

## ***Jesus: Bridegroom, King, and Judge***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. During this conference we are looking at the glorious person of Jesus. As simple as this is, it is truly rare across the earth to actually hear the person of Jesus expounded on. The knowledge of God, specifically *in the face of Christ* (2 Cor. 4:6), is lamentably the least preached subject in the church today. You can find conferences all over the earth rallying people to very good and helpful topics, but the good has subtly become the enemy of the best. Thankfully, the Lord is a better leader than we are followers, so He is graciously helping the body of Christ to amend this.
- B. As we gaze upon the person of Jesus I would like to focus upon three interrelated facets of His glorious Person, Jesus as the Bridegroom, the King, and the Judge. Why these? Let's read:
1. **Strategic Emphasis:** The word of God and the Spirit strategically emphasize these facets of Jesus at the end of the age.
  2. **Unity of Jesus' Identity:** when we see how these three aspects of Jesus relate we understand that there are no contradictions in His identity. These are not *three* distinct faces of Jesus, but rather these three truths relate to each other in a coherent and unified way.
  3. **Personal Transformation:** when we rightly take our place at the feet of Jesus and listen to His word concerning His own identity, our own hearts begin to see Him differently. And when we see Him differently, we relate to Him differently.
    - a. Principle: It is always a mistake to decide what we are going to do before we decide who we are to become.
    - b. Who does Jesus desire us to become before Him? As we gaze upon these facets of the beauty of Jesus, our lives that are *hidden in Christ*, will begin to unfold and transform how we see ourselves.

(1) Bridegroom → Bride

(2) King → Priests

(3) Judge → Rewarded

- C. Key Passages: Psalm 2 - Psalm 45 – Matt 22:1-14 - Rev. 19:1-16 - Rev. 22:17

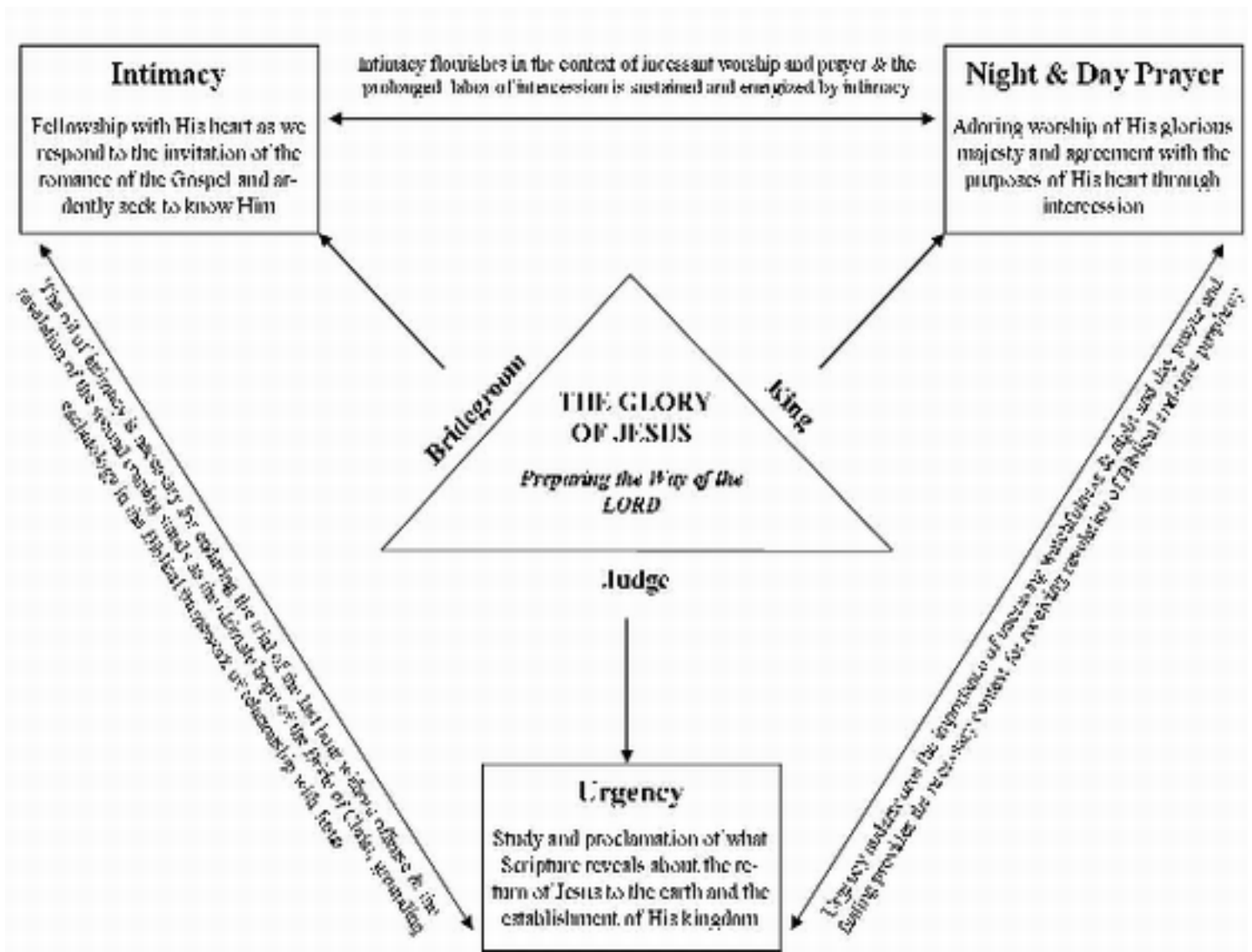
### **II. THE UNITY OF JESUS AS BRIDEGROOM, KING, AND JUDGE**

A. There is a fundamental unity in the person of Jesus as the Bridegroom, King, and Judge. In the one person of Jesus, He has the *heart of a Bridegroom*, the *role of a King*, with the *responsibility to Judge*.

1. Heart - Bridegroom
2. Head - King
3. Hands – Judge: the primary role of the king of Israel was to judge the people.

*<sup>15</sup>So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered judgment and justice (righteousness) to all his people. (2 Sa 8:15)*

*<sup>1</sup>Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. (Ps 72:1)*



B. Relationship of Intimacy and Day and Night Prayer:

1. *Intimacy* flourishes in the context of *intercessory prayer and worship*.
2. The prolonged labor of *intercession* is sustained and energized by *intimacy*.

C. Relationship of Urgency and Day and Night Prayer:

1. *Urgency* underscores the importance of *unceasing watchfulness*.
2. *Night and day prayer* and fasting provides the necessary context to create a suitable atmosphere for receiving revelation of end times prophecy (urgency, Jesus' return).

D. Relationship of Intimacy and Urgency:

1. *Intimacy* is necessary for enduring the urgent trial of the last hour that is coming.
2. The second coming stands as the ultimate hope of the Bride, grounding the eschatology in the Biblical framework of relationship with Jesus. We want Him to come.

### III. JESUS THE KING & JUDGE

A. When we consider Jesus as King, we need to consider Him as a King through the lens of the Godman – fully God and fully human.

1. Messiah – Deut. 17:14-20; 2 Samuel 7
2. YHWH the King – see 1 Sam 8:7, 10:19, Ps. 96 (specifically v.11).
3. Two times in Matthew 21, Jesus seeks to “upgrade” His messianic kingly identity (Matt 21:13, 16)
4. Key Summary Passage: Rev. 1:5-7

B. Jesus the Judge: the primary responsibility of the king (messiah) of Israel was to judge the nation. Ultimately this means that Jesus alone has the authority and the power to make decisions concerning the fate of every single person that has ever lived. He alone can see what man cannot see and will evaluate accordingly. This is where the fear of God is cultivated, but we must remember it is the fear of God [= He sees, He cares, He acts] before a Judge with the heart of a Bridegroom.

### IV. JESUS THE BRIDEGROOM

A. Most Potent Part of Him

1. When we give ourselves to beholding and growing in the revelation of Jesus as the Bridegroom, we touch the part of Jesus' identity that most clearly reveals His tenderness towards us, His jealousy for us and His unrelenting passion and joy.
2. We encounter the tenderness and affection that dispels our fear and shame. It is when we begin to live in the confidence of this divine desire and jealousy that our hearts come alive in love and obedience.

B. Most Transformative

1. This part of His identity as Bridegroom has been *consistently true* of Him and *continually revealed* by Him. Understanding this part of the Lord's identity as something He always conveyed of Himself to His people confronts all forms of false ideas about Him as a God who is distant, indifferent or stoic.
2. The testimony of Scripture confirms that from the beginning of creation, all through the time of the Old Testament, according to God's own words about His nature and the witness of the prophets, He is the One who is filled with *unrelenting tenderness* and *jealousy* over His inheritance. He is deeply moved with consuming desire for His own.

V. GOD THE HUSBAND: UNRELENTING JEALOUS LOVE

A. A Very Old Identity

While we may be familiar with a few passages that point to this understanding of Jesus as a Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15, 22:2; 25:1, etc.), what may be new to us is that when Jesus declared Himself as a Bridegroom in the New Testament He was connecting Himself to a previous identity already in the minds of His people - *the Husband* of the Old Testament. In so doing, He evoked the remembrance of a faithfulness so longsuffering and a mercy so tender that it takes the breath away and strips the words from the mouths of its witnesses (Eph. 5:31-32).

B. Even From Genesis

1. All the way back to the Garden of Eden, when God created Adam, He said to him, "*I will make a partner suitable to you.*" Later, the Holy Spirit would reveal to Paul that this promise ultimately spoke of Jesus and the church (Eph. 5:32).
2. In fact, unless He Himself was first a Bridegroom, no marriage would have ever commenced. For as the Husband, He set all in motion to ultimately reveal and make manifest Himself.

C. The Marriage Relationship of God and His People

The marriage relationship was the framework that the people of God understood their relationship to Yahweh. They understood - from Eden all the way to Sinai - that God was the Husband of His people and they were to relate to Him in the context of a marriage relationship of covenantal love. Over and over again throughout the Old Testament we see God's desire for fellowship as He openly declares it of Himself through the prophets (Isaiah, Hosea, Jeremiah, Ezekiel). By His unrelenting covenantal jealousy, we see Yahweh as the Husband of His people.

*The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh ; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." 24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife ; and they shall become one flesh. Gen. 2: 23, 24*

*"Hear O Israel, the Lord our God the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might." Deut. 6:4-6*

*Listen O daughter incline your ear...forget your own people and your fathers house...So the King will greatly desire your beauty; because He is your Lord, worship Him. The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace. Ps. 45*

*I am dark yet lovely, daughters of Jerusalem. Do not look upon me because I am dark...Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and see King Solomon with the crown with which his mother crowned him On the day of his wedding, the day of the gladness of his heart... You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace. Love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave. It's flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. Song. 1:5, 3:11, 4:9, 8:6.*

*And it shall be, in that day,' says the Lord, 'That you will call Me "My Husband," and no longer call Me "My Master."... "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the Lord." Hosea 2:16 - 20*

*For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth. Isaiah 54:5*

*'Thus says the Lord: "I remember you, The kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, When you went after Me in the wilderness, In a land not sown. Jer. 2:2*

*...as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you. Is. 62:5*

*Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. Jeremiah 3:14*

*"When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine," says the Lord GOD. Ezekiel 16:8*

- D. Hosea: the prophet who embodied the heart of Jesus as Bridegroom

1. Have you grappled with the life of Hosea until your heart begins to get involved? Few do. Nobody likes the story of Hosea. It's distasteful. It's unsettling. It's no ordinary love story. God commanded Hosea to go and marry a harlot, and not only that but to *love* her. He told him to love Gomer until he won her over, just as He loved Israel and determined that though she violated the covenant with Him over and over, she could not sever it, for His love refused to let her go.
2. Hosea was not merely to accept an adulterous as his wife, he was to love her, and love her until he won her. The prophetic marriage of Hosea and Gomer was to assure Israel that her own violations of the covenant cannot sever the covenant, for Yahweh loves her with a love that will not let her go. Yahweh calls Hosea to keep on loving Gomer, even as she continues to run to the arms of another man, with the same love that Yahweh is showing to Israel, even as they go on turning to the Baals. Thus, to sustain the commanded demonstration of faithful love, Hosea has to buy His wife back.
3. I imagine the pain in Hosea's heart as he received this word from the Lord. "But Lord! My heart! She is being loved by another lover! How can I possibly??" And the Lord might have said, "*I know, Hosea. I know. I know what she is doing. I know the scandal, the shame. I know your right to administer justice. But Hosea! I have this burning in My heart I cannot deny. It's My tenacious mercy and tenderness. It pervades heaven and earth! I am longsuffering and kind and my lovingkindness swells within Me relentlessly. You must go again even as I go after My own again and again. You must buy her back!*"
4. Hosea fleshed out the heart of the Bridegroom God until Jesus Himself came and demonstrated it personally, in the flesh. Hosea's life fleshed out to Israel that they were the harlot and that God was faithful to His covenant despite her unfaithfulness. In the same way, Jesus in the incarnation fleshed out the heart of the Bridegroom in pursuit of a harlot people, Jew and Gentile. Some have even connected the intertwined storyline of Hosea and of Jesus in His incarnation by the price paid for the purchase of the beloved one. Hosea bought Gomer back for the price of a slave: 15 shekels of silver and one half homers of barley, totaling the worth of 30 shekels. Jesus, the One who became a Servant, and who was Himself the Divine Bridegroom, was betrayed by Judas for the same slave price – 30 shekels of silver.

## VI. JESUS *THE BRIDEGROOM*: PASSION ON DISPLAY

### A. The Husband with a Face and Bridegroom with a History

1. When the Word became flesh and the eternal God now stepped onto the scene, He revealed *Himself* to be *the Bridegroom*. In Christ, the Husband of the Old Testament has a face, and the Bridegroom of the New Testament has a history.
2. The heart of God was put on display in the Person of Christ and in Him we see with all clarity His jealous love and affections. As the New Testament opens, the Bridegroom - *the divine Husband* - appears right before our very eyes, ultimately laying down His life to free us from bondage and to wash us from our sins. In so doing, He set into motion the final events that will lead to the consummation.

*Far from a peripheral or obscure doctrine, from Matthew to Revelation the New Testament explicitly presents Jesus as the Bridegroom to whom the redeemed are betrothed. Coupled with this positive affirmation is the striking absence of one reference to the people of God as the wife of the Father. The only reasonable conclusion based on the Biblical testimony is that Jesus is the Lord, Yahweh incarnate, and it was His very heart burning with jealousy for Israel on the pages of the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup>*

B. The Cross of the Bridegroom who Loved us

1. When we consider the holy Heart behind the Cross and just *who* it was who *gave Himself up* unto death for us, our hearts are wrenched in an unspeakable love. The One upon that cross was Himself *Yahweh incarnate*, the *Creator in the flesh*, the *Bridegroom in person*.
2. Just as the Lord said to Hosea, “Go again, Hosea, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans.” Now in the fullness of time, the Bridegroom King Himself has come in the flesh and embraced the suffering of the Cross. Though slain by His own, He yet pursues with unrelenting jealousy and vulnerable love. Willingly, He submits Himself to rejection, scorned love, and shame.
3. His role as Savior is tightly intertwined with His role as Husband. He comes as the Husband to purchase us from our bondage to sin and betroth us to Himself. Yet the price that He pays to purchase us is the price of His own life, a price of unutterable worth. When our pride pleads with Him to come down from the shameful tree, His lowliness looks us in the eye and pierces us with the response, “Love holds Me here!”
4. On the cross, He purchased us back from our slavery, our bondage, our harlotry. And in that redemption, He washes us and cleans us from all of our filth. He clothes us with beautiful garments of white and prepares us for the day that He will present us to Himself, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:26, 27; Song. 4:7). He is our Savior and He is our Husband. It is the Lamb that we will marry.
5. To the heart meditating on this cross, the cry must come forth, “O Jesus, what have you done in Your dying for me? I, the poor one, the sinful and the dark. I, the one joined to the wretchedness of self-absorption, self-exaltation and self-love. And You the One who dwells in the pure freedom of self-denial, self-abandonment and self-sacrifice...the only One of Your kind...O Jesus, what have You done? And what kind of jealous love burned within Your holy heart, what kind of fury for sin and selfishness did you possess that You would put Yourself in such shameful sufferings? What kind of holy affections consumed You to bring You to this heart-wrenching display of love?”

C. The Marriage of the ages is no Ordinary Marriage

---

<sup>1</sup> Venable, Stephen. Christology II. International House of Prayer University. Session 03, 2007.

***Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish...For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:25-32***

1. This is no ordinary marriage. He is no ordinary Bridegroom and we, no ordinary bride. He is the perfect, ever faithful Husband who's love on display is utter self-giving and long suffering. We, on the other hand, are the last conceivable portrait of a bride. A bride is usually chosen for her beauty, her worth and her uprightness. Yet throughout the Biblical narrative, the bride of Christ is we are portrayed as the prostitute, given to other lovers, defiled and undesirable.
2. This bride has not been the most beautiful fiancé'. She has not shown herself faithful to Him. She has not been very modest. And certainly, she has not waited in His delay very well. But this is no ordinary Bridegroom. He still loves her and in spite of such disturbing qualities, He is willing to give everything to her and unite her to Himself forever. He gives everything He has to win her, His status on the throne, His riches and renown, all the way to the point of the most wretched and humiliating death on a cross. He takes her for Himself, washes her and purifies her and makes her holy and blameless in love.

***And you He made alive, bwho were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the <sup>1</sup>course of this world, according to <sup>d</sup>the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in <sup>e</sup>the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in <sup>g</sup>the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and <sup>h</sup>were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. Eph. 2:1 – 3***

## VII. COMING NEAR TO HIS JEALOUS HEART

### A. Making it Deeply Personal

1. This understanding of Jesus as a loving and jealous Bridegroom changes everything if we'll allow it. Why? It's just that invasive in a beautiful way. We must allow it to touch our hearts personally in the deepest place. We cannot only hear the information and be wowed by the notion; we must grapple with these truths deeply in our own lives.
2. Knowing Jesus as Bridegroom in a personal way does not mean that we take this revelation to an unbiblical place, claiming some *special* relationship with Him or taking it to a wrong end. Rather, it means that we take to heart the powerful revelation of Jesus' deep affection, tender care and covenantal jealousy over us His bride. There is no *higher relationship* than the espousal relationship and no *stronger bond* than the bond of marriage. This is the extravagant proximity we have been given to His heart and the inextricable union we have been brought into in Christ.



3. When we truly receive the truths of Jesus as a Bridegroom in a personal way, it is *invasive* to our inner life. Often times, we would prefer the comfort of the corporate dimension. This deeply personal love infringes upon our comfort zones. His focused and narrowed gaze upon us individually creates a trembling that is not discovered when we only know Him at a distance. This nearness confronts the areas in each of our minds that stand in opposition and accusation to the true knowledge of His love, His character, and His heart. As we receive His love here, our hearts become realigned in truth of His heart.

B. Where the Heart is Transformed

We come before His fiery affections day after day and open our hearts to Him. We fill our minds with the scriptures that speak of Jesus' affections, and we meditate on who He is in His personality. We sing and speak the written Word over our hearts again and again, allowing our old paradigms to be transformed by the Holy Spirit. Slowly, He transforms us within.

## VIII. JESUS, THE JEALOUS HUSBAND

A. His Jealousy Moves us towards Radical Holiness

*"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." Rev. 3:16*

This is the revelation of the Lord's heart that moves us into radical holiness. The right form of the fear of the Lord finds its home in a love affair. It is a trembling before the flaming jealousy of a holy Husband who is the Lord. There is a fuming in His heart when His chosen one is seduced away from Him, allured into comforts and charmed into compromise of any level. To the One that desires the "first" of the affections, the strength of all the deep-seated longings, even the faintest aroma of indulgence in the wine of this world arises as a stench within His nostrils. He detects such division of heart on the slightest level. And out of His heart comes the beckoning and beseeching, not of an enraged task Master but of a love-consumed heart.

B. Love Demands ALL

1. The One who is the happiest Man alive is also the All Consuming Fire; His joy and His jealousy hold no contradiction. He fiercely desires that nothing would come between Him and His bride. Out of passionate desire, He zealously destroys all that hinders and stands in the way of love. His fire consumes the heart of His bride with love. The very fire of His gaze imparts and protects the supernatural love flowing within us. He describes His love in the Song of Solomon with unmatched description. "...Love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it" (Song Sol. 8:6-7).

2. *If I fall in love with a woman do I cease to care whether she is fair or fowl? Love may forgive all infirmities and love still in spite of them but love cannot cease willing their removal. Love is more sensitive than hatred itself to every blemish in the beloved. Of all powers, love forgives the most but condones the least. Love is pleased with a little but demands all. In the New Testament, the “I am yours” is not metaphorical but literal. He is the Bridegroom and we are the Bride. He gave Himself for us and the love of Jesus Christ is given to make us holy, without stain or blemish.<sup>2</sup>*

C. His Jealousy is His Love

In our desire to be loved by God, that innate longing within, we want Him to be jealous whether we've connected to it or not. Why? Because if He is jealous, then He is near, intensely near, and immersed in all the details of our lives. We want the strength of His jealousy to chase us down and keep us when we cannot keep ourselves and, ultimately, we want the comprehensive sensitivity of His jealousy to love us in such a way as to not relent until we're fully His.

*You asked for a loving God: you have one...not a senile benevolence that drowsily wishes you to be happy in your own way, not the cold philanthropy of a conscientious magistrate, nor the care of a host who feels responsible for the comfort of his guests, but the consuming fire Himself, the Love that made the worlds, persistent as the artist's love for his work... provident and venerable as a father's love for a child, jealous, inexorable, exacting as love between the sexes. How this should be, I do not know: it passes reason to explain why any creatures, not to say creatures such as we, should have a value so prodigious in their Creator's eyes. It is certainly a burden of glory not only beyond our deserts but also, except in rare moments of grace, beyond our desiring...<sup>3</sup>*

---

<sup>2</sup> Keller, Tim. "The Jealousy of God."

<sup>3</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: HarperOne, 1940; 1966), 39-40.