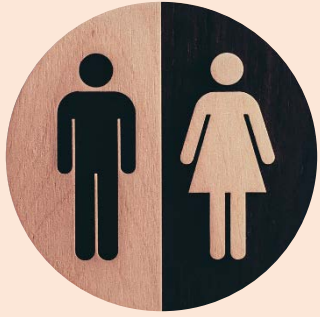


Jesus, Gender & Sexuality

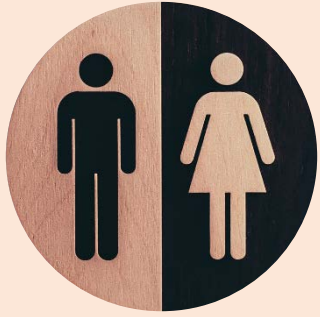
Week 5:
Jesus' Marriage





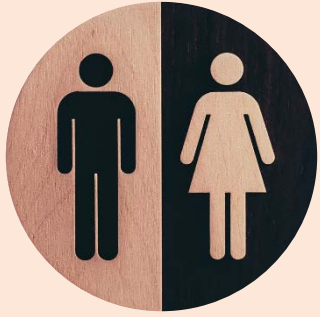
Jesus, Gender and Sexuality

- Question time after the service each week:
 - You can put your hand up ...
 - ... or ask a question at [slido.com](https://www.slido.com), #872255
 - Grab a coffee and come along – we will aim to start 5-10 minutes after the service ends.
- Aggressive questions will not be tolerated; arrogant questions will receive short shrift!
- Feedback, in person (preferably) or by email will be welcomed.



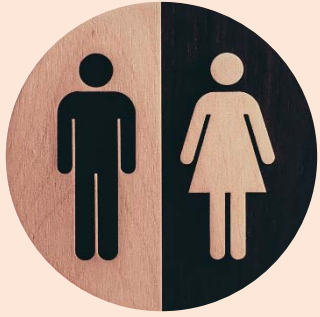
Jesus, Gender and Sexuality

- How did we get here?
 - Questions – asking and being asked.
 - There is no “them” – seeking grace and truth as sexual sinners.
 - Gender: grace to a eunuch; God “made them male and female”.
 - Sexuality: grace to idolaters; God’s will is abstinence or faithfulness.
- Today:
 - We turn our focus from sex (whose only proper place is in marriage) to marriage itself. **What is God’s purpose in marriage?**



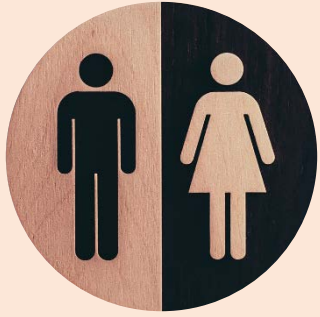
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- What is God's purpose in marriage?
 - The Creator's intention is plain, isn't it? Remember last week!
- Paul refers to the Bible's "north star" as he teaches the married:
 - "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." (Ephesians 5.31: Genesis 2.24)
- But then he says something remarkable:
 - "This is a profound mystery – *but I am talking about Christ and the church.*" (Ephesians 5.32)



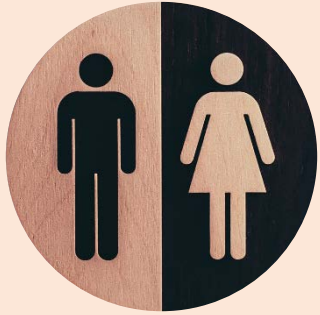
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- So what *is* God's purpose in marriage?
 - To illustrate the one and only relationship for which we were perfectly made – one that begins now and will endure into eternity: to know God.
- As single or married, we are called to bear witness to this.
 - “I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.” (1 Corinthians 7.7)



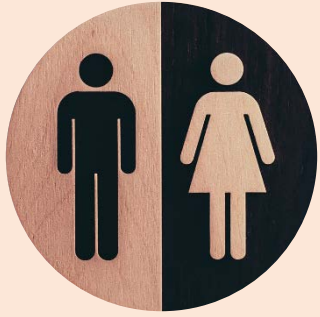
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- The married bear witness to the gospel by:
 - our *calling* to reflect the grace and faithfulness of God in our marriages,
 - and by a *contrast to the coming age*: we were made for a union that is eternal, not finite; perfect, not flawed.
- The single bear witness to the gospel by:
 - our *calling* to demonstrate the sufficiency of Christ in our singleness,
 - and by *similarity to the coming age*: we were made for union with Christ, not another person:
 - “At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage.” (Mt 22.30)



Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- Marriage is a “parable” in both Old and New Testaments:
 - God is the faithful husband: the passionate, faithful lover of his people.
 - We are the faithless wife: yet loved, restored and renewed.
- The Law: for example, Exodus 34.11-16
 - “The Lord’s jealousy for his wife Israel requires that she offer her devotion to no other lover, just as a man will share his wife with no other.”
- The Prophets (frequently) – for example Ezekiel 16 and Jeremiah 3.



Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- Ezekiel 16

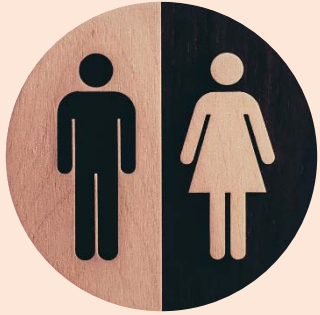
- The Lord takes Israel as his bride (v1-14)

- She had no noble heritage (v3), no one to love her (v4-5). The Lord gave her life (v6): this is the gospel!

- She grew into sexual maturity (v7) and the Lord married her (v8). The Lord lavished his love on her (v9-14): this is the foundation of the gospel!

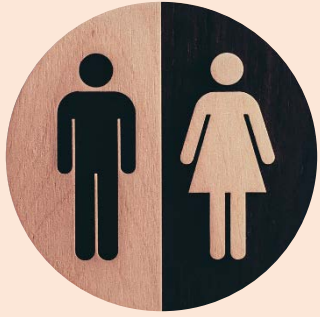
- Israel “played the whore” (v15-58)

- She used her God-given beauty to engage in prostitution – pagan rites and other idolatrous practices. She forgot all the Lord had done and her prostitution increased – but the Lord will rebuke and renew.



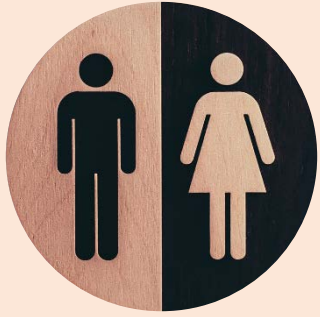
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- The Lord promises a new covenant (v59-63):
 - “I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an **everlasting** covenant. . . . when I **atone** for you for all that you have done, declares the Lord GOD.” (v61,63)
- Jeremiah 3 – “I am merciful” (v12)
 - “I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries.” (v8)
 - “‘Return, faithless people,’ declares the LORD, ‘for I am your husband.’” (v14)



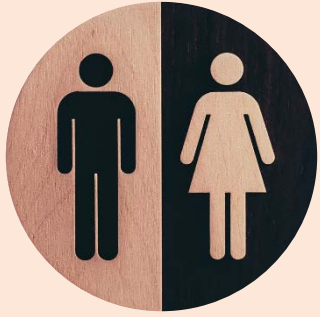
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- Jesus also describes spiritual faithlessness in sexual language:
 - “A wicked and *adulterous* generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.” (Matthew 12.39)
 - “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this *adulterous* and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.” (Mark 8.38)
- But now the husband-saviour has come!



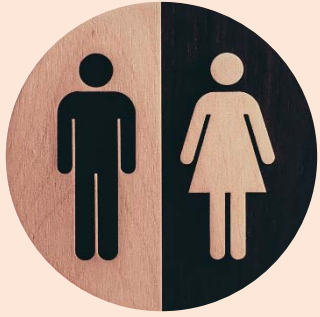
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- Jesus is the bridegroom ...
 - “How is it ... your disciples do not fast?” Jesus answered, ‘How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them?’” (Matthew 9.14-15)
- ... inviting us to his wedding banquet:
 - “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.” (Matthew 22.2)



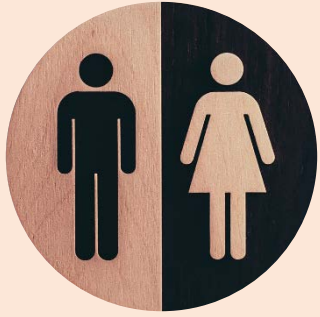
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- The church, therefore, is the bride of Christ:
 - “I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.” (2 Corinthians 11.2)
- Our “wedding day” is yet to come:
 - “Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. . . . Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” (Revelation 21.7,9)



Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- We long for Jesus' marriage to be fulfilled:
 - “¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’” (Revelation 21)



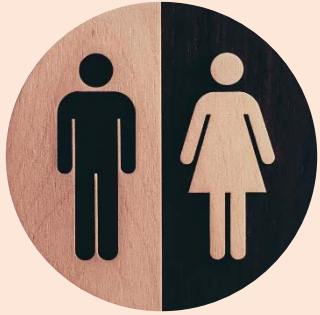
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- This is indeed a “profound mystery”!
- Consider Christ, the husband:
 - “²³ ... Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. ... ²⁵ Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ... ²⁹ [Christ] feeds and cares for ... the church – ³⁰ for we are members of his body.”



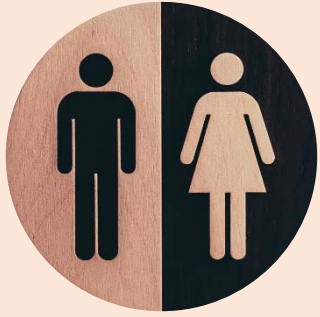
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- “Christ is the head of the church”
 - “his body . . . we are members of his body”
- “the Saviour . . . Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her”
 - “to make her holy”
 - “cleansing her by the washing with water through the word”
 - “to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”
- Christ “feeds and cares for” the church



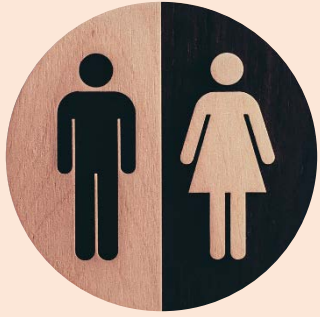
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- Consider the church, the wife – us:
 - “the church submits to Christ” (v24)
- What does this submission look like for the “bride”?
 - *We confess he is Lord* – he is the risen ruler of all creation (1.10)
 - *We trust his love* – for it led to the cross by which we are washed, and which is applied by his word.
 - *We serve each other* within his body (v21)



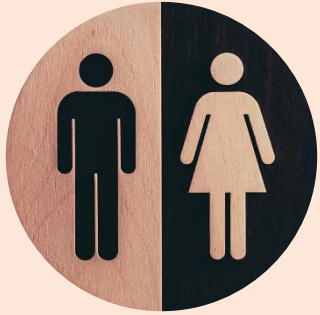
Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- A word to the married from Ephesians 5
 - Although the “profound mystery” refers to Christ and his bride, Paul’s application is to the actually married.
- The danger of reading what we want to find:
 - Some read the passage as if v21 was invisible.
 - “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”
 - Some read the passage as though v21 was the final word, taking all meaning from the differing commands to husbands and wives.
 - “wives, submit . . . husbands, love” (v22, 25)



Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- There is little comfort for either chauvinists or feminists here!
 - “the husband is the head of the wife” (v23) ...
 - ... but the husband is not called to exert his headship, but to love his wife “as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (v25)
 - “as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.” (v24)
 - How does the church submit to Christ? Willingly, gladly, joyfully – for it is a response to headship expressed in sacrificial love.
 - “as ... so”: in the same way, wives submit.



Week 5: Jesus' Marriage

- A word to us all from Ephesians 2:
 - “As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins ... we were by nature objects of wrath.” (v1, 3)
 - “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions ...” (v4-5)
 - “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no-one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (v8-10)