

Luke 5:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

Analysis

Can ye make children bridechamber fast while bridegroom is with them. Rhetorical question expects no. Children *nymphōnos* wedding guests attendants. Bridechamber wedding hall. Fast *nēsteusai* abstain food. While *en hō* during time. Bridegroom *nymphios* groom. Is with them presence. Fasting is mourning bridegroom presence is joy. Cannot mourn while celebrating. Jesus self-identification as bridegroom. Old Testament imagery God as husband Israel as bride. Jesus claiming divine prerogatives. Reformed theology sees Christ as husband church as bride. Intimate covenant relationship. Marriage most intimate human relationship pictures Christ and church.

Historical Context

Bridegroom imagery rich Old Testament background. Isaiah Jeremiah Hosea depict God as husband Israel as bride. Jewish weddings week-long celebrations feasting. Fasting during wedding inappropriate. Jesus presence is ultimate celebration. He brings kingdom inaug urates new age. Disciples experience joy now though suffering awaits. Early church maintained tension joy in Christ suffering in world. Paradox of Christian life. Modern church sometimes loses this balance either triumphalism no suffering or pessimism no joy. Biblical Christianity holds both.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus self-identification as bridegroom reveal about His relationship with disciples church?
2. How does bridegroom imagery challenge both joyless religion and superficial triumphalism?

Interlinear Text

ο	δε	εἰπεν	πρὸς	αὐτῶν	Μὴ	δύνασθε	τοὺς	υἱοὺς
G3588	And	he said	unto	them	G3361	Can ye	G3588	the children
G1161	G2036	G4314	G846		G1410		G5207	
τοῦ	νυμφῶνος	ἐν	ῳ	ο	νυμφίος	μετ'	αὐτῶν	
G3588	of the bridechamber	G1722	while	G3588	the bridegroom	with	them	
G3567	G3567	G3739		G3566		G3326	G846	
ἐστιν	ποιῆσαι	νηστεύειν						
is	make	fast						
G2076	G4160	G3522						

Additional Cross-References

John 3:29 (Parallel theme): 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.

Isaiah 62:5 (Parallel theme): For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

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.

Matthew 22:2 (Parallel theme): The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

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.

Zephaniah 3:17 (Parallel theme): The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

Song of Solomon 5:8: I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

Song of Solomon 6:1: Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.