

# Exodus 19 - The Purpose of the Covenant

To read:

1. Isaiah 54
2. Ephesians 5:22-33

## I. Introduction

### A. This morning we're starting the next major section of Exodus in Exodus 19-24

1. This next story is the covenant between God and Israel at Sinai which is the fourth major covenant in the Bible
  - a. The first covenant is the Adamic covenant, promising a son who would crush the serpent
  - b. Next is the Noahic covenant, promising to preserve the earth until the promised son comes
  - c. After this is the Abrahamic covenant, promising a son who will inherit the promises of land and kingship
  - d. This fourth covenant is often called the Mosaic covenant, and over the next four weeks we'll look at the purpose of this covenant, how it fits into the story of Exodus and into the larger story of the covenants
  - e. And looking forward, after this comes the Davidic covenant, promising a son who would inherit the throne

### B. But as we start to look at the Mosaic covenant, we have to notice that there is some distinct difference between this covenant and the other major covenants of the Old Testament

1. For example, there is a difference in parties, the other four covenants are made with individuals, Adam, Noah, Abraham, and David, but the Mosaic covenant is made with the whole nation
2. There is also a difference in purpose, if you listened closely, you may have noticed that there is a common theme in the four other covenants in the Old Testament, they all focus on the promise of a son, while the Mosaic covenant is different and joins the people of Israel to YHWH
3. There is also a difference in form, in each of the personal covenants the covenant takes the form of short speeches between God and the recipient, while the Mosaic covenant is much more developed, taking the form of a short book here in the middle of Exodus and expanding to become an entire book in Deuteronomy
4. Finally, as we look forward to the New Testament, we see there is a difference in result, while each of the covenants are fulfilled in the New Testament, the Mosaic covenant is specifically called obsolete and is passing away while none of the other covenants are referred to in this way
5. All of the covenants are intimately tied together and form the backbone of the Biblical story but somehow the Mosaic covenant is different than the others

### C. So, as we start to look at the Mosaic covenant, to understand it rightly we have to ask, what is this covenant?

1. I think the authors of Kingdom through Covenant have described the purpose of the covenant well: *The offering in Exodus 24 is not specified as a sin or reparation sacrifice, nor is the verb "sprinkled" used, as is normal for offerings for sin. The blood is applied to the altar representing Yahweh as well as to the people, and certainly Yahweh does not need to be cleansed from sin. Instead, the ceremony indicates the meaning. Half of the blood is put on Yahweh and half of the blood is put on the people. In between these two symbolic acts are the reading of the Book of the Covenant and the vow of the people to keep its stipulations. The symbolism is that the one blood joins the two parties. What is most similar to the ceremony of Exodus 24 is a wedding. Two people who are not related by blood are now, by virtue of the covenant of marriage, closer than any other kin relation. It is by virtue of the covenant at Sinai that Yahweh becomes the go'el, that is, the nearest relative, and that Israel becomes not just a nation but a "people", that is, a kinship term specifying relationship to the Lord.*
2. Each covenant is about creating a relationship between God and someone, but the relationship created in the Mosaic covenant is different than the other covenants
3. In each of the other four covenants, the relationship upheld is sonship, Eve is promised a son, Noah is promised the preservation of the earth until the son comes, Abraham is promised a son, David is promised a son - so I call these covenants the Son-ship covenants, each covenant makes a promise of a son who will come to undo the curse and initiate the Kingdom of God
4. In the Mosaic covenant, the relationship that is created is a marriage, the people of Israel are joined to God as a bride to a husband and God will take them to be His people and He will be their God
5. This is the difference and the unity between the Mosaic Covenants and the others - the difference is a difference in the relationship created, but the unity is the unity of two sides of a coin, or two partners to a marriage
6. The Son-ship covenants all promised a son who would come to inherit and fulfill every promise and break the curse of sin, a Son who would be a groom and marry the people of God so that God's people would be able to share in His victory: the Son-ship covenants are groom covenants and the Mosaic covenant is a bride covenant

**D. So, I over the next four weeks I want to show four things about the Mosaic Covenant:**

1. The covenant of Exodus 19-24 is a type of marriage joining Israel to YHWH as His treasured possession and therefore appointing Israel to the Adamic role of image bearer, representing God to the world (19)
2. Since Israel as YHWH's bride is to be an image bearer, the representative of God to creation, the Ten Words describe the image of God the Israelites are to portray setting a pattern for how to represent God (20)
3. Since Israel is the bride of YHWH, the covenant community is very important because Israel is going to live with God and thus how to live in covenant community is described in the Judgments (21-23)
4. Since Israel is the bride of YHWH fellowship with God is allowed and enjoyed (24)

**E. This week we'll start by looking at the first topic, the purpose of the covenant - Let's read Exodus 19**

*On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do."*

*And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD. And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you forever." When Moses told the words of the people to the LORD, the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. And you shall set limits for the people all around, saying, 'Take care not to go up into the mountain or touch the edge of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death. No hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain." So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments. And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman." On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.*

*And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the LORD to look and many of them perish. Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them." And Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.'" And the LORD said to him, "Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest he break out against them." So Moses went down to the people and told them.*

**F. Proposition and Outline**

1. **Proposition:** Israel is brought to covenant as the bride of God and therefore is given the rights and responsibilities of the bride of God pointing us forward to a better groom and a better bride in Christ.
2. **Outline:**
  - a. Looking at the passage: A Marriage with a Mediator
  - b. Turning to Christ: The Mediator's Identity
  - c. Concerning us: A New Bride

## II. A Marriage with a Mediator

### A. Before we dive into the passage, first I want to consider the organization of the passage

1. As with many stories in the Old Testament, the prelude to the covenant in Exodus 19 is carefully orchestrated and recorded to help us understand its purpose, we don't need to guess the meaning of the story, the meaning is laid out for us in the organization
2. If you pay attention in the text, you notice that Exodus 19 is broken into three parts by Moses going up and down the mountain three times
  - a. Moses goes up the mountain in verse 3 to talk to God and comes down in verse 7 to report to the people
  - b. Moses goes up again in verse 8 to talk to God and comes down again in verse 14 to report to the people
  - c. Moses goes up once more in verse 20 to talk to God and comes down in verse 25 to report to the people
3. These three trips up and down the mountain each have a slightly different theme this morning
  - a. During the first trip up the mountain, the purpose of the covenant is described
  - b. During the second trip up the mountain an obstacle to the covenant is given
  - c. During the third trip up the mountain the obstacle is resolved by appointing a mediator

### B. The purpose of the covenant (vs. 1-8)

1. Exodus 19:1-8 is a beautiful piece of literature that is extremely carefully crafted to emphasize the main point of this first section, and it makes a somewhat complicated chiasm if you look carefully at the text
  - a. Chiasms, or mirror images with an unpaired center, emphasize the central unpaired point, so Exodus 1-8 emphasizes God's words in verses 4-6, and this is what I want to focus on this morning
  - b. Exodus 19:4-6 - *You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*
  - c. In Exodus 19:4-6 God describes the purpose of making a covenant with Israel, both looking back at what has happened and looking forward to what should happen and the covenant connects the two parts
2. First, we see God look back at what has brought Israel and God together to make this covenant
  - a. God recounts very briefly in verse 4 the events that had happened in Egypt, how God had defeated the Egyptians and their gods and had rescued His people
  - b. And the one overarching emphasis in this verse is God's actions, God says, "I defeated the Egyptians," "I brought you to myself," "I bore you on eagles wings." The reason Israel is standing at Sinai ready to make a covenant with God is because of the actions that God has accomplished for them
  - c. In fact, the first statement in preparing for the covenant is a statement of grace, many people make a distinction between the New Covenant and the Mosaic covenant by calling them a covenant of works versus a covenant of grace, but here we see that grace underlies all of the covenant, grace has brought them to the place where they could enter into covenant with God
  - d. And there's the beautiful picture showing us this grace - the picture of God swooping in like an eagle and rescuing His people
    - i. For those of you who are Tolkien fans, you can think of the scene where Gandalf is helpless on top of the tower and the eagle comes and rescues him, or when Bilbo and the dwarves were helpless in the woods caught between wolves and fire and the eagles came down and rescued them and brought them to the heights of the mountains
    - ii. These are the types of pictures that God wants us to have of how He rescued Israel, He by His own divine choice swooped down, scattered the enemy and grasped Israel and brought her to Himself
  - e. So the first purpose of the covenant is to remember God's grace, the covenant is based on grace, and as they enter into covenant they will remember grace

3. Second, we look forward and see why God is making covenant with them
  - a. In verses 5 and 6, God makes a statement about the results of entering into and abiding in the covenant of God - *you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*
    - i. The purpose looking forward is described in two parts: Israel will be God's treasured possession out of all the earth and Israel will be a kingdom of priests, that is, a holy nation, let's look at these
  - b. First, God says that Israel will be His treasured possession
    - i. The word here translated treasured possession means a king's private treasure, His own treasury as opposed to the nation's treasury, something that He alone possesses - probably the best image are Crown Jewels in London, the jewels belong to the queen as her own not to the nation as a whole
      - a) For example, the same word is used in I Chronicles 29:3, referring to David's personal gift to the temple in contrast to the kingdom's provision for the temple - *Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God*
      - b) God is declaring that, in contrast to all of the earth which belongs to Him, Israel will be His special possession, His personal treasure, the thing He delights in
      - c) We can see the connection to marriage again, God chooses Israel to be His bride, the one who, in contrast to all others, He delights in, He takes pleasure in her
    - ii. But, also, this is a connection to Adam and Genesis 1, in Genesis 1:26, God defines Adam's role in the world - *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*
      - a) There was a twofold reflection of God in Adam's creation, God's image and God's likeness
      - b) In ancient near eastern languages, image referred to an honored lesser king who devote service to a greater king and in whom the greater king takes pleasure
      - c) This is the same concept as treasured possession, God's image in this world is the one who devotes herself to Him and in whom He takes pleasure
      - d) So, by being God's treasured possession, Israel is renewing the Adamic role lost in the fall, God is undoing the curse and choosing a new representative from out of the world
  - c. Second, God says that Israel will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation
    - i. These two closely related statements reflect each other and describe the reverse of treasured possession - Israel as God's treasured possession was His special treasure out of the world, Israel as a Kingdom of priest and a holy nation is devoted to God and represents God to this world
    - ii. Israel will be a king-priest devoted to God and therefore devotes herself to worship as a priest in God's land and building a temple as a king, displaying to the nations what worshipping God looks like
      - a) If treasured possession represents image from Genesis 1, then kingdom of priests and holy nation represents the second half of Adam's role, likeness
      - b) In ancient near eastern languages, likeness referred to a lesser king's role in petitioning and relating to the greater king or to the gods and therefore represents the king to the people
      - c) This is the same concept as kingdom of priests and holy nation, Israel as priests and kings are able to approach and petition God and therefore display to the world how God is to be worshipped - God is again renewing the Adamic role lost in the fall, He is undoing the curse and appointing a new representative to the world
    - iii. And we see here another way that this covenant relates to marriage
      - a) In marriage, the wife is beloved of the husband, His treasured possession, but not only is the wife the one chosen out of the world to be the husband's treasure, she is chosen by the husband to represent him to the world
      - b) We see this clearly in the wife taking her husband's name, the husband puts his name upon his wife so that she is now his representative to the world, she is part of his family and represents what his family looks like
      - c) Israel is this to God, not only is Israel God's treasured possession, but God is putting his name on her so that she can represent Him to the world
  - d. So, God's purpose in the Mosaic covenant is to call a bride to Himself and through this new relationship to restore that Adamic roles of image and likeness in this world - God is undoing the curse by marrying Israel and bestowing on her the rights and responsibilities of a wife so that humanities role in this world is restored

- C. But, as we move on in the chapter, we immediately run into a major obstacle to this marriage covenant (vs. 9 -20)**
1. In verses 9-14, Moses goes back up the mountain and talks to God and God reports the strict rules for His appearing to the people to make a covenant with them
    - a. The people must devote themselves to meet with God and must be clean and ready to meet with God
    - b. The people must not approach God too closely and they must not touch the mountain where God is
    - c. In summary, we might say that the people needed to understand the God to whom they were being pledged in marriage, this marriage covenant wasn't with any two-bit king, this marriage covenant was with the King of Kings who is holy beyond description, so holy they could not even approach Him
  2. And then in verses 16-20 God appears on the mountain in what can only be described as terrifying holiness and glorious splendor, the mountain was wrapped in smoke and the earth trembled before God and God's voice out of the cataclysm was like thunder calling Moses up the mountain
  3. The center of the Exodus 19 is designed to show us how holy God is, so holy that we might despair that the marriage covenant proposed in the first verses of chapter 19 could not be consummated - how could Israel be joined with God when God and Israel are infinitely separate, when God is so far above Israel that Israel cannot approach Him?
  4. This is emphasized in the last verse, Exodus 19:20 - *The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.*
  5. Notice that God came DOWN to rest on the mountain and yet Moses still had to go UP to meet with God, the gulf between Israel and God is insurmountable, how will this marriage take place? Can the people be holy enough for God?
- D. But our passage this morning ends with an answer to the problem as a mediator is appointed (vs. 21 -25)**
1. As Moses goes back up the mountain, God continues to proclaim His holiness to Moses, telling Moses that if the people are not holy enough for God and not far enough away from God, He would destroy them
  2. And Moses confronts God with the problem, repeating God's commands back to Him, saying - *The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it*
  3. If God is this holy, how will they enter into covenant with God? God Himself has barred them from His mountain
  4. But God gives an answer to Moses by appointing Moses and Aaron, the prophet and the priest, as mediators of the covenant, saying - *Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest he break out against them.*
  5. God agrees with Moses, the people cannot be holy enough and they cannot approach, but the covenant will be sealed through a mediator who can approach God, the covenant will not be lost, it will be fulfilled through the mediator
  6. Which leads us to our second point this morning:

### III. The Mediator's Identity: Christ is the Mediator

#### A. The end of Exodus 19 calls us to think about the future of this covenant, could Moses really be good enough to seal a covenant between Israel and God? Could a covenant based on Moses satisfying God's holiness ever stand?

1. The glorious answer is no! This covenant was never meant to stand, this covenant was meant to point forward because a better mediator needed to come to make a better covenant, and we see that Christ is this mediator
2. Hebrews points to this, we'll start in Hebrews 7:22 - *This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.*
3. Or again in Hebrews 9:15 - *Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.*
4. And once again in Hebrews 12:24 - *and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*
5. This covenant was set up and mediated because it was a picture of what was going to happen, but neither Israel nor the covenant was the final step, they were both types pointing forward, and Christ has fulfilled those types
6. The holiness of God has not changed but a better mediator has appeared to stand between God and the bride

#### B. And Christ can be the mediator of a better covenant because Christ truly satisfies the holiness of God

1. Moses may have stood between the people and God, but what did Moses really have to offer except to distance the people from God? He could never make the people righteous, he could only keep them away.
2. But Christ has done better than Moses because Christ has perfectly satisfied the holiness of God, so that the blazing terror of God's righteousness will not come and devour His people
3. Paul declares that Christ can justify a people while upholding the justice of God in Romans 3:26 - *It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*
4. In fact, the great marriage picture in Ephesians 5:25-27 tells us that Christ cleansed His bride and made her holy - *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*
5. And Christ has done this by making a perfect sacrifice, Hebrews 9:11-14 - *But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*
6. Christ is able to mediate a better covenant because He has completely satisfied the holiness of God, He has stood on the fiery mountain and brought His people through to see God

#### C. But, the amazing thing about the New Covenant is that Christ fulfills both sides of the bargain, Christ is not only the mediator and groom of the New Covenant, Christ is also God's beloved image in this world

1. We can clearly see that Christ must be a better mediator than Moses, but Christ also stands on the other side of this covenant, being the beloved of God, the treasured possession of God who represents God to the world
2. Listen to Christ's status before God in Matthew 3:17 - *and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*
3. This is a call to think about Israel's role as listed in Exodus 19 and developed in the prophets, in fact, Matthew quotes out of Isaiah later making the same statement in Matthew 12:17-18 - *This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles." - Christ was standing in Israel's place as the well-pleasing one, the beloved one fulfilling Exodus 19*
4. And if Christ is the beloved one, then He should be the image of God, representing God to the earth, and this is exactly what we see in Colossians 1:15 - *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*
5. Christ's fulfills not only the role of mediator, but the role of the bride as well, in fact, this brings up on reason that being 'in Christ' is so important to salvation, we cannot be a part of the bride of Christ unless we are in Christ, because Christ has fulfilled Israel's role as the bride, the grace upon grace of the New Covenant is that Christ keeps both sides of the covenant for us, and we merely need to be 'in Him', which leads to our last point:

## IV. There Is a New Bride

### A. Exodus 19 is important because we are the true recipients of Exodus 19 because we are the bride of Christ

1. This is the glorious mystery of Ephesians, I'll read Ephesians 5:25-27 once more - *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*
2. Christ has mediated a better covenant, He has fulfilled both sides of the covenant, and now He has called a new bride to participate with Him in His covenant, and that new bride is us, the church
3. Israel was called to be the bride of YHWH because there would be a bride of Christ that would enjoy the goodness of God in Christ forever, and we are that bride! So we should pay careful attention to Exodus 19 and the promises that are made! So, let's think this through and apply the passage to ourselves.

### B. If we are the bride of Christ, then we are the treasured possession and therefore must devote ourselves to Christ

1. In fact, the New Testament is very clear about our status as Christ's treasured possession
  - a. Peter even quotes out of Exodus 19 in I Peter 2:9 to make it clear that the church is the final fulfillment of Exodus 19 - *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession*
  - b. Notice he hits the idea of treasured possession twice in his description of the church, first the church is chosen by God, you are a chosen race, and then finally the church is a people for his own possession
  - c. Or Paul says in Titus 2:14 - *who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds* - again, a people for his own possession
  - d. Paul also focuses on the idea that we are chosen, we were made special by God's choice, for example in Ephesians 1:4-6 - *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.*
  - e. Clearly, we are the chosen bride, the treasured possession of Christ, the true fulfillment of Exodus 19
2. But if we are Christ's chosen bride, His treasured possession, then there is a call for how we must live
  - a. Listen to Paul in II Corinthians 11:2 - *For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*
  - b. If we are God's treasured possession, His beloved bride, we must be devoted to Christ and Christ alone
  - c. Devotion is the loving response of a bride, to seek after her husband, to revolve her life around her husband, to seek out what pleases her husband, to serve her husband's interests
  - d. We are that bride, and so our lives ought to be marked by this sort of loving devotion, a life that revolves around Christ, a life that is ordered and prioritized after seeking Christ, a life that renounces everything else except seeking Christ
  - e. This is the proper response to hearing ourselves called and chosen as Christ's treasured possession, a reflection of that status back to Him - and the New Testament tells us this all of the time, although it often uses a different but nearly synonymous word - holiness, holiness and devotion are extremely similar concepts, to be holy is to be completely devoted to something, so to be holy to the Lord is to be completely devoted to Him, the bride of Christ is devoted to Christ alone
3. You see, the thing is, we can't be devoted to two things at the same time, you have to be wholly devoted to one, this is exactly what Christ said in Matthew 6:24 - *"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money"*
  - a. We can't devote ourselves to anything else, we must even despise all other things, anything that is not causing us to seek more after Christ
  - b. So, what things seek your devotion? We could ask a list of probing questions: What things fill your time? What things rule your schedule? What things fill your imagination? What things fill your conversations? What things give you hope and joy? What things come at the top of your priorities? What things can't be missed? What things organize your life? What things can you not give up?
  - c. If the answer to any of these questions is something substantially other than God in Christ, then we have a problem, you're trying to devote yourself to two things and cannot, you must devote yourself to God alone
  - d. A wife who claims to love her husband but is promiscuous is a terrible bride, the bride of Christ must be wholly devoted to Him, must be a treasured possession desiring to seek only Him

**C. If we are the bride of Christ then we are the kingdom of priests, we are the holy nation and therefore we must represent Christ to the world**

1. If we get to enjoy one side of being the bride of Christ, being His treasured possession, then we also get enjoy the other side of being the bride of Christ, being His representative in this world
2. In fact, this is the application that Peter makes when he paraphrases Exodus 19 in I Peter 2:9-12 - *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*
3. If we are the chosen race and the people for his own possession, then we are also the royal priesthood and the holy nation, so therefore we must proclaim the excellencies of Him who called us, we must demonstrate to others the honor of our position
4. In reality, this is nothing different than being holy devoted to Christ but it is directed the other way, we are holy devoted to our bridegroom, Christ, and therefore we represent His desires well in this world and we are constantly ready to proclaim how good our husband is
5. We devote ourselves to Christ in order to enjoy Christ, but also in order to make Him known, to honor Him as our husband, to show that He is the best husband, better than anything the world has to offer
6. So, are all of your actions calculated to show how good Christ is to you? Is this your motivation in taking part in the various parts of your life? Do the activities of your life show that you are different from the world because you serve a better husband, or in many ways are your activities the same activities as the world, even if done under the name of Christ? Are you quick with your words to declare how good Christ is to you? Do you want to tell others how good Christ is to you?
7. As the bride of Christ bearing His name, we represent Christ in this world, and it ought to be our great joy, the joy of the bride to share with everyone how good our husband is!