

## Agape Chapel Ministries Discipleship Study

From the Sermon Notes of Pastor Nick Bibile.

Edited and modified, *with additional text*, and formatted for inter-active Bible-study.

# Our Love Relationship with Christ Jesus.



Read 1 John 1:1-3



Observe the key points of the verses above and write them down.



Who is being spoken of in these verses, especially in 1 and 2?

What does "That which we have seen and heard" refer to?

Why is it important to have fellowship with The Father and Jesus Christ?

We all know what the word fellowship means. Fellowship is participation, and it is a partnership. The Father and the Son take us into a partnership with them. We are partakers of his divine nature. For us to understand the fullness of the above scriptures we need to understand a little history. The Apostle is writing to the Christians and in those days, Christians were very poor. To be a Christian is to deny the world and follow Christ.



Read Matthew 16:24



Look at the verses which come before and after this one to get the context (meaning). Remember, we cannot isolate one Scripture verse from the rest. We need to see the author's intended meaning by reading it in context. Then we can make the application that is being made in this study.



What is this verse telling us?

When you follow Jesus it is to follow Gods way and not our way, it is to do Gods will and not our will, it is to be obedient to the word of God. This has to do with leaving the pleasures of sins in this world, and not having *intimate* fellowship with worldly friends anymore. (Don't misunderstand, however. You *can* have worldly friends, or else how can you witness to them? But, we should not copy their ways and conform to their lifestyle or have pleasure in their sins as we have a new life in Christ Jesus).

## The Changed Life and Consequences



Make note of the key points of the following verses and think about their meaning.



Does this changed life apply to all Christians?



Read Romans 12:2

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

Read 1 Corinthians 2:12

Now when you become a different person than the world, they will notice you and they will mock you, make jokes about you, ridicule you, give you a hard time and persecute you. The world would like you to become like them. [Editor's note: Consider what persecution really is. In some countries, like the USA, many feel that they are being persecuted when someone says some negative or derogatory comments about them because they are Christians. However, the real persecution is happening in other parts of the world where Christianity is not even allowed! In some countries, Christians are killed for their faith! Churches are burned, and many other terrible things happen, especially in many Muslim countries. Here in the United States, life for the Christian is actually very easy, and our walk with the Lord can become weak.]



Read John 15:18

Read John 18:36



Read John 15:19 and *observe in context* with the surrounding verses.



What does "you are not of the world" mean?



Why does the world hate Christians?

The bottom reason for the world to hate you is because of Satan. He is called the 'god' of this world.



Read 2 Corinthians 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.



What is Satan's goal or purpose?

Read Matthew 4:8,9

## Divine Fellowship

Christians were despised, looked down upon, persecuted, mocked, ridiculed and were poor. They were the filth of the world. Below, apostle John is encouraging these poor Christians. The world may have their parties, the pleasures of sin, the wealth, and their ungodly fellowship, yet you, the believer, have a greater fellowship as our fellowship is with God Almighty. While the world is having a worldly fellowship, the true Christians are having a divine fellowship.



Read 1 John 1:1-3 again.

Now to go a little further we see that we have not only the fellowship of Christ but also an intimate relationship with Christ Jesus. The church is called the Bride and He is the Bridegroom. This is a marriage relationship. In this mutual relationship we experience his love for the church.



Read Song Of Solomon 2:16 to see a picture of this beautiful kind of relationship.

Yes, He is mine, I possess Him, I belong to Him, He owns me.



Read Isaiah 54:5

There is a beautiful fellowship for us with Christ, as Christ will be like the beauty of a splendid royal crown to us.



Read Isaiah 28:5

John the Baptist was a friend of the Bridegroom, he heard His voice and rejoiced greatly.



Read John 3:29



Why was John The Baptists full of Joy?

How much more the joy and the gladness of the bridegroom to you who are believers.



Read Zephaniah 3:17



Why will the LORD rejoice?

Yes, beloved, you may be poor, going through a very difficult time; you do not have all the wealth and the pleasures of the world, yet Christ takes the believing poor sinners into a marriage relationship with himself, so rejoice in these thoughts!

Christ was willing to undertake the difficult task of coming down from His throne in Heaven, humbling Himself as a man, and dying on the cross. He had to be the sacrifice, first, by obedience to the law of God where he kept all of the law which the sinners have broken, and the ultimate sacrifice of his death for His people, the believers. But it was a delight to Him to give his life for the poor believing sinners.



Read Psalm 40:7,8

He loved the church and gave all he had.

Read Ephesians 5:25

There is a day of his marriage and a great rejoicing.

Read Revelation 19:7,8



Who is the “Lamb” here? Read the verse in context.

There is going to be an awesome wedding and a supper.



Read Matthew 22:1-14



What is the meaning of the word, ‘parable’?

Just like in any marriage there is a mutual commitment to each other. Christ as a husband loves the believing sinner unconditionally. He shows kindness and keeps us from falling. We may undergo difficult times. The Christians may not have the pleasures of the world, but we have Christ as our pleasure, like a husband to his wife he takes good care us. In response, the church has a mutual commitment to Christ. As a wife, the church (us) is to be obedient to the husband. The prophet Hosea describes this in the relationship between himself and his unfaithful wife:



Read Hosea 3:3 And also Exodus 20:2,3



How do these two Scriptures correlate?

## Sinners Become The Bride of Christ

Yes, we were like prostitutes and had many lovers (or other 'gods'). We loved the Hollywood stars; we had their pictures in our bedrooms, and their worldly songs we loved so much. We had our sports stars, which we loved so much. We loved the worldly parties, the pleasures of sin, the gossip, and the worldly talk. We loved this world so much that we knew all the latest fashions. We spent time and money for the best things of this world. We loved *ourselves* so much that we ate the best of foods, and gave much comfort to this deteriorating flesh. We took very good care of this flesh; we loved ourselves more than anyone else. Like a prostitute, we had many lovers. Yet Christ took us to be his bride! This is amazing! We don't deserve this at all. This is the kind of love He has for the believers. Christ forgave all our sins. When Christ looks at the true believer, He does not see the believer as a prostitute, but sees the believer as a fair and beautiful bride, like a husband looks at his beloved wife.



Read Ezekiel 16:8-14

Read Song Of Solomon 2:14



How does God now see the bride?

Christ knows the trials, temptations and difficulties the believer has to go through as he was a man and was tempted. Now he urges us to come to an even closer fellowship with him. He will not leave us.



Read Matthew 11:28-30

Read Hebrews 13:5

He truly loves the believer. We realize that when we come closer to Christ.



Read Song of Solomon 7:10

We did not deserve His love, it is all of grace and we realize it is not because of *our* righteousness or *our* power that he loves us but because of *His* righteousness and He is the wisdom and the power of God.



Read Jeremiah 23:6

Read 1Corinthians 1:30



Why is Christ's righteousness significant?



Read 1John 4:19

We understand that He first loved us. He died for the believing sinner, purchased us, and his love is unconditional. He alone is sufficient for all our needs. On our part, obedience is required. Submission is to Christ as Lord and Savior. We are to embrace Him, and love Him as we see Christ's beauty that outshines all other beauty, and we realize he is above all.



Read Song Of Solomon 5:9-16

By comparison to the beauty of the LORD, we see that all the worldly beauty is passing away, the beautiful movie stars are getting old and they will die, the beautiful car, house, clothes and all other material things are getting old and they will turn into dust. Our own loved ones within the family are getting old and we all will die. Only Christ's beauty and His Word remains. Also, the believers and all that we do for Christ remains.



Read 1John 2:16,17

When we compare all the other 'lovers' we have to Christ, there is no comparison. The beauty of Christ is internal, as He is holy, blameless, upright, righteous, compassionate, longsuffering and true love. Now we can count all the others as rubbish or dung compared to Christ.



Read Philippians 3:8



What is the cost of being in fellowship with Christ then?

## Our Joy of Fellowship

Fellowship with God through Christ Jesus is truly a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory! The eternal life is manifested to us. There are many in the world that cannot understand this, they may be intelligent and powerful but Christ has given this grace only to his beloved ones whom he loves.



Read Luke 10:21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

When a sinner realizes that he is lost and there is damnation, hell and the lake of fire waiting for him as he has sinned against the holy God, and then truly repents of his sins and turn to Christ, Christ will forgive all of his sins and will not remember them any more. He will come to you and will have fellowship with you

and truly love you for the rest of your life. There will be rejoicing in heaven when one sinner repents.



## Discussion

- **As Christians, Whose kingdom do we belong to?**
- **Meditate on what it means to be the Bride of Christ. What kind of relationship do we then have with Christ?**
- **What is the meaning of the pure white linen which is adorned by the bride in Revelation 19:7,8**
- **Make and note observations of the parable Jesus told in Matthew 22:1-14**
  - **Why did Jesus tell this parable?**
  - **Who was the marriage arranged for?**
  - **Who was invited at first?**
  - **Who was invited later and who came?**
  - **Who does the King represent?**
  - **What is the significance of the wedding garment?**
  - **Why did the King judge the man without the garment so harshly?**
  - **Correlate the message of the parable to us as Christians and the world.**

**Discuss further the Joy of fellowship with Christ as well as the cost of it.**

- **What do we have to give up when we have this fellowship, or marriage, with Christ?**
- **What is that compared to the Joy we have now?**