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## *Devotion for November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021*

*"Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb!"  
- Revelation 19:9*

**Many customs have changed since my ordination in 1994.** Take weddings, which back in that day normally happened in the springtime, particularly June. Much of that change was because it was becoming increasingly difficult to find large banquet facilities due to an increase in large graduation parties. Soon October, November, and also late December were taking over as popular months for weddings, a custom that remains the case to this day, so much so that our wedding seasons at Grace are March/April with October, November, and January a very close second, if not a sneaky first.

Jesus often called the Christian church His bride and used several parables about wedding banquets to teach truths about His work of redeeming God's people. Especially He compared His second coming to that of a groom coming to town for His bride. In that day the custom was that a prospective groom would contract with the father of the bride to pay an upfront price for the hand of his daughter. Once that price was paid the ball was in the groom's court and he could come for his bride at any time with little or no warning. Her entire wedding party needed to be high alert until that time came, a point that Jesus made in the parable of the 10 virgins.

While it's not easy to recognize because of all the mysterious stuff, there are actually a series of seven beatitudes in John's Revelation. The verse cited above is the fourth of these seven and it marks a turn towards Jesus' ultimate conquest of evil at His second coming. In chapter 19 the Holy Christian church in heaven, all believers there, are rejoicing over the fall of Babylon the Great.

While God and by extension His people want all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, there will come a day when enough will be enough. On that day, when Jesus returns, there will be great rejoicing that those who rejected God's ways and continued to persecute His people have received their just punishment.

Until then our good and gracious God has given us a rehearsal dinner to tide us over in the Sacrament of the Altar. In that meal we receive a taste of heaven on earth as the exhortation of the psalmist to, "Taste and see that the Lord is good," is followed and our Savior's very body and blood are received in, with, and under the elements. That taste causes us to hunger and thirst for the wedding banquet itself, the one that never ends.

Come quickly Lord Jesus. Amen!

Dear friends in Christ,



We will be publishing devotions on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday of this week and then taking the month of December off. Don't worry, though, we will resume written devotions four days a week in January.

*Prayers for a Happy Thanksgiving from your Grace family,  
Rev. Kevin Loughran, Senior Pastor  
Grace Lutheran Church & School*

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