Monday to Sunday, I ate a lot of baloney sandwiches in those early years. I can still taste it in my mouth, but I didn't care as long as I got to hold her hand, right? It's the same way as a Christian. Your joy does not come from your circumstances. It comes from your relationship to Jesus Christ. Do you want joy this

morning? You get it through Christ. Do you want to experience the happiness these people felt? You go to Him.

And this morning, we're going to celebrate that by talking about the upcoming wedding that we'll have with Jesus in the future. And just to warn you, this is a long wedding. So if you wanted to sit through a short wedding, you've come to the wrong passage. There's a lot of stuff beforehand in verses one through six that you could look at kind of like the music and the orchestra playing before the actual ceremony. The ceremony comes down in verse seven. So just be patient with me while we work up to this together. But this morning, we're going to look at four reasons for Heaven's rejoicing in this wedding. So if you're taking notes, this is our outline today. In the first part of Revelation 19, we're going to look at four reasons for Heaven's rejoicing.

The first one is because God's justice has been displayed on the earth. That's the first reason for Heaven's rejoicing in the passage here, but God's justice has been displayed on the earth, which means He has avenged Himself on His enemies. Of all the things for Heaven to rejoice about, they are rejoicing at the death of the wicked. Now let that sit in for a moment. They're excited because God has punished those who deserve it.

And just to give you some background for this, if you look in verse one, you'll notice the passage starts off with the phrase "after these things." This event takes place after all the things that have been described in the previous chapters, and specifically after the fall of Babylon that John has been talking about in Revelation 18. Babylon was the world's last great city in the tribulation. It was its one final empire that ruled over everything in such a horrible way that chapter 18:2 says Babylon had become a dwelling place of demons. Verse three says the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality with her. Verse five says her sins piled up as high as heaven and all that eventually led God to destroy her. The sin and the evil and the wickedness drove Him to the point that verse 19 says He laid waste to her, causing the whole earth to mourn but Heaven to rejoice. It's funny how that works. Oftentimes, when the world is at its saddest, sometimes Heaven is at its happiest because justice is being poured out. That's what you're seeing here.

And there's four hallelujahs that express the joy of Heaven. The first one is in verse one, another one in verse three, another one in verse four, and the last one is in verse six, like we just said. But if you look at the first one, in verse one, it says, "After these things, I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, 'Hallelujah.'" If you're wondering who this great multitude is, well, the answer is, these are the inhabitants of heaven. It's the men as well as angels, you're going to see both mentioned in the passage. To be honest, we don't know how many that would be if you add it all up, John doesn't say but if you think of every single believer who has died from the beginning of time from Adam until today, and you add them up with all the angels, that's kind of the number. Scholars have said, there's thousands, millions, maybe hundreds of millions of angels. So this is a massive crowd, bigger than anything you would ever see on the earth. And they start off by saying, "Hallelujah,

salvation and glory and power belong to our God; because His judgments are true,” which means they're accurate. “And they're righteous,” it says, which means they're fair. God always gives men what they deserve no more, no less. “Because He has judged the great harlot Babylon.” In other words, the reason these people in heaven are singing, and rejoicing and praising is because God has punished the evil empire, who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and shedding blood at the end of the verse there.

When you read Revelation, you see that Babylon or its associates were very violent. For example, Revelation 11 says they killed the two witnesses who were prophesying on the earth at the time. And then Revelation 12 says they killed those who are keeping God's commandments. And then chapter 13 says they kill the saints because they waged war against them and try to overcome them. Because this is a constant theme in the book. Every time the people of God stand up and do something for the Lord, the forces of evil come against them. But what John is saying here is not for long; there will come a time when God will stop it. All the bloodshed, all the carnage, all the misery is going to come down to an end, and that's what's leading to the jubilation.

The people in heaven, they're not excited because they want to see the city of Babylon suffer. They're excited because they want to see God put a stop to the brutality. We do the same thing when you see a mass murderer being executed. You're not happy because he's suffering. You're happy because the violence is coming to an end and God is holding him accountable for the wicked things that he's done. It's the same way here. And friends, can I just say that there must be a day like this? There has to be a time when God will take the city of Babylon and evil places like this and destroy them. It's got to come. I mean, just look at the world around you and what do you see? You see evil, right? I mean, turn on the news, and what do you watch? You watch murders, killings, violence, theft. Right is becoming wrong; wrong is becoming right. Even a blind man can see this is all backwards, so there has to be a moment when the Lord will take the forces of darkness and obliterate them. What kind of God would He be if He didn't? You meet people today who say they don't want God to do that because they would prefer that He forgive everybody instead. Anybody ever met somebody like that? And then you kind of asked them, “What about the murderers?” They say no, not them. “What about people like Adolf Hitler, do you want God to forgive them?” No, don't forgive Hitler. I mean, even they understand there has to be a reckoning for men like that. They're just not consistent with it; God is.

The Bible says God is holy, which means there's a settled righteous indignation within Him against all that is sinful. It doesn't matter what it is, if it's sin, He hates it. He hates every lie. He hates every lust. He hates every outburst of anger. And He especially hates it when people pour out their anger on His saints. So a season is drawing near when God will avenge this by bringing destruction.

Should cause some of you to rejoice this morning because some of you have been sinned against in this room. Some of you have been victims of abuse in the past; someone has poured out their violence on you for no reason. They took you aside and beat you up with it. They put you in a corner and treated you

like a punching bag. And it frustrated you because you thought, “That's not fair. They're getting away with it.” The truth is, it's not true. Nobody gets away with nothing in God's kingdom. He remembers everything. Men may forget the sins they commit against you. God never does. And He will never ever, ever, ever, ever let it go without His justice being satisfied.

Listen, friends, if there's, if there's any passage in the Bible that should make the lost world tremble it's the last passages in the book of Revelation. And here's why. What are the people rejoicing over in heaven? The Destruction of the Wicked. They're singing over that. And what does God do? He approves. He doesn't correct them. God wants His justice to be poured out over the earth. And if you don't want His justice poured out on you, you need to turn to Christ. And I'll say more about that in a moment.

But for now, let's just go on to another reason for Heaven's rejoicing at this wedding, and that is because human rebellion has been stopped. First, because God's justice has been displayed on the earth. But a second reason for Heaven's rejoicing at this wedding is because human rebellion has been stopped. Because God has crushed His greatest opponent, which was the city of Babylon. You look on in verse three it says, “And a second time.” That means that this is the second hallelujah. The second time the multitude says, “Hallelujah.” You get one hallelujah in verse one, another one in verse three. One outburst of praise in the beginning of the wedding, another one in the middle.

And the term “hallelujah” it's an interesting study just all on its own. It's a compound word from the Hebrew *hallēl* praise, and *ouia* or Yahweh, it means to praise Yahweh. And not just praise Him but do it passionately. And not just worship, but worship from the bottom of your heart. This word is so special to the authors of Scripture, this is the only time it's seen in the New Testament. And you have to wait until Heaven to see it.

Because they use it now to say that “Hallelujah for her or Babylon's smoke rises up forever and ever.” That's another way of saying that God's judgment on Babylon is permanent. It'll never be revoked. It's not saying there's gonna literally be smoke coming from this place forever and ever. It's just the idea that they're never going to build the city again. Earlier in chapter 18:8, it says that the city of Babylon was burned up in a fire after the Lord brought plagues and pestilence and famine on it. Now it's saying the fire is so bad the destruction will be irreversible. Some of you have gone back to the ruins of ancient cities. The idea here is that there's going to be no ruins. You won't even know they were there, which causes the 24 elders in verse four and the four living creatures to fall down and worship, which means that they go down like this with their face to the ground, and their bodies stretched out to say that “we're nothing. God is everything.” Those 24 Elders, those are the ones who are given responsibility for leadership in heaven over the people. And the four living creatures, those are the angels that are near the throne of God saying, “Holy, holy, holy.” And they act this way because the fall of Babylon blew them away. It was so ferocious and violent that they couldn't believe it. Babylon terrified people in this book. We haven't had a chance to talk about this a lot. But this was where the Antichrist lived. This is where

he gathered all the nations of the world to do his bidding. One southern preacher called it the devil's playground. And they would rebel against God and resist God and defy God and spit in His face and shake their fist at Him. And by destroying it, the Lord is showing all the inhabitants of heaven that's over now. God has defeated the last great stronghold of opposition to himself.

It's very interesting that the Lord does this in Revelation because if you remember your Bible history, He did that in the beginning of the Bible with the Tower of Babel. See Babel, Babylon, the connection there. The Book of Genesis says way back in the beginning, the people of the earth built the tower rising up to heaven, to make a name for themselves and shake their fist at God. And the Lord crushed that too. And He does it to show that whether it's in the beginning of the Bible, or at the end of the Bible, whether it's in Genesis or Revelation, God hates the sin of insubordination. He can't stand it. I mean, everything on this planet obeys God. All of it submits to Him. God tells the sun to rise, and it rises. He tells the stars to shine, and they shine. He tells the plants to grow, and they grow. He tells the snow to fall, and it falls. So what do you think His reaction is when He tells men to do something and they say, "No." He hates it. It's an abomination. Which is why He chooses to wipe Babylon off the face of the earth as He's making an example out of them. The judgment won't stop, by the way. It begins here in Revelation 19. But we're going to see this next week starting in verse 11. And going on from there, once the wedding is over, Jesus is going to return and continue the punishment by killing everyone who's disobeyed God. Whether they're in Babylon or not, He's gonna strike down the nations, which means that He's going to mow them over like a lot more. Whether it be the nation of Canada or the nation of the U.S. or Mexico, England, Brazil, Puerto Rico, China, Russia, He's going to knock them all over. Then in Revelation 20, it says that after that, He will usher in the Great White Throne Judgment, where He'll do the same thing for dead people if you can believe that. It's one thing to judge those who are alive on the planet. But Revelation 20:12, says He will make the dead great and small stand before the throne and He's going to do it to them. If their name was not found in the Book of Life, He'll throw them into the lake of fire, which means that He will take people out of hell to send them back to hell. They will leave the lake of fire for a moment so he can pronounce a sentence upon them, and He will send them back which shows you how much God hates sin. He despises it enough to condemn people almost twice over it for all eternity.

Which should be a warning for everyone here, not to go down that road. You need to be humble and submit to Him when God tells you to do something, you do it right away. I told you this before but what do you have to do to go to hell? Nothing. Do nothing. Keep being proud, and you'll go to hell. What do you have to do to go to heaven? Be humble. Be small in your own eyes. Obey God, trust in Christ. Bow the knee. There's a doorway to heaven. It's a low door. There's a road there. It's a narrow road. You bow to get in. Nobody gets there by strutting.

One commentator said, "Babylon's fate is so unusual here because God never pronounced His mercy on them. On the contrary, He just gives them judgment in order to demonstrate that God has no mercy for people who resist Him and never stop. He only gives grace to the humble."

It brings it to another reason for Heaven's rejoicing here. This is rejoicing, but it's a sobering rejoicing, and these people are not rejoicing in a lighthearted fashion. It's heavy rejoicing. And the heaviness continues with a third reason, and that's because the Lord reigns. The Lord reigns, which means that He rules and leads and calls the shots. It only makes sense that if He does all these other things to Babylon, then He is sovereign. That's what they praise Him for next.

If you look in verse four, it says that as John looked at heaven, he sees the elders and the four living creatures bowing, and saying, "Hallelujah," again, that's the third time if you're keeping count. And as they do, all the people in heaven join them down in verse six. In other words, the picture is that of the elders and the living creatures worshipping and everyone following their example. The first group falls to the floor, cries out to God, and then it's the idea that there's hundreds of millions of men and women and angels doing the same. It looks to me like the biggest worship service in history. I can't think of any other time where this many people came together to do this.

And if you notice, right in the midst of this, verse five says a voice came from the throne. Who's that referring to? Who is this voice coming from the throne? There's some debate about this among scholars. It's not the elders, they're bowing. It's not the four living creatures, they're doing the same. So I think this refers to Christ. Earlier John told us that Jesus was in the centre of the throne in heaven, remember that? Which means that Jesus is not off to the side, He's in the middle. He is not on the ground with the crowd. He's right up there in the presence of God, He is God. So when the people bow, they bow to Christ. When they sing, they sing to Christ. When they worship, they worship Christ.

And what does He say from the throne? He says, "Give praise to our God, all you His bondservants, you who fear Him, the small and the great," and that causes the people to respond with another hallelujah that's so loud verse six says it sounds like three things. It seems like the worship is ramping up. You guys have been to a conference or a bible camp before where the music gets louder and louder and louder. That's kind of the atmosphere here. And then if you look in your passage, "it sounds like a great multitude." It looked like a great multitude, now it sounds like one. Another is many waters that are crashing against the shore, banging against the rocks. It sounds like the mighty peals of thunder that are pounding against the sky and roaring and clanging and rumbling, making you do this with your ears and tremble. This noise was so loud that it kind of gave John a headache because heaven is not quiet at this moment. It's very noisy. And what are they saying as they cry out together? Here's the word again. "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns." In other words, Babylon doesn't reign. God does. The Antichrist doesn't rule and lead and call the shots. The culture doesn't do it. The society doesn't do it. Politicians don't do it. He does. Everybody in heaven knows that. When you go to heaven, there will be no question as to who is in control. Only one throne in heaven.

And I want you to see this in your Bibles because when it says "the Lord Almighty reigns" that's something that doesn't really translate well into English. But it could be rendered to say, "The Lord Almighty has begun to reign." It's not saying The Lord reigns continually, although He does that. And

it's not saying that He reigns in sovereignty, although that's absolutely true. What it's saying is that His reign has taken on a new and different form now because the Lord is now going to reign through the upcoming kingdom of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the inhabitants of heaven are saying this as a prelude to that. The fall of Babylon is like a foretaste of the dominion that is to come when Jesus takes over the earth, and we can't wait for it. That's why they're so loud here. The thought of Jesus coming back fills their hearts with so much joy. They're about to blow the roof off the place in anticipation.

You know, I kind of wonder sometimes if the doctrine of the return of Christ has the same impact on the church today. And what I mean is, when you think about Jesus coming back, does it ever fill your hearts with so much joy that you want to blow the roof off the place? Or do you want to avoid it because it's just too controversial? I find that a lot of Christians do that today. They don't want to talk about the return of Christ because it's caused so much division in the church; and there's so many camps on it, that they want to avoid it at all costs.

But when you read a passage like this, you have to say, what are the people doing in heaven? They're celebrating the return of Christ. And what do you find the saints and angels worshiping God for at this point in the Bible? It's the second coming. They can't stop talking about it. It's almost like you couldn't hold them down. And the reason they're doing this is because they don't believe the government is going to fix everything. They don't believe the culture is going to fix everything. They don't believe this society is going to turn it all around. They think Jesus will. And they're praising Him for it because the day is coming, when the Lord will step into this planet, and clean it up. He's going to ride out from heaven on a white horse with a robe dipped in blood, and He's going to sweep away everything evil, all the sin, filth and misery, all the chaos, violence and decay of the killing and murder that we talked about earlier. And He's going to start over again. He's going to take out his finger and hit delete on the keyboard of human history. He's gonna pull out the eraser and scrub out all the evil stuff and turn it the other way. And when He does, the Bible says we'll see this next time, there won't be anything left standing but us. Believers, saints, Old Testament New Testament, there won't be any mass murderers there. There won't be any killers there. There won't be any kind of evil sin there.

And the question is, how can we hear about this and not want to praise Him? It should just roll off the tongue. We're not the kind of people who go around saying, "Oh, no, the end is coming." We're the kind of people who say, "Oh, yes, it's coming. Maranatha, come quickly, Jesus." As far as we're concerned, He can't get here fast enough. I don't know about you, but when I was younger, I wanted Jesus to delay His return so I could grow up and get married and raise a family. Now that I'm older and I look in the mirror, I say, "No, I'm good." I'm good. He can come tomorrow; I'd be satisfied with that. I just want to be with Him. Take the world; give me Jesus. Amen? I don't need all this.

It brings me to one more reason for heaven's rejoicing in the wedding here. And let me just go and tell you what it is: it's the wedding itself. We've been building up to this. We've been getting ready for the

main event. But a fourth and final reason for the rejoicing is the actual wedding itself. I just told you that all this stuff in the first part of the chapter is part of the wedding but it's almost like the beginning of it and the prelude, the introduction. You could look at it like the singing that's going on before the bride and groom arrive. But when you come to verse seven, there's a shift taking place. And from what I can tell the singing is over. I couldn't find any singing after this because the wedding party is here. I mean, there'll be singing later and other parts of the book here, but not at this point. Which is why verse seven says, "Let us rejoice and be glad and give glory to God". Why? Because it says, "The marriage of a Lamb has come." It's finally here.

You guys have been to a wedding before. You wait, and you wait, and you wait, and you wait. And it's finally here, right? You guys don't know what I'm talking about? I've been in some long weddings ahead of time. And I'm thinking, "Can we get them married already, like we all showed up for this." Well here is where they get married.

And I can't go further without explaining this word marriage to you because a marriage or a wedding in the first century, it's not like it is today, there's a lot more steps involved. Such as the engagement period, because these were pre-arranged marriages, where the parents of the bride and groom would come together in order to arrange a union between the parties in establishing a dowry. And then there would be the preparation time that would last several years, where the groom would work hard to provide a home for his new bride. And then there'd be the wedding feast, which could last as long as a week, where the whole village would be invited to come together, and celebrate, and sing and laugh and rejoice. And then finally, there would be the ceremony where the vows are exchanged, and the priest would bless them. And he would say, "I now pronounce you husband and wife, you may kiss the bride."

And with that in mind, when John says that the marriage of the Lamb has come, it's like he's saying the supper and the ceremony are here. These are the last two pieces of the puzzle because it says the bride has made herself ready. And that means the people of God have gotten dressed up. That's how you know the ceremony is about to begin. The church has clothed herself in fine linen, bright and clean. Not in coarse linen, but fine linen. Nobody wears coarse linen in their wedding. Not in dirty clothes, but

fresh clothes, the best clothes imaginable. Every bride gets dressed up on that day.

It says, "For the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." And to be honest, that's a hard phrase to interpret. There's a lot of ideas about it, I had to really spend some time on this one. Some have taken it to say that John is telling us you have to earn your right to come to the wedding. But I don't think that's what he's saying. Earlier, if you look in verse eight, it says that all this was given to us, you see that phrase there? The clothes are presented as a gift, which means you don't earn this. I think what John is saying is that when we stand before Christ, on this day, we'll do it in a glorified state and that is the fine linen we will wear. Jesus will raise us from the dead. When He does, we will approach Him in the

righteous acts of our resurrected bodies that we're going to wear like wedding garments. So none of the glory goes to us; all of it goes to Him.

And this will be so amazing that it will cause someone to tell John in verse nine to write "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." In other words, the speaker doesn't actually tell John to write about the wedding supper of the Lamb. He tells him to write about the response he had to it. It's a blessing, means it's a hallowed sacred thing. so sacred that the next verse says it causes John to fall down on his knees to worship the speaker. Earlier you saw the elders and living creatures falling down to worship God. Now John is falling down to worship this speaker who tells him to stop because he says he's just a fellow servant. So this is not the voice of Christ we saw earlier. The voice of Christ is speaking from the throne. It's talking to the whole multitude. This voice here is just talking to John.

And as all this unfolds before John's eyes, the whole thing just leaves him dumbfounded. It's almost like he doesn't know what to say. And I just want to stop here for a moment and say that since John doesn't describe the whole wedding ceremony here, I don't want to do that. It's almost like he thought it was too sacred to write about it, so I want to treat it the same way instead of speculating about the details. That might disappoint some of you because you're saying, "Well, come on Pastor Jeremy, paint me a picture here. What was it like at the banquet? Who's there? Were they standing or sitting? Where they close to Jesus or far away? How was the table arranged? Where was it located? How big was it? What were they eating? I hope it wasn't bologna. Well, what do they drink? Were the people from the Old Testament there? What about Israel? What about men like Moses, Abraham?" John doesn't go into all that kind of stuff, not here, so we're not going to do that.

But I will say that doesn't mean you don't know anything about what happens here because you do. John says it's a wedding. And we know what weddings are like. It means from this point in time, Jesus will treat His church as if He's married to her. He'll respond to her like she is His bride. What's that like? Well, for one thing, He'll love her that way. He won't hate her or despise her. He'll look on the church with a special affection. And He'll give Himself up for her. That's what husbands do. Ephesians five, says "Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself up for her so that He might sanctify her having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word." As He does that, Christ will spend time with her. He'll free up His schedule, so that so the two of them can walk together and talk together and be one. He'll also be faithful to her and loyal to her. He'll protect and provide for the church; He'll comfort and counsel her. And we could go on and on with this.

As I described that, can I say do you see why they're happy here? And this is why they're excited. And some of you may hear about this. And you may say, "Well, why would Jesus do that for me? Of all the people on earth, who am I to have such a blessing? What did I do?" Well, you didn't do anything. If you look in verse nine, it says Jesus does this for you because this is the wedding of the who? The Lamb. See that there means that when you marry Jesus, you don't marry a fearsome person. It's the most gentle gracious one imaginable. And that's why He does this for you. Not because of you, it's because of Him.

You don't get all this because you're special; you get it because He's special. He's a tender, loving husband.

The word "Lamb" has another meaning as well. It means that just as the priests took the lamb and the temple and cut its throat and let the blood drain out before putting it on the altar to burn, so the Father did that to the Son. And He put him on a cross. And He laid Him out on Calvary, where He was pierced for our transgressions so the Lord could take all the wrath He had toward sin and punish Him with it and say, "It's finished; you're forgiven. There's nothing more to pay."

That's another reason why you can have this relationship. Because everything that stands between you and Jesus Christ as a husband has been paid for in His blood. Is your sin standing between you and Jesus? He died for that. Are your lies getting in the way of your relationship to God? He died for that too. What about your lust? Same thing. What about your anger? Same thing. What about your blaspheming and all the things you've done in the past? He went to the cross to wash that clean. So that all you have to do to have this is trust in Him. You don't have to work for it. You don't have to strive for it. You don't have to earn it by being good enough. You get it through faith alone.

You might say at this point, "Well, I don't deserve that, Pastor Jeremy." I know, nobody does. You might say, "Well, I can't accept it. I'm too evil." Are you a sinner? Then you can accept it. He died for sinners.

I remember when I got married, I was pretty emotional about it because I remember thinking, "How could someone as beautiful as this want to be with me?" Anybody identify with that? Some of you may be thinking that about Jesus Christ. You may say, "how could someone as wonderful as Him want to be with someone as ugly as me?" Well look around the room. And I'll tell you, you're not any uglier than the next person, no offense. Your sins are just as dark as everybody else's. And He died to open the door wide open for you to experience this.

I don't think I'd be doing my job as your pastor, if I didn't remind you at the end here, you need this. You have to have this. I mean, you have two options at the end of the day. Jesus can be your husband, or Jesus can be your judge. You can have Him as the one who loves you and forgives you and gives mercy to you in the first part of Revelation 19. Or you can have Him as the one who will slaughter you and slay you and obliterate you on Judgement Day in the second half. But there's no in between. There's one or the other. First part, second part. God of mercy, God of wrath. The question is, which one will it be? There's a moment of decision in this chapter. And there's a time when God is drawing a line in the sand and saying, pick your side. And you need to do it now before it's too late.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus drives this point home, when He tells us about the parable of the wedding feast. And He says in that parable. A king sends out servants all throughout the land, to invite them to a wedding. And what do they say? They say, "Come." Come. Young man, come. Young

woman, come. Sinner, come. Old person, come. Brokenhearted, come. Sad and dejected, come. Worried and afraid, everybody, come. What do you have to do to go to heaven? Come to Jesus. Anybody can do that.

But the parable goes on and says that for those who don't or for those who try to get in some other way, the King will bind them hand and foot and throw them into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And I tell you that to say there is no reason why anyone in this room should ever experience that. It's not necessary. Jesus has done everything, and I mean everything to save you, if you will believe. Will you trust in that today?

Next week, we are going to cover the rest of Revelation 19. And I think it will be one of the most sobering passages in the entire book about the return of Christ because when He comes back, there will be no grace. For those who have rejected Him, there will only be judgment. But the opportunity of grace is there before you now. Take advantage of it. Let me close this in a word of prayer.

Heavenly Father, thank You for these words from the apostle John. And the things that we have learned this morning, may we take to heart and marvel at our great salvation? Lord, You have provided everything for us: the atonement, the redemption, the payment, the sacrifice, the offering, the lamb; so that all we have to do is believe. Father, may we be grateful for that this morning?

May we walk away in all of Your kindness to sinners, like us? And as we come to the Lord's table this morning, may You remind us of the depth of what Your Son has done.

Lord, and I do pray for any who were here this morning who were lost. I don't know where everyone's at, but You do. And Lord may they know that the time the clock is ticking on this world. There's a date You have set on Your calendar, it is written in stone, You will not be changed when all these things will unfold. And if they don't come to Jesus, they will wish they'd never been born. And I pray You would open their eyes to this.

Father, for those who are born again, who have trusted in Christ, put their faith in His blood given themselves to Him, may they leave this room overjoyed at the thought of the coming day when they'll be Your bride? There's nothing closer than a husband and a bride. It's the nearest relationship on Earth. And to think we could have that with Jesus is amazing. Thank You for those reminders this morning.

May You be glorified as we take the Lord's Supper and draw these things to heart. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.