

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

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

