

2008 #6 Gospel of John –JOHN’S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS JOHN 3:22-36

We continue today with John’s Gospel
And his testimony about Jesus as the truth.
This is a testimony not like that used in court of law,
But that of a wedding when the best man, or maid of honor speak.

We all love weddings
I have done a lot of weddings in my day,
Some because I wanted to,
Some because they wanted to.
Some because Grandma wanted to.

At a three-day retreat for pastors and their wives,
Participants were sharing how the Lord had blessed their marriage and ministry
One very nervous preacher’s wife stood up and said “The Bible promises, ‘No good
thing does the Lord withhold from them that walk uprightly.’ Then she sincerely said:
“my husband is one of those ‘no good things’!”

In Jesus time Jewish weddings had wedding planners
known today as a wedding consultant or bridal consultant.
This person was to help make the wedding acceptable,
To make it an honorable thing in the community,
To make the wedding run smoothly
In other words someone who know how to spend your money
And make it seem less painful.

A Bride's Magazine survey states the average cost of a wedding
in the U.S. is \$19,000, the wedding planners earn \$2000-3000 per wedding.
They are trained to be a facilitator, money manager, decorator,
And constructor of dreams."
But with all the stress involved in planning a wedding,
They become a therapist, sounding board, mediator,
and even punching bag, when frazzled nerves appear.

One wedding planner, giving advice, told the bride to be
"The first ten years are the hardest."
The bride asked "How long have you been married?"
She replied: "Ten years,"

We even have a reality show on TV called Bridezillas
Where we can watch a real bride at her worst.
Some accusing everyone in the wedding party of trying to steal the groom,
To panic attacks over hair, the size of the cake, the decorations in the church.
It’s like watching the three stooges.
You wait for the wedding to get derailed we enjoy it!

When the Jews asked John the Baptist just who he was
John said: “I am not the groom”

I am not the Christ! John 1:20

I am the wedding planner:

I am the voice of one calling in the desert, "Make straight the way for the Lord."

John 1:23

John the Baptist came to prepare the wedding.

He came to prepare the bride (the church) for the Groom,

He came to prepare the way for the groom (Christ) for the bride.

This whole thing just about got derailed by the river.

²³Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized. John 3:23

Jesus and John were baptizing in approximately the same place.

It was a good place.

Just outside the edge of the desert or wilderness

Aenon signifies "place of springs," **Salim** means "peace."

So just off the wilderness we find peace and the place of springs.

But Satan is at work.

He uses John's disciples to get John sidetracked

And in a fight with the Jews,

And over who is more popular.

²⁵An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew²⁵ over the matter of ceremonial washing. ²⁶They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan--the one you testified about--well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.": John 3:25-26

Now if Satan could get John sidetracked,

And think differently about Jesus,

He would lose his mission and purpose.

Satan still works in the same way today.

To get us fighting over which pastor is better,

Which church is more friendly,

Which woman's Bible Study is more exciting,

We can get caught up and preoccupied with who is leaving and coming,

And who is coming and going.

We lose our focus,

And stop baptizing and sharing Christ.

Because if we stop baptizing

We stop getting people saved.

When we stop leading people to Christ,

we have lost our mission.

Satan is happy .

But John doesn't take the bait.

He is not the groom, he is the wedding planner.

We don't say: Well , didn't Vera the wedding planer, plan a great wedding?

No we say: Didn't Marge and George have a great wedding.,

The Wedding planner is no longer mentioned or important.

John says:

He must become greater; I must become less. John 3:30

John's role as the wedding planner is to

I. PREPARE THE WAY FOR JESUS -THE BRIDEGROOM.

The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ²⁹He must become greater; I must become less. John 3:29-30

The Jew's word for wedding planner is the
Shoshabin in Hebrew
Or the paranymph in Greek

The Jews believe that this was appointed by God;
and that he himself was shoshabin to Adam.

Before the marriage: it was the business of the shoshabin:

To procure a virgin for the husband,
That is what we see in the play : "Fiddler on the Roof."
to guard her, and to bear testimony of her
He was the intercessor, between her and her spouse elect;
Because before marriage young women were strictly protected at home.

I have come to prepare the way of the Lord. ²⁸You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' John 3:25-26

John accepted his position as one who came to prepare the wedding.

Between Christ(the groom) and the Church(the bride).

All he wanted to do was live out God's plan for his life.

He must increase, but I must decrease (3:30)

In a sense we are the wedding planner for the unsaved.

We try to win and negotiate an acceptance of Christ

To prepare a sinner's heart for a savior.

Someone has said it takes 7 attempts at evangelism to bring a person to Christ.

So don't get discouraged with your non-Christian friends.

Keep witnessing and sharing Christ with them in love.

THE WEDDING PLANNER

1ST. PREPARES FOR THE MARRIAGE

2ND OVERSEES THE WEDDING CELEBRATION.

He Carries out all the direction of the bride and groom.

He makes sure all things are ready,

The candles, the flowers, the gowns,

The food and decorations, the rings.

The two invitations- one a year in advance,

The other the day of the wedding.

He makes sure there is enough wine.

I think it is a possibility that

Jesus' mother Mary might have been a wedding planner

Remember in the Marriage of Cana of Galilee.

She was the one who was responsible when they ran out of wine.

It was Mary who asked Jesus to take care of this problem.

Did Jesus do it to protect his mother?

To honor the bride and groom?
If you remember both occurred.

The Shoshabin made sure the wedding would come off without a hitch.
John knew his place and his job
And he knew it was short
Since the planner usually were involved
During the year of betrothal and then during the wedding
And the seven day feast after the wedding.
When that was over their main job was done,
The wedding planner

I. JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS

After the marriage the Shoshabin,

II. JOHN IDENTIFIES AND SUPPORTS JESUS.

That's why many times the Shoshabin or wedding planner was
chosen as an intimate and particular friend.
a brother might be chosen
Or like John the Baptist who was Jesus' relative.
Because we all know that marriage takes work
And we need someone to intercede, to protect
and encourage us in our marriage vows.
Don't we need that today.

Someone has said:

- In the first year of marriage, the man speaks and the woman listens.
- In the second year, the woman speaks and the man listens.
- In the third year, they BOTH speak and the NEIGHBORS listen.

Even the Apostle Paul portrays himself as Shoshabin,
Or the Friend of the Bridegroom,
the protector and advocate some sort of guardian,

I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. II Corinthians 11:2

The Apostle Paul was fighting to bring the Church together with Christ.
To get rid of any differences
And to reconcile them when they have been at odds.

13But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. Ephesians 2:14-15

III. JOHN HONORS JESUS AS THE LAMB OF GOD.

Last the Shoshabin was one who help unwrap the gifts.
John ends this passage by unwrapping the gifts
That Jesus (the groom)(brings to us from God.
That Jesus is qualified by the Spirit of God
To be the savior of the world
The Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.

Because John says:

³¹"The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. John 3:31

John want us all to know where he comes from :

That is heaven.

And John wants us to know how unique he is.

There is no other like him in all the world.

He is above all

Jesus is *greater* than everyone else.

Not only that, but He speaks in an entirely different and reliable way.

because He has the Holy Spirit without **measure**,

³⁴For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. John 3:34

so when we are joined to Christ

we are joined to the whole mind and will of God.

We are joined in the whole blessing and abundance of God.

17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. Revelations 22:17

Jesus ALONE is our salvation.

John concludes this passage as the true Shoshabin to help reconcile any differences which might happen to protect the marriage so it wouldn't fail.

And both would be faithful to one another.

³⁶Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."^{E28} John 3:22-36

In true fashion God demands man and women to be faithful in marriage.,

Just as he expect the Church and Christian to be faithful to Christ.

24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy... and blameless,. Ephesians 5:24-26

John prepared us for the Lamb of God,

John identified for us the Lamb of God.

John introduced us to the Lamb of God as the Savior of the world.

Are you living faithfully in your marriage covenant and vows,

Not just to your spouse, but to the Lamb of God.

As the bride of Christ?

John has done his job.

And now its up to us.