

“Our Heavenly Husband”

Summary

This powerful message invites us into a profound revelation of our relationship with Jesus as our Bridegroom. Drawing from the Hebrew betrothal traditions, we discover that communion is far more than a ritual—it's a marriage covenant. When Jesus offered the cup at the Last Supper, He was extending a betrothal proposal in the Jewish tradition, asking each of us: 'Will you take Me as your lawfully wedded husband?' The sermon beautifully unpacks how Jesus paid the bride price—the mohar—in full through His suffering and death on the cross. Every shame, every failure, every sin we carry was dealt with when He hung naked, bearing our humiliation. The seamless garment He wore prophetically represented His wife-to-be, the Church. This message demolishes the lies of unworthiness and disqualification that haunt so many of us. Whether it's abortion, divorce, addiction, or any other past we're ashamed of, we learn that our Bridegroom has declared us clean, forgiven, and worthy. The Hebrew word 'ishi'—meaning 'my husband'—becomes our declaration of intimate relationship with the One who chose us, redeemed us, and now calls us His own. As we approach Holy Week, this perspective transforms how we view the cross: not just as sacrifice, but as the ultimate wedding preparation.

Small Group Study Guide – Our Heavenly Husband

"Our Heavenly Husband: The Marriage Covenant in Communion"

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin by inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and remove any shame or barriers that might prevent authentic sharing.

Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

Question: What traditions or practices around communion did you grow up with? How have they shaped your understanding of this sacrament?

Key Takeaways

1. Jesus as Our Husband

The communion table represents a betrothal covenant, not just a memorial. When Jesus offered the cup at the Last Supper, He was extending a marriage proposal in the Hebrew tradition.

2. The Bride Price Was Paid in Full

When Jesus said "It is finished" on the cross, He declared that the mohar (bride price) was completely paid. No sin, shame, or past failure is too great for His redemption.

3. Communion as Wedding Vows

Taking communion is our response to Jesus' proposal—we're saying "I take You to be my lawfully wedded husband."

4. Freedom from Shame

Jesus bore our shame naked on the cross so we could be clothed in His righteousness. He is unashamed to call us His bride.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message (15-20 minutes)

1. **The Hebrew Wedding Model:** How does understanding the ancient Jewish betrothal customs change your perspective on communion? What stands out to you most about this tradition?
2. **Personal Revelation:** Pastor Christie shared how the Holy Spirit revealed Jesus as "Ishi" (husband) to her while praying in tongues. Have you experienced moments where the Holy Spirit revealed something profound about God's relationship with you?
3. **The Seamless Garment:** Reflecting on last week's message about Jesus' seamless garment representing His wife, what does it mean to you that Jesus prophetically wore this while being crucified?

Going Deeper (20-25 minutes)

4. **Shame and Redemption:** Pastor Christie vulnerably shared her abortion story and journey to freedom. How does her testimony illustrate that "no sin is too great" for Jesus' redemption? What areas of shame might God be inviting you to bring to Him?

5. **The Bride Price:** When Jesus said "It is finished," the full bride price was paid. What specific sins, failures, or past mistakes do you struggle to believe are fully covered by this price? How can this truth set you free?
6. **Preparation as the Bride:** In the Hebrew tradition, the bride prepared herself while the groom built their home. How should we be preparing ourselves as the bride of Christ while we wait for His return?
7. **Honor in Relationships:** The sermon touched on honoring husbands, wives, parents, and one another. Where do you see a lack of honor affecting relationships in our culture? In your own life?

Personal Application (15-20 minutes)

8. **Communion Practice:** How might your personal or corporate practice of communion change knowing it represents renewing your marriage vows to Jesus? Will you approach it differently going forward?
9. **Walking in Freedom:** Pastor Christie said, "If the Lord had accepted me, then who is anybody else to cast stones at me?" How can this truth help you walk in greater freedom from others' judgments or your own self-condemnation?
10. **Fragrance of Christ:** Pastor Rob prayed that "the fragrance of Christ would be tangible on our lives." What practical steps can you take this week to deepen your intimacy with Jesus so others notice something different about you?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose at least one of the following:

1. **Daily Communion:** Take communion at home this week, each time declaring aloud: "I take You to be my lawfully wedded husband." Journal about what God reveals to you.
 2. **Holy Week Reflection:** Set aside time each day during Holy Week to meditate on one aspect of Jesus' suffering. Consider what specific shame, pain, or sin He bore for you.
 3. **Freedom from Shame:** Identify one area of shame in your life. Confess it to a trusted friend or this small group and receive prayer for complete freedom.
 4. **Honor Practice:** Choose one relationship (spouse, parent, child, friend) and intentionally practice honor this week. Speak well of them, serve them, and refuse to participate in any dishonoring conversation.
 5. **Spirit-Led Prayer:** Spend time praying in the Spirit (if you're baptized in the Holy Spirit) and ask God to reveal Himself to you in a fresh way, just as He revealed Himself as "Ishi" to Pastor Christie.
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Scripture References for Further Study

- **Hosea 2:14-23** - God's restoration of His unfaithful bride
- **Ephesians 5:25-32** - Christ and the Church as husband and wife
- **Revelation 19:7-9** - The marriage supper of the Lamb
- **Isaiah 54:5** - "Your Maker is your husband"
- **2 Corinthians 11:2** - Betrothed to Christ as a pure virgin
- **John 14:2-3** - Jesus preparing a place for us

Closing Ministry Time (15-20 minutes)

1. **Invitation:** Ask if anyone needs prayer for freedom from shame, healing from past wounds, or a fresh revelation of Jesus as their husband.
2. **Communion Together:** If appropriate for your setting, take communion together as a group, each person declaring the wedding vow: "I take You to be my lawfully wedded husband."
3. **Prophetic Encouragement:** Allow space for the Holy Spirit to speak words of encouragement or affirmation over group members.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for the incredible price Jesus paid to make us His bride. Remove every trace of shame from our lives. Help us to walk in the fullness of our identity as Your beloved. Prepare us for the return of our Bridegroom. May the fragrance of Christ be evident on our lives everywhere we go. In Jesus' name, amen.

Main Points – Our Heavenly Husband

Sermon Summary: This powerful message reveals the profound truth of communion as a marriage covenant between Jesus and His Church. Pastor Christie shares her personal testimony of experiencing Jesus as her husband, emphasizing how He removes all shame and accepts us completely despite our past failures. The sermon connects the Hebrew betrothal customs to the Last Supper, showing how Jesus extended the cup as a marriage proposal to His bride. Through the cross, Jesus paid the full bride price (mohar) for our redemption, dealing with every sin including abortion, divorce, and all forms of shame. The message calls believers to recognize their identity as the beloved bride of Christ, living in the freedom of total acceptance and forgiveness, and carrying His fragrance into a broken world.

Key Points:

- Jesus revealed Himself as husband through the Hebrew word "Ishi" during personal prayer time
- Communion is a betrothal ceremony where we accept Jesus as our lawfully wedded husband
- The seamless garment Jesus wore represented His bride, and His nakedness on the cross bore all our shame
- The bride price (mohar) was paid in full when Jesus declared "It is finished"
- No sin is too great for Jesus to forgive - abortion, divorce, adultery, or any failure
- Hebrew betrothal customs mirror the Last Supper: the cup represents acceptance of the marriage proposal
- God can restore the most broken lives and use them as powerful witnesses
- The Church as the bride is called to carry Christ's presence and fragrance to the world
- Honor is essential in all relationships: husbands and wives, parents and children, believers with one another
- Mary Magdalene, out of whom came seven devils, was chosen to be the first resurrection witness

Scripture Reference:

- Hosea 2:14-23 (God calling Israel "Ishi" - my husband, not "Baali" - my master)
- Ephesians 5 (Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church)
- The Last Supper accounts (Jesus establishing the new covenant through bread and wine)
- The crucifixion narratives (Jesus' seamless garment and payment of the bride price)

Discussion Questions – Our Heavenly Husband

How does understanding Jesus as our heavenly husband change the way we approach communion and our daily relationship with Him?

In what ways have shame and past failures prevented you from fully embracing your identity as part of Christ's bride, and how can the truth of complete forgiveness set you free?

What does it mean that Jesus bore our shame naked on the cross, and how does this reality address the specific areas where you've experienced humiliation or rejection?

How does the Jewish betrothal tradition deepen your understanding of what Jesus meant when He offered the cup at the Last Supper?

Pastor Christie shared that Jesus carried abortion on the cross. What other specific sins or burdens do you believe Jesus bore that you need to fully release to Him?

What idols or 'baals' in your life need to be removed so that you can call Jesus 'Ishi' (my husband) rather than 'master'?

How does the concept of the 'bride price' being paid in full on the cross challenge your understanding of your worth and value to God?

In what practical ways can we honor one another as members of Christ's bride, avoiding gossip and dishonor that gives the enemy opportunity?

How does viewing the Church as the bride called to evangelize the world change your perspective on weakness being used to reveal Christ's strength?

What would it look like for the fragrance of Christ to be so tangible on your life that people are moved to tears or want to pour out their hearts when they're around you?

Scriptures – Our Heavenly Husband

Explicitly Mentioned or Directly Referenced:

1. **Hosea 2:14-16** - God alluring His unfaithful bride and calling her "Ishi" (my husband)
2. **Hosea 2:16** - "You will call me Ishi (my husband) and no longer call me my master"
3. **Hosea 2:17-23** - God's covenant restoration and mercy
4. **Ephesians 5:25** - "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her"
5. **Ephesians 5:27** - Presenting the church as a glorious bride
6. **Ephesians 5:22-24** - Wives submitting to husbands as the church submits to Christ
7. **Exodus 20:12 / Ephesians 6:2-3** - "Honor your father and mother, that it may be well with you and you may live long"
8. **John 19:23-24** - The seamless garment (referenced from previous week's sermon)
9. **Luke 22:19-20** - The Last Supper institution of communion
10. **John 19:30** - "It is finished"
11. **Jeremiah 31:31-33** - The new covenant written on hearts

Alluded to or Thematically Referenced:

12. **Matthew 27:51** - The veil torn from top to bottom
13. **Galatians 3:28** - No male or female in Christ
14. **John 20:1, 11-18** - Mary Magdalene at the resurrection ("while it was yet dark")
15. **Luke 8:2 / Mark 16:9** - Seven demons cast out of Mary Magdalene
16. **Matthew 1:18-25** - Mary and Joseph's betrothal
17. **Revelation 19:7-9** - The marriage supper of the Lamb
18. **1 Peter 3:7** - Wife as the weaker vessel
19. **Hebrews 2:11** - Jesus not ashamed to call us brethren
20. **Romans 8:22** - Creation groaning
21. **Genesis 1:27** - Created in God's image
22. **Revelation 1:6** - Kings and priests unto God

Devotional – Our Heavenly Husband

Day 1: The Seamless Garment of Grace

Reading: John 19:23-24; Ephesians 5:25-27

Devotional: When Jesus hung on the cross, soldiers cast lots for His seamless garment—a prophetic picture of the wedding vesture He wore to honor His bride. While bearing our shame naked before the world, He was simultaneously declaring His covenant commitment to us. Every humiliation He endured was stripping away the shame that has marked our lives through failure, abuse, or sin. Jesus didn't just die; He suffered deliberately, removing every barrier between us and intimate relationship with Him. Today, recognize that no shame from your past—no matter how deep—can separate you from His love. He has clothed you in His righteousness, making you presentable as His cherished bride.

Day 2: The Cup of Covenant

Reading: Luke 22:14-20; Hosea 2:14-20

Devotional: In Hebrew tradition, when a bridegroom offered a cup of wine to his beloved, her acceptance meant "Yes, I am yours." At the Last Supper, Jesus extended this cup to His disciples—and to us. Every time we take communion, we're not merely remembering; we're renewing our marriage vows to our heavenly Husband. The bride price has been paid in full through His blood. No sin is too great, no failure too devastating, no past too broken to disqualify you from this covenant. Like Israel whom God promised to allure back from unfaithfulness, Jesus pursues you relentlessly. Today, when you consider Jesus, ask yourself: "Do I take You as my lawfully wedded Husband?" Let your answer be a resounding yes.

Day 3: Forgiveness That Transforms

Reading: Psalm 103:8-12; 1 John 1:9

Devotional: Shame is the enemy's weapon to keep us distant from God's embrace. Whether from abortion, divorce, addiction, or moral failure, the accuser whispers that we're disqualified from intimacy with Jesus. But when we confess our sins before God—sometimes even before trusted believers—the power of shame is shattered. Jesus carried every sin on the cross, including the ones we think are unforgivable. He removes our transgressions "as far as the east is from the west." The Hebrew word "ishi" means "my husband"—a term of endearing intimacy, not distant formality. God doesn't relate to you as a master demanding perfection, but as a loving husband committed to your restoration. Receive His forgiveness fully today. Let go of self-condemnation.

Day 4: Preparing for His Return

Reading: Matthew 25:1-13; Revelation 19:6-9

Devotional: After the Jewish betrothal, the bride never knew when her groom would return. She had to remain ready, prepared, watching. The groom would come when his father released him, announced by trumpet blasts and joyful celebration. This is our position today—betrothed to Jesus, awaiting His return. Are we living as those truly engaged to the King of Kings? Our preparation isn't about perfect performance but devoted relationship. It means keeping our lamps filled with oil, staying connected to Him through prayer and His Word, and refusing other lovers—the idols that compete for our affection. The bride's whole focus was pleasing her coming husband. Let that be our singular passion: to honor Jesus with abandoned devotion, making ourselves ready for His appearing.

Day 5: Walking in Your Identity

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Hebrews 2:11

Devotional: Jesus is not ashamed to call us His brethren—or His bride. Despite our past, our weaknesses, our ongoing struggles, He delights in us and displays us before the world as trophies of His grace. The very things the enemy uses to disqualify us become our greatest testimonies when surrendered to Christ. Like Mary Magdalene, out of whom came seven demons, yet chosen as the first resurrection witness—our brokenness becomes the canvas for His glory. You are not defined by your divorce, your addiction, your failures, or your shame. You are defined by whose you are: the beloved bride of Christ. Walk today carrying the fragrance of Jesus. Let His presence on your life be so tangible that others are drawn to Him through you. You are royalty, chosen and cherished.