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The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Joy, Righteousness, and the Word of God

Revelation 19:7-10, *Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.⁹ Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”¹⁰ And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”*

Overview

Verses	Content
V 7a	The Command to Rejoice: 'Let us be glad and rejoice'
V 7b	The Announcement: 'The marriage of the Lamb has come'
V 7c–8	The Bride: Her Readiness and Her Righteousness

Verses	Content
V 9	The Beatitude: 'Blessed are those called to the marriage supper'
V 10	The Rebuke: John's Misdirected Worship and Its Correction

Introduction.

✦ The Wedding That Changed a Nation — Cana of Galilee, c. AD 29

It was the third day of a village wedding in Cana of Galilee. Weddings in first-century Jewish culture were not afternoon ceremonies followed by a reception. They were week-long celebrations, the most socially significant events in community life. The entire village participated. The host family's honour was bound up in the lavishness of the provision.

When the wine ran out, it was not merely an inconvenience. It was a social catastrophe. In a culture where hospitality was a matter of family honour, to run short at your own wedding feast was a shame that could follow a family for a generation.

Mary came to her Son.

Jesus said: *'My hour has not yet come.'*

Then He turned 120 gallons of water into wine, and not ordinary wine. The master of the feast declared it the best wine, saved until last.

John records this miracle as the first of Jesus' signs — the act that *'manifested His glory'* (**John 2:11**). It is no accident that His

ministry began at a wedding feast and that it will culminate at one. The first sign was a preview of the final celebration.

- At Cana, Jesus supplied the wine.
- At the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, He is the Bridegroom.

Revelation 19:7–10 is the announcement of that final feast. The wedding the whole of Scripture has been moving toward has arrived.

The Bridegroom is the Lamb.

The bride is the Church.

The guests are the blessed of every age. And this time, the wine will never run out.

Revelation 19:7–10 is one of the most compressed and theologically dense passages in the entire Bible. **Four verses. Four staggering truths.**

In the span of a paragraph, John records:

- The announcement of the most anticipated event in redemptive history.
- The nature and preparation of the bride,
- The most intimate beatitude in Revelation.
- A sharp corrective to misdirected worship that every generation of the church needs to hear.

This is not a transitional passage. It is a summit.

To understand it fully, we must understand the Jewish marriage customs it draws upon, the Old Testament betrothal imagery it fulfils, and the New Testament theology of the church as the bride of Christ that reaches its consummation here.

Context.

The previous passage (**Revelation 19:1–6**) gave us four Hallelujahs of heaven celebrating the fall of Babylon and declaring the omnipotent reign of God.

The passage that follows (**Revelation 19:11–21**) will give us the return of Christ on the white horse and the final battle.

Between those two great events, John gives us this passage (**Revelation 19:7–10**) the announcement of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

This positioning is deliberate.

The Marriage Supper is the bridge between the judgment of the enemy (Babylon's fall, the beast's defeat) and the establishment of the Kingdom.

You cannot have the wedding until the old order has been removed. You cannot begin the eternal celebration until the mourners have been silenced.

The hallelujahs of **V 1–6** clear the stage.

V 7–10 announce the event.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is not a metaphor for something else — it is a literal event in the prophetic calendar, the eternal celebration of the union between Christ and His redeemed people.

But it is simultaneously the fulfilment of every metaphor of intimate relationship between God and His people that runs through the entire canon: the covenant at Sinai, the Song of Solomon, the betrothal language of the prophets, and the parable of the ten virgins.

When the announcement comes, it carries the weight of every promise God has ever made about dwelling with His people.

Verse Range	Movement in Chapter 19
V 1–3	The great multitude praises God for Babylon's fall.
V 4	The elders and living creatures confirm: Amen, Alleluia!
V 5	Voice from the throne: 'Praise God, all His servants'.
V 6	Final Hallelujah: 'The Lord God Omnipotent reigns'.
V 7–10	The Marriage Supper announced — THIS PASSAGE.
V 11–16	The Rider on the white horse. Christ returns in glory.
V 17–21	The great supper of God. Judgment of the beast.

I. The Command to Rejoice.

Revelation 19:7, *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory."*

Three verbs — An escalating summons

The verse opens with three verbs in rapid succession.

- 'Be glad' (chairōmen),
- 'Rejoice' (agalliōmen), and
- 'Give glory' (dōsomen).

Each one intensifies the call of the previous:

Verb	Meaning and Significance
Chairōmen: 'Be glad'	From chairō, the ordinary Greek word for joy, used frequently in the New Testament for the joy of salvation. It is the settled, inward joy of those who know their standing before God.
Agalliōmen. 'Rejoice'	— From agalliaō an intensified, exuberant, exultant joy. The word is used of the leaping of John the Baptist in the womb (Luke 1:44), of Abraham rejoicing to see Christ's day (John 8:56), and of the joy of heaven at the conversion of one sinner (Luke 15:10). It is joy that cannot be contained.
Dōsomen doxan: 'Give glory'	The ultimate movement of joy and it is outward, toward God. True joy does not terminate on itself, it becomes worship. The gladness and the exultation both resolve into this: glory given to God.

*The three verbs form a theological movement that mirrors the structure of the whole passage: **inward gladness becomes outward exultation becomes ascriptive worship.***

This is the pattern of authentic Christian joy.

It is never merely emotional (though it is emotional).

It is never merely intellectual (though it engages the mind).

It culminates in the giving of glory to God — which is the purpose for which the redeemed were created and the activity in which they will spend eternity.

Who is speaking?

The shift from 'they' (the great multitude of **V 6**) to 'us' (**V 7**) is significant.

The same multitude that declared God's reign now calls itself and by implication the reader into the celebration.

The 'us' is inclusive: every redeemed soul who has heard the four Hallelujahs is being summoned into the joy of the announcement that follows.

This is not a detached proclamation about something happening to others. It is a personal invitation. John is not a spectator here, but a participant.

So is every person who reads these words. The Marriage Supper is not a spectacle to be observed. It is a feast to be attended.

II. The Announcement.

Revelation 19:7, "*For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.*"

The Marriage of the Lamb — The most anticipated event in History.

The word translated 'marriage' (**gamos**) refers specifically to the wedding celebration. The public, consummating event of a betrothal relationship.

In Jewish marriage practice, a betrothal (*kiddushin*) was legally binding as binding as marriage itself, but the actual marriage ceremony (*nissu'in*), when the groom took the bride to his home, could come months or even years later.

The betrothal of Christ and His church began before time. It was established in the eternal covenant of redemption, enacted at the cross, ratified in the resurrection, and is being lived out through the age of the church. The bride has been betrothed to the Lamb since the foundation of the world.

But the wedding ceremony, the consummation of that relationship in the full, visible, eternal union has not yet come until now.

'The marriage of the Lamb has come'

It has arrived, it is here, it is begun.

The Jewish Marriage — Three Stages

Understanding the three-stage Jewish marriage ceremony is essential to understanding how the New Testament describes the relationship between Christ and the church and what **Revelation 19:7** announces.

Stage	Jewish Custom	Spiritual Fulfilment
Betrothal (<i>Kiddushin</i>)	Arranged by the father of the groom. Legally binding. Involved payment of the bride price (mohar). The couple were legally	Established in eternity past, enacted at the cross (1 Corinthians 6:20 , 'You were bought at a price'). The church is legally bound to Christ now.

Stage	Jewish Custom	Spiritual Fulfilment
	married but did not yet live together.	
Preparation (Interval)	The groom returned to his father's house to prepare a dwelling. The bride prepared herself to gather her trousseau, adorning herself. Duration: 12 months to years.	The current age of the church. Christ has gone to His Father's house (John 14:2–3). The bride (the church) is being prepared through sanctification (Ephesians 5:25–27).
Wedding (<i>Nissu'in</i>)	The groom came for the bride often at midnight with a procession of friends. The bride was taken to his home. The wedding feast followed, lasting 7 days.	The Second Coming. Christ returns for His bride (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17). The Marriage Supper of the Lamb. The eternal celebration begins. Revelation 19:7 .

The entire New Testament lives in the second stage — the interval of preparation.

*Christ has gone to prepare a place (**John 14:2**).*

*The bride is being prepared through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and the Word (**Ephesians 5:26–27**).*

The church age is not a parenthesis in God's plan — it is the betrothal period, the time of preparation, the season when the bride is made ready.

Every act of sanctification, every sermon heard, every prayer offered, every trial endured that produces Christ-likeness is part of the bride making herself ready.

***Revelation 19:7** announces that the preparation is complete. The groom has come. The wedding begins.*

'The Lamb' — Why this title at the wedding?

The Bridegroom is not called 'the King' or 'the Lord' or 'the Son of Man' at this moment. He is called 'the Lamb' (**Arnion**) the same title first used in **Revelation 5:6**, where He appeared as '*a Lamb as though it had been slain.*'

This is the title of sacrificial love, of redemptive suffering, of the One who purchased the bride at the cost of His own blood.

The reason this title matters at the wedding is this: the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is not a celebration of power, but it is a celebration of grace.

The Bridegroom who comes for His bride is the same One who died for her.

The wedding is the completion of what the cross began. The One who bore her sins is now taking her home. The title 'Lamb' at the wedding feast is a permanent reminder of what it cost to make it possible.

Ephesians 5:25–27, "*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious*

church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."

Application: The Church's present life is a life of Preparation!

If the current age is the betrothal period, the season of preparation then the question for every believer is: **how seriously are you taking the preparation?**

The Jewish bride in the betrothal period did not live as though the wedding were indefinitely postponed. She lived in daily readiness, daily beautification, daily anticipation.

The church that loses its eschatological expectation that stops looking for the Bridegroom, loses its motivation for holiness, its urgency in mission, and its sense of identity.

We are not a social club, a political organisation, or a self-help community. We are the bride of Christ in the betrothal period, being made ready for the most glorious event in eternity.

Matthew 25:10, *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut."*

III. The Bride.

Revelation 19:7-8, *"And His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."*

The two verbs: 'Made Herself Ready' and 'Granted'

One of the most theologically precise moments in the passage is the relationship between two verbs in **V 7–8**,

'Has made herself ready' and 'it was granted.'

At first glance they might seem in tension, did she prepare herself, or was she granted the preparation?

The answer is both, and understanding how is crucial.

'Has made herself ready' is she acted. The bride's preparation is genuine, active, real. She is not a passive recipient of a makeover. The sanctification of the bride involves real human response:

- Repentance,
- Obedience,
- Faith,
- Perseverance,
- Putting off of sin and
- Putting on of Christ.

'It was granted' means it was given to her by God.

The readiness she has achieved has been enabled entirely by divine grace. She cannot take credit for the preparation, but it was granted. But she is genuinely prepared because God graciously equipped and enabled her for it.

This is the classic Reformed doctrine of sanctification in one sentence: the bride made herself ready and it was granted to her. Human responsibility and divine sovereignty are not in competition. God's grace does not eliminate the bride's genuine activity; it produces it.

Philippians 2:12–13, *'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.'*

You work because He works.

You are ready because He granted it.

Fine Linen — The Garment of the Bride

In Revelation, clothing carries profound theological significance. The harlot of **Revelation 17:4**, *'clothed in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls'*

External adornment purchased with corruption. The bride's clothing could not be more different: fine linen, clean, and bright.

The contrast is comprehensive and deliberate.

The Harlot's Clothing	The Bride's Clothing
Purple and scarlet — colours of earthly wealth and power.	Fine linen — the simplest, purest fabric. White not coloured
Adorned with gold, jewels, pearls — externally applied decorations.	Clean and bright — qualities of character, not accessories
Purchased through exploitation and corruption.	Granted by God — given, not earned.
Concealing what is underneath (the cup of abominations, 17:4)	Revealing what is underneath — the righteous acts of the saints.

'The righteous acts of the saints' — What the fine linen is?

John does not leave the symbolism of the fine linen unexplained. **V 8**, provides the interpretation.

'For the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.'

The bride adorning herself for the wedding favours the sense of deeds the accumulated acts of faithfulness, obedience, service, love, and perseverance that constitute a life lived in response to grace.

This is not a works-righteousness passage. The bride does not earn her place at the wedding by her deeds.

She was granted the garment. But the granted garment itself is pure and clean and bright is made up of her righteous acts.

The grace that saves also produces the righteousness that adorns. The deeds are real, they are hers, and they make up the fabric of her wedding dress.

◆ The Wedding Dress Kept in the Box

In many families, a mother's wedding dress is kept in a special box preserved for decades, sometimes passed down to daughters. There is something deeply moving about the care taken to preserve it: the careful folding, the acid-free tissue paper, the climate-controlled storage.

The dress is not merely a garment. It carries the weight of a moment, a covenant, a life.

But there is a difference between a dress that has been stored and a dress that has been lived in that carries in its fabric the story of the one who wore it.

The bride of **Revelation 19** does not arrive at the wedding with a borrowed dress retrieved from storage. Her wedding dress has been woven from her own life — from every act of love, every sacrifice of obedience, every tear shed in the service of God, every morning she got up and chose the Lamb over the world.

The fine linen, clean and bright, is the righteous acts of the saints. It is made of their lives. And it was granted to them by God who

worked in them to produce the very fabric of the garment He would present them wearing.

The bride as a community, not just an individual.

It is worth pausing to note that the bride in **Revelation 19** is not an individual, but she is a corporate entity.

She is the church, the people of God, the complete company of the redeemed across all ages and nations.

The fine linen is made up of the 'righteous acts of the saints' plural saints, contributing collectively to the corporate garment.

This means that every believer's life of faithfulness contributes to the beauty of the whole. The anonymous act of kindness, the prayer no one hears, the offering no one sees, the word of encouragement in an ordinary moment, all of it goes into the fabric.

The bride's dress is woven from the combined righteous acts of all who have ever loved Christ. No single thread is wasted.

*The bride is not the Western ideal of a solo individual in a white dress. She is the entire church of every age, nation, language, and culture the great multitude of **Revelation 7:9**, dressed in the linen of their combined faithfulness.*

When you live a life of righteousness in Christ, you are not merely being personally holy. You are contributing a thread to the wedding dress of the people of God.

Application: The acts of your daily life are being woven into eternity.

If the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints, then no act of faithfulness is insignificant. The visit to the hospital, the

conversation about Christ, the forgiveness extended at personal cost, the integrity maintained when no one is watching. These are not lost in the noise of history. They are being woven, by God's grace, into something that will be displayed in eternity.

1 Corinthians 3:12–15 describes the judgment seat of Christ, where each believer's works are tested by fire. What is gold, silver, and precious stones genuine acts of righteousness in and through Christ survives.

The pattern of **Revelation 19:8** and **1 Corinthians 3** are the same: what you do in this life in the power of the Spirit, in response to God's grace, endures. It becomes part of the fabric you will wear.

1 Corinthians 3:13–14, *"If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."*

IV. The Beatitude.

Revelation 19:9, *"Then he said to me, 'Write: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' And he said to me, 'These are the true sayings of God.'"*

The Fourth Beatitude of Revelation

This is the **fourth of seven beatitudes** in Revelation (**1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14**).

The word 'blessed' (***makarios***) is the same word Jesus used in the Beatitudes of Matthew 5.

The word that describes the deep, divine happiness of those who are in right relationship with God. It is not the ordinary Greek word for happiness (eudaimōn), which depended on circumstances.

Makarios describes a happiness that transcends circumstances entirely because it is rooted in God Himself.

That this beatitude is spoken over those called to the Marriage Supper tells us something profound that the deepest happiness available to any human being is not found in any earthly achievement, relationship, or experience. It is found in being called to the feast of the Lamb.

Every other happiness is temporary and circumstantial. This happiness is eternal and unconditional.

'Those who are called'

The language of Election and Invitation

The word 'called' (***keklēmenoi***) is the Greek ***kaleō*** — the verb used throughout the New Testament for God's effective call to salvation.

Romans 8:30, *'Whom He predestined, these He also called.'*

1 Corinthians 1:9, *'God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son.'*

1 Peter 2:9, *'You are a chosen generation... that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.'*

The call to the Marriage Supper is not an open invitation that may or may not be accepted, but it is the sovereign, effective call of God that brings the invited guests to the feast. Those who are called are those who will come.

The blessing is not conditional on performance, but it is the blessing of those who have received the call of God and responded.

*There is a distinction in **Revelation 19** between **two groups**:
The bride (the church — the corporate people of God) and
The wedding guests (those called to the supper).*

*Some interpreters see these as separate — Old Testament saints,
Tribulation saints, or others distinct from the church.*

*Others see the bride and the guests as the same company viewed
from different angles — the people of God as both participants in
the union and celebrants of the feast.*

*Either way, both groups are distinguished by one thing: they were
called by God. The calling is not the worthiness but the
qualification.*

'These are the true sayings of God'

The seal of certainty

This phrase is a solemn verification formula.

It appears three times in Revelation (**19:9**; **21:5**; **22:6**) and functions as a divine seal on the promises being declared.

God Himself is testifying to the reliability of what has just been announced.

The angel adds this seal at this specific moment because the announcement of the Marriage Supper is so staggering, so beyond ordinary human experience, that it requires divine attestation.

Is it really true that the redeemed will be called to the wedding feast of the Lamb?

Is it really true that this moment will come?

God says that these are My true sayings. Bank on them.

Occurrence Revelation	in	Context
Revelation 19:9		The Marriage Supper of the Lamb: sealing the truth of the beatitude and the invitation.
Revelation 21:5		The new creation: <i>'Behold, I make all things new... Write, for these words are true and faithful.'</i>
Revelation 22:6		The final conclusion: <i>'These words are faithful and true, and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.'</i>

The three occurrences bracket the most staggering promises of the entire book.

Each time God says 'these are true sayings,' He is staking His own character on the fulfilment of what He has announced.

When God says it is true, it is the most secure guarantee in the universe.

Application: The invitation has already been extended. The question is whether you have accepted it?

The beatitude of **V 9** is spoken over 'those who are called.'

But the Gospels make clear that the call comes through the preaching of the gospel.

The parable of the wedding feast in **Matthew 22** shows servants going out into the highways and byways, compelling people to come in.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is not a private event with a fixed guest list that excludes you. It is a feast that God is filling and the invitation is extended to all who will hear and come.

Matthew 22:9–10, *"Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding." ¹⁰ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests."*

The blessing of **V 9** is the deepest divine happiness which is available to every person in this room who will receive the call.

The Marriage Supper has room. The linen is being woven. The feast is being prepared. The question is not whether there is a place for you. The question is whether you are coming.

V. The rebuke.

Revelation 19:10, *"And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'"*

John falls at the angel's feet

The announcement of the Marriage Supper has overwhelmed John. The reality of it, the beauty of the bride's preparation, the beatitude spoken over the called, the divine seal of certainty and it is more than he can take in standing up.

He falls at the feet of the angel who has been speaking to him.

This is not a calculated theological error. This is a man in a state of spiritual and emotional overwhelm, responding instinctively to the most glorious messenger he has ever encountered.

John has already seen the glorified Christ, the throne of God, the four living creatures. Yet this angel's proclamation so overwhelms him that he prostrates himself in worship.

It is worth sitting with the humanity of this moment.

John was the beloved disciple. He had reclined on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper. He had stood at the foot of the cross. He had seen the risen Lord. He was the apostle most associated with love and intimacy with Christ. And he got this wrong.

The capacity for misdirected worship is not a sign of weak faith or shallow spirituality. John's error happened at the peak of a revelation — at the moment of greatest spiritual intensity, when the most glorious things had just been announced. If anything, John's error tells us that the more overwhelmed we are by the things of God, the more careful we need to be about where that overwhelm is directed. Emotional intensity in worship is not a guarantee of theological accuracy in worship.

The Angel's response.

The angel's correction is swift, clear, and complete. It comes in four movements.

The Angel's Correction	What It Teaches
'See that you do not do that!'	A sharp, present-tense prohibition. Stop this, immediately. The angel does not gently redirect, he firmly refuses. Wrong worship is not gently accommodated

The Angel's Correction	What It Teaches
	even when it flows from genuine overwhelming reverence.
'I am your fellow servant'	The angel defines himself by his function as servant. Not a deity, not an intermediary between God and man, not an object of worship. An angel is a servant of God, just as John is. They are colleagues, not superior and inferior in the way that would justify worship.
'And of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus'	The angel is also a fellow servant of those who bear witness to Jesus. Connecting himself to the entire company of prophets and witnesses. This demarcates the community of worship. It consists of those who testify to Jesus, and the object of their worship is God.
'Worship God!'	The entire correction resolves into this command. Two words in Greek (tō Theō proskuneō meaning to bow down, to adore, to render worship). The energy that was about to go to the angel is redirected entirely to God. This is the universal corrective for every form of misdirected worship.

'The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy'

The angel closes with one of the most theologically important statements in Revelation.

'For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'

This phrase has generated significant discussion among commentators. Two main interpretations:

Interpretation	Explanation
Jesus is the content of all prophecy	All genuine prophecy from Genesis to Revelation has Jesus as its ultimate content and goal. The spirit that drives prophecy, the soul of the prophetic enterprise, is the testimony about Jesus. This interpretation is supported by Luke 24:27 (Jesus explaining that all the Scriptures spoke of Him) and John 5:39 ('the Scriptures... testify of Me').
Testimony about Jesus produces prophetic ministry	Those who bear witness to Jesus are, by that very act, operating in the spirit of prophecy. The prophetic calling and the witnessing calling are inseparable: both are driven by the same testimony of Jesus. 'The testimony of Jesus' is the defining characteristic of the true prophet.

Both interpretations are true and complementary.

Jesus is the content of all prophecy. He is what the prophets were pointing to. Those who testify about Jesus are those in whom the prophetic spirit operates.

The angel is saying that I am a servant, just as the prophets were servants. We are all testifying to Jesus. Worship the One we are all pointing to.

The statement 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy' is one of the great hermeneutical keys of Scripture.

It means that any alleged prophecy or spiritual experience that does not testify to Jesus — that centre on the prophet, the experience, the angel, or any other intermediary — has missed the spirit of genuine prophecy.

The corrective to every form of mysticism, charismatic excess, angel-worship, saint-veneration, and prophetic narcissism is this single sentence: the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. If it does not point to Jesus, it is not genuine.

John makes this mistake again.

One of the most striking details of this passage is that John makes this exact mistake twice.

He also falls at the feet of the angel in **Revelation 22:8–9**, and receives the identical rebuke.

John, the apostle of love, the author of the Gospel that most clearly proclaims the deity of Christ fell in worship at the feet of an angel not once but twice.

Why does John record his own repeated failure?

Because it is a pastoral gift to the church.

If John can make this mistake twice, anyone can. The warning is for every generation. In moments of spiritual intensity, at the edge of revelation, when the things of God overwhelm your capacity to process them, there is a strong pull toward worshipping the messenger rather than the Source.

The rebuke is preserved in Scripture precisely so that every reader encounters it. See that you do not do that. Worship God.

The relevance for today: What do we Worship at the edge of Revelation?

John fell at the feet of an angel.

The modern equivalents are numerous.

- Movements that centre on the experience rather than Christ.
- Churches where the worship leader is effectively adored.
- Ministries where the founder's authority becomes functionally indistinguishable from divine authority.
- Mystical traditions where encounters with spiritual beings (whether angels, visions, or 'spirit guides') are treated as objects of reverence.
- Any system where something other than God Himself is the terminal object of devotion.

The angel's rebuke is always the same.

See that you do not do that. Worship God. The testimony of Jesus, not the experience, not the angel, not the prophet, not the movement, not the church, is the spirit of prophecy.

Everything genuine points to Him. Everything genuine bows before Him. Everything genuine says Worship God.

Isaiah 42:8, *"I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images."*

Application: Test every spiritual experience by whether it points to Christ?

The test of any genuine spiritual experience: vision, dream, sense of divine presence, powerful preaching, moving worship, apparent miracle is not its emotional intensity, its theological novelty, or its social impact.

The test is this: **does it testify to Jesus?**
Does it produce worship of God?
Does it leave you more in awe of Christ, or more in awe of the experience?

The angel of **Revelation 19** had just announced the Marriage Supper of the Lamb — the most glorious event in redemptive history. And his immediate response when John fell at his feet was: Worship God. If an angel announcing the Marriage Supper deflects worship from himself to God, how much more should any human messenger, ministry, or experience deflect attention from itself to Christ?

Old Testament Background: The BRIDE and BRIDEGROOM.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Revelation 19 is the culmination of one of the great sustained metaphors of Scripture. The covenant relationship between God and His people as a marriage. This metaphor runs from Sinai to Revelation.

Text	The Marriage Theme
Exodus 19:5–6	God's covenant with Israel at Sinai has the structure of a marriage covenant: ' <i>You shall be My own possession... a holy nation.</i> ' God is the initiating party; Israel is the covenant partner.
Hosea 2:19–20	<i>'I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy... and you shall know the LORD.'</i> God speaks as a jilted husband who will restore His unfaithful wife through

Text	The Marriage Theme
	new betrothal. Hosea's own marriage to Gomer is the enacted parable.
Isaiah 54:5–6	<i>'For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name.'</i> Isaiah addresses Israel as a wife restored — abandoned briefly but brought back with everlasting kindness.
Ezekiel 16	The most extended and painful use of the marriage metaphor. God describes His relationship with Jerusalem as a marriage corrupted by her harlotry. The same language John uses for Babylon in Revelation 17–18, applied historically to unfaithful Israel.
Song of Solomon	The entire book is read in the Jewish tradition as an allegory of the love between God and Israel; in the Christian tradition as the love between Christ and His church. It is the lyric poetry of covenant love, pointing forward to the Marriage Supper.
John 3:29	John the Baptist identifies himself as <i>'the friend of the bridegroom'</i> not the bridegroom himself. Jesus is the Bridegroom. The Baptist's joy is to hear the Bridegroom's voice and step aside.
2 Corinthians 11:2	Paul: <i>'I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.'</i> The church is the betrothed bride; Paul is the father's friend who arranged the match.
Ephesians 5:25–32	Human marriage is a living parable of Christ and the church. The husband's love is modelled

Text	The Marriage Theme
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on Christ's love for the church. The wife's submission mirrors the church's submission to Christ. Marriage as an institution exists to display the gospel.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb does not come out of nowhere. It is the destination toward which three thousand years of Scripture have been pointing.

From God clothing Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21 — the first gift of righteousness to cover shame) to the fine linen of Revelation 19:8, the story has been moving toward this moment: the Lamb and His bride, face to face, forever, the shame gone, the garment pure, the feast never-ending.

Conclusion.

Four Verses. Four Truths. One Destiny.

Revelation 19:7–10 gives the church four truths that define her present identity and her eternal destiny.

Truth	What it means for the Church now
The marriage of the Lamb has come (V7b)	History has a destination. The long betrothal period, the entire age of the church ends at a wedding feast. Nothing in this world's calendar matters more than whether you will be there.

Truth	What it means for the Church now
The bride has made herself ready, arrayed in fine linen (V7c–8)	The life you live now is weaving the fabric of eternity. Every act of righteousness in Christ is a thread in the wedding garment of the people of God. Your daily faithfulness matters cosmically.
Blessed are those called to the marriage supper (V 9)	The deepest happiness available to any human being is the blessing of the one who is called. This blessing is available now — received through faith in the gospel, lived in anticipation of the feast.
Worship God (V10)	In all the overwhelming beauty of revelation, the corrective is always the same: Worship God. Not the experience, not the messenger, not the movement — God. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of all genuine prophecy.

◆ The Return of the Prisoners — The Philippines, 1945

On **January 30, 1945**, **121 American Rangers and 250 Filipino guerrillas** mounted a daring raid on the **Cabanatuan prisoner-of-war camp in the Philippines**.

Inside the camp were **511 American and Allied prisoners** who had survived the **Bataan Death March** and **three years of brutal captivity under the Japanese**.

Many were near death — starved, diseased, broken in body but not in spirit.

When the Rangers broke through the gates at dusk, the prisoners initially did not understand what was happening. They had been in captivity so long that liberation felt impossible.

One survivor, **Lester Tenney**, later described the moment: *'I heard shots and I thought, this is it — they are killing us. And then I saw the face of an American soldier. And I could not speak. I could not stand up. I just wept.'*

It took time for the reality to reach them. They had been waiting so long, had given up believing it would come, that when it arrived, their first response was not triumph but tears. The liberation was real. The captivity was over. But the emotional journey from prisoner to free man took more than one night.

The return of Christ for His bride will be something like this — except the waiting will not have been in vain, and the tears will be tears of joy, and no one will doubt for a moment that it is real.

The prisoners in **Revelation 19:7–10** are those who have endured the long betrothal period — some through suffering, some through martyrdom, some through the ordinary faithful grind of a life lived for Christ. And when the announcement comes — 'Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb has come' — it will not be a surprise. It will be the thing they have been waiting for all their lives.

The question is whether you are among the ready. Whether your dress is being woven. Whether you have received the call. Whether you are practising, in the daily life of the betrothal period, the worship that will one day ring around the throne: Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns — and the marriage of the Lamb has come.

Personal Challenge — Three Questions

1. Are you dressed for the wedding? The fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Is your life producing the fabric of that garment — acts of genuine righteousness in Christ, through the Spirit, in

response to grace? Not to earn your place, but because your place has been secured by the Lamb who purchased you.

2. Have you received the call? Blessed are those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The call comes through the gospel. If you have never responded to that call — if you are still outside the feast — the invitation is open. The King's servants are in the highways compelling people to come in. Today, this moment, is your invitation.

3. Are you worshipping the right One? The angel's rebuke is for every age: See that you do not do that. Worship God. Is your spiritual energy — your devotion, your enthusiasm, your time, your money — going to God, or to something that is standing in His place? The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Does your life testify to Jesus?

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is not a distant, abstract theological concept. It is a real event, on the prophetic calendar of God, toward which all of history is moving. The betrothal period is running out. The Bridegroom is preparing. The bride is being made ready.

Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory.

For the marriage of the Lamb has come.

Theological questions

Question	Insights
Who is the bride in Revelation 19:7–8 — the universal church,	Most evangelical commentators understand the bride to be the church — the body of Christ from Pentecost to

Question	Insights
the Tribulation church, Israel, or all the redeemed?	the Rapture. Some distinguish between the bride (the church) and the wedding guests (Old Testament saints, Tribulation saints). The bride is the church, and her identification with Israel and all the redeemed is a matter of progressive revelation reaching its fulfilment. The unity of the people of God in Revelation 19 is its completion.
How does 'the wife has made herself ready' relate to justification — is this works-righteousness?	No. The readiness of the bride flows entirely from grace: 'it was granted to her' (V 8). Justification is complete — the bride is already the Lamb's wife (not merely engaged). The fine linen of righteous acts describes the sanctification that flows from justification, not the basis of the relationship. Compare Ephesians 2:10, <i>'We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.'</i>
When does the Marriage Supper of the Lamb take place in the prophetic calendar?	Most premillennial commentators place it between the Rapture/Resurrection and the Second Coming: the church is taken to heaven, presented as the bride, and the Marriage Supper occurs in heaven while the Tribulation concludes on earth.

Question	Insights
	The Second Coming (19:11–21) is then Christ returning with His bride. The precise timing is debated; the fact of the event is not.
Why does John make the mistake of angel-worship twice (19:10 and 22:8–9)?	The repetition is almost certainly deliberate — either John genuinely made the mistake twice, or he records it twice as an emphatic warning for the church. In either case, the pastoral purpose is clear: the most spiritually mature, most intimately acquainted with Christ, can still misdirect worship in moments of overwhelming revelation. The warning is permanent.
What does 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy' mean for evaluating modern prophecy?	It means the test of any prophetic word or spiritual experience is: does it testify to Jesus? Does it magnify Christ, direct the hearer to Christ, produce worship of God through Christ? Any alleged prophecy that centres on the prophet, the experience, or any entity other than God has failed the primary test. This is the biblical basis for evaluating charismatic claims and all forms of special revelation.
What is the relationship between the Marriage Supper (19:9) and the Great Supper of God (19:17–18)?	The two suppers are a deliberate and devastating contrast. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is the feast of the redeemed — joy, celebration, union.

Question	Insights
	The Great Supper of God is the feast of the birds — the judgment of the beast and his armies. Two suppers, two guest lists, two utterly different outcomes. Every person will attend one or the other. The choice is made now.
