

Mark 2:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

Analysis

Jesus responds with a rhetorical question comparing His disciples to wedding guests ('children of the bridechamber'). Wedding guests don't fast during celebration because it's inappropriate. Jesus identifies Himself as the bridegroom, a messianic title rich with Old Testament significance. God repeatedly portrays Himself as Israel's husband (Isaiah 54:5; 62:5; Hosea 2:16). By claiming the bridegroom role, Jesus asserts deity and announces that the promised marriage between God and His people is being consummated in His ministry. Reformed theology sees the church as Christ's bride (Ephesians 5:25-27), experiencing betrothal now and consummation at His return.

Historical Context

Jewish weddings were week-long celebrations featuring feasting, music, and joy. Wedding guests were released from certain religious obligations to participate fully. The bridegroom was the feast's center, honored and attended by special companions. Jesus' metaphor would have resonated immediately. The Old Testament frequently used marriage imagery for God's covenant relationship with Israel. Jesus applies this imagery to Himself, claiming messianic identity and inaugurating the new covenant.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does viewing Jesus as bridegroom deepen your understanding of salvation as intimate relationship?
2. What practical difference does Christ's presence make in your daily experience of joy?
3. How does the marriage metaphor affect your understanding of devotion and faithfulness to Christ?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	εἶπεν	αὐτῶν	ό	Ἰησοῦς	Μὴ	δύνανται	οἱ	νιόι
And	said	them	G3588	Jesus	G3361	Can	G3588	the children
G2532	G2036	G846		G2424		G1410		G5207
τοῦ	νυμφῶνος		ἐν	ῷ	ό	νυμφίον	μεθ"	αὐτῶν
G3588	of the bridechamber		while	G3739	G3588	the bridegroom	with	them
		G3567		G1722		G3566	G3326	G846
ἐστιν	νηστεύειν	ὅσον	χρόνον	μεθ"	έαυτῶν	ἔχουσιν		
is	fast	as long as	G5550	with	them	they have		
G2076	G3522	G3745		G3326	G1438			G2192
τὸν	νυμφίον	οὐ	δύνανται	νηστεύειν				
G3588	the bridegroom	they cannot		Can		fast		
	G3566	G3756		G1410		G3522		

