

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

ἥ	ἔχων	ἥ	νύμφην	νυμφίου	ἔστιν·	ἥ	δὲ
which	He that hath	which	the bride	of the bridegroom	is	which	but
G3588	G2192	G3588	G3565	G3566	G2076	G3588	G1161
φίλος	ἥ	νυμφίου	ἥ	ἔστηκὼς	καὶ	ἀκούων	
the friend	which	of the bridegroom	which	standeth	and	heareth	
G5384	G3588	G3566	G3588	G2476	G2532	G191	
αὐτοῦ	χαρὰ	χαίρει	διὰ	ἥ	φωνὴν	ἥ	νυμφίου
him	greatly	rejoiceth	because	which	voice	which	of the bridegroom
G846	G5479	G5463	G1223	G3588	G5456	G3588	G3566
αὕτη	οὖν	ἥ	χαρὰ	ἥ	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.