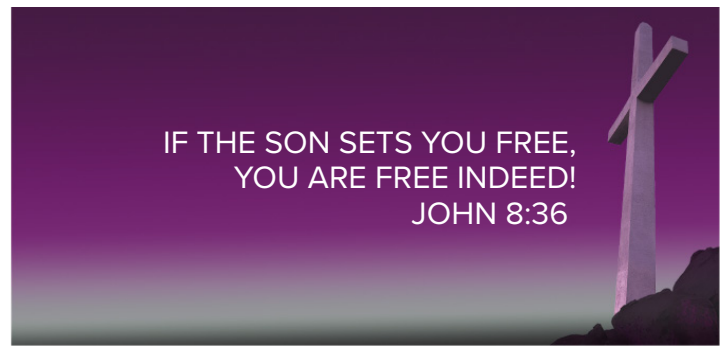


Jesus IOI

“Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” –Revelation 19:7

A few years ago, we celebrated my parents’ fiftieth wedding anniversary, and it was a most joyful occasion. At the entrance of the hall where the festivities were taking place, there were various exhibits displayed, including wedding gifts and my mother’s wedding dress. In the photos of the wedding, my mother looks truly stunning, and my father has a sparkle in his eyes as they are leaving the church, as if saying, “She is all mine from this day forward!”

Can you imagine what we will feel when we finally meet our heavenly Bridegroom, who gave His life for us? Can you imagine how eager Jesus is to take us home? In order to fully savor the Scriptural metaphor of marriage relating to the final union of Jesus with His church, Dr. Ranko Stefanovic helps us understand a wedding in the first century: “The Hebrew wedding usually began with the betrothal at the house of the bride’s father, where the groom paid the dowry. The two were, afterwards, considered husband and wife. The groom then returned to his father’s house to prepare the place where he and his bride would live. During that time the bride stayed at her father’s home preparing herself for the wedding. When both the place and the bride were ready, the bridegroom would return to take the bride to his father’s house where the wedding ceremony was to take place (cf. Matthew 25:1-10).”^{*} Yet, unlike in regular weddings, in this final wedding, the Lamb who is the Bridegroom, does everything for the bride: He becomes the dowry, giving up His own life for her. He washes the bride clean. He provides the white dress. He does everything! The bride just loves Him back because He first loved her, and pledges allegiance to her Beloved. Check out all that He has done to make sure the bride is ready: “Christ also 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, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory” (Ephesians 5:25-27). You are loved! Jesus can’t wait to take you home!

^{*}*Ranko Stefanovic, Revelation of Jesus Christ, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2009), 553.*

Talbot, Elizabeth *Jesus Wins!*, p. 53.