

# MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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P.O. BOX 9043 • KNOXVILLE, TN 37940

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Not A Destination Wedding

Dear Friend,

Weddings are joyous celebrations where a man and a woman are joined in holy matrimony, two becoming one. The idea of two becoming one is unique to a covenant. It is not something to be taken lightly or entered into haphazardly because the intent of a covenant agreement is that it never be broken. Consequently, when one of the two parties is not fully invested or has some ulterior motive for joining in a covenant relationship, it fails.

With that thought in mind, picture this. A beautiful, blushing bride, poised on a sandy beach of an exotic island in a long flowing dress that she has dreamed about for years. She's about to exchange vows with the man of her dreams, a handsome, wealthy, heir of a multi-million dollar empire. Everything is just as she has planned. All the hours of preparation have brought them to this moment and everything is perfect; or so it seems.

The ceremony comes off without a hitch and the two are gloriously wed. The next morning she wakes up only to discover that now she is married to a man that she doesn't really know very well. For the first time she realizes **that the beautiful wedding ceremony was not the ultimate objective. The ultimate objective was the joining of herself to the groom in an everlasting covenant.**

I believe that millions of people have done this when they joined themselves to Jesus Christ by making Him the Lord of their life. For many, they were told of the prospects of dying and going to hell for eternity and that by accepting the Lordship of Jesus they would instead go to heaven when they die. For the rest of their life they struggle to live a life that they believe to be the kind of life a Christian would live in hopes that they won't do anything to miss heaven. The sad reality is that instead of getting to know the one who gave His life for them they spend their life "**Destination Wedding**" minded and miss the opportunity to get to know the one to whom they have joined themselves to in covenant.

At some point we need to own up to the fact that our initial reason for coming to Jesus was for ourselves, because we didn't want to go to hell. I think everyone most likely fits into that category. We might want to believe it was for another, more selfless reason. But truth be known, we had ourselves on our mind. Face it, you chose Jesus because you didn't want to go to hell. The good news is, since you are reading this letter, you are still on earth and you still have an opportunity to get to know the most wonderful man who has ever existed and gave His all for you.

Or, is just going to heaven enough? When we adopt the attitude; "I'm okay with Jesus. I'm on my way to heaven because I prayed a prayer. Now, I'll take care of myself, occupy a pew once a week, fulfill my spiritual obligation, and everything will be fine." We are actually demonstrating just how little we understand about what it means to make Jesus Lord.

So, let's try to better understand what really happened when we said, "**Jesus I accept you as Lord of my Life.**" Our decision for Jesus is not so different from two people's decision to join themselves in holy matrimony. You see, both are decisions to be joined in a covenant relationship. The apostle Paul understood this and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost wrote these words in Romans chapter 7 explaining this relationship. (Romans 7:2-3)

***"For the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. (3) So then if, while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress, though she be married to another man."***

At first glanced, it would be easy to read these words and think that Paul is talking about marriage and divorce between a man and woman and nothing more. Too often it seems that people trying to prove a point can turn to verses like this and take them out of context to support their own doctrines. When we go on to the next verse we can easily see that Paul was talking about much more than the marriage between a man and a woman. (Romans 7:4)

***"Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."***

By continuing to read on into the fourth verse we can easily see that Paul was talking about Israel, and subsequently all of mankind, dying the death of the cross in Christ, freeing them to be married to another. These words paint a

crystal clear picture of the covenant of marriage we enter into when we make Jesus Lord. Our connection to our first spouse, the first Adam, and subsequently the law, is dead and gone forever in Jesus. His death marked the death of the first Adam and man's freedom from the law. This in turn freed humanity to be married to another man, the second man the last Adam, Jesus Christ.

(1 Corinthians 15:45)

***“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.”***

Jesus is called the second man, the last Adam. The same way the first Adam was the starting point for the race of humanity, Jesus, the Last Adam, is the first of an entirely new race of beings, new creation beings. By accepting His Lordship our old man dies the death of the cross in Christ and we are raised from the dead as new creation beings, in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

***“Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”***

Being “in Christ” describes our new life once we make Jesus Lord. We are not the same people we were before coming to Him. We have ended our connection once and for all to the person we used to be and are now identified in the one who gave His life for us to join Him. I believe His heart's desire is for us to use our remaining days to get to know Him and not to merely be focused on escaping the flames of hell and going to heaven.

Look closely once again at the words Paul wrote in Romans 7:4.

***“Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that you should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”***

The words, ***“that you should be married to another”***, make it very clear that we are indeed speaking about a covenant of marriage. The person to whom we are to be wed is Him who is raised from the dead. Now, wouldn't it be a shame for us to spend the rest of our days so enamored by the prospect of going to heaven that we fail to get to know the one we have joined ourselves to? I would hate to get to heaven, look at Jesus and realize I missed out on all the opportunities to get to know Him while I was still on earth. Sure, being with Him will be wonderful, but I can't help thinking that if I don't get to know Him now, I'm going to wish I had.

The book of Revelation mentions a time when God shall wipe away all tears. (Revelation 21:4) This verse comes after it says that the first heaven and the first earth are passed away. (Genesis 21:1) Apparently, there will be a brief shedding of tears that God Himself will wipe away. I'm certain we won't be standing there in heaven crying because we didn't work enough hours at our earthly jobs or spend enough time enjoying leisurely activities. One might think those tears were shed because we didn't give more of our lives working for the kingdom. But, I'm wondering if it might just be that when we finally see Jesus in all His glory and realize the error of many of our choices, which put Jesus last on our list of things to do, the tears are going to flow.

In closing, I pray that you don't read these words and allow condemnation to overtake you because you have never taken the time to get to know Him. The enemy is so good at twisting something to the point that instead of receiving a word as encouragement, we take it as criticism. The good news is that if you are one that has had the mentality that your whole spiritual walk can be summed up in these words: "I'm going to heaven!" It is not too late to change. Jesus is waiting for each of us to make a place for Him in the daily walk of our lives.

To make this practical, so that hopefully you will do what I am proposing, practice throughout your day to simply acknowledge Jesus in your life. Start by talking to Him like He is a real person, because He actually is a real person, who loves you with a love that cannot be measured. As time goes by I believe you will notice less and less effort is needed to acknowledge Him in your moment by moment life.

~ Jesus Loves You!

*Mark Jenkins*