

John 3:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

Analysis

John uses wedding imagery: 'He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.' John is the 'friend'—the best man—whose role is to serve the bridegroom's purposes. The bride belongs to Jesus; John's joy is hearing the bridegroom's voice and seeing the wedding proceed. Completed mission brings joy, not jealousy.

Historical Context

The 'friend of the bridegroom' (shoshben) had important duties in Jewish weddings—arranging, preparing, facilitating. But the wedding wasn't about him. John perfectly fulfilled his role; now joy replaces any sense of displacement. Israel is the bride; Jesus is the bridegroom; John is the facilitator.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does the 'friend of the bridegroom' role model proper understanding of Christian ministry?
2. What brings joy to those who properly understand their role as pointing to Christ?

Interlinear Text

ἡ ἔχων ἡ νύμφην νυμφίου ἐστίν· ἡ δὲ
which He that hath which the bride of the bridegroom is which but
G3588 G2192 G3588 G3565 G3566 G2076 G3588 G1161

φίλος ἡ νυμφίου ἡ ἐστηκώς καὶ ἀκούων
the friend which of the bridegroom which standeth and heareth
G5384 G3588 G3566 G3588 G2476 G2532 G191

αὐτοῦ χαρὰ χαίρει διὰ ἡ φωνὴν ἡ νυμφίου
him greatly rejoiceth because which voice which of the bridegroom
G846 G5479 G5463 G1223 G3588 G5456 G3588 G3566

αὕτη οὖν ἡ χαρὰ ἡ ἐμὴ πεπλήρωται
this therefore which greatly which my is fulfilled
G3778 G3767 G3588 G5479 G3588 G1699 G4137

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 54:5 (Parallel theme): For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Hosea 2:19 (Parallel theme): And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies.

Matthew 9:15 (Parallel theme): And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

Ezekiel 16:8 (Parallel theme): Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

Revelation 21:9 (Parallel theme): And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

John 16:24 (Parallel theme): Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Philippians 2:2 (Parallel theme): Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

1 John 1:4 (Parallel theme): And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

2 Corinthians 11:2 (Parallel theme): For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Luke 15:6 (Parallel theme): And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.