

What Is the Gospel?

Installment #5 — The Master Plan — The Bride!

Sometime ago I read a book for the second time by a man named Gene Edwards called, THE DIVINE ROMANCE. Normally this kind of book is not my cup of tea, being more the Rambo type, but the truth of the story line so gripped my heart that it actually changed the way I thought of God, his plan and purpose for creation. Imagine for a moment that there is no universe. Time and space doesn't exist yet there is only this alien creature. I use the word alien because in many ways he is so absolutely different from us. Everything that exists or that does not yet exist exists within him. He is alone, the only one of his kind, the only one of any kind. Yet within the very substance of this being's composition is an unquenchable burning fire. A fire so intensely passionate, so intensely hot that all the suns in all the galaxies that we have come to know over our short existence couldn't even come close to its heat. Throughout the millennia, we have come to define this essence as LOVE. Love, the most powerful force in all of creation and un-creation alike. This alien being of Love we have come to know as GOD!

As a Christian we are taught that God is absolutely complete within himself, lacking nothing. For God to be lacking anything would make him incomplete and the very thought of God being incomplete would be considered sacrilege. Yet the very concept of love has within it the need to give. This is not what I consider a negative, but as positive a positive as you can have. I believe that from what we humans call the beginning it has always been God's desire to have a helpmeet. It is evident in his entire creation. For every corporeal life form there is a male and a female of the species. I do not know that much about the angelic world, but I believe, as some do, that there are no two alike and that they were not created in God's image. However, when it came to the creation of man the Scripture declares that God created man in his image. Obviously there is one major difference that can never be bridged and that is that we are created while God is uncreated. He has no beginning of days and no ending of days. He is way beyond a creature that has eternal life and everything that exists, exists within him.

What then are the characteristics that make us, alone among his creation, like him? We have the ability to freely give love without asking anything in return. We can experience the full range of emotions. We are basically a spiritual being, with a soul in a body. In God's great plan to have his soul-mate, counterpart or Bride he had to devise a plan that even his enemies couldn't understand or thwart! So he created the human species and gave them the greatest gift of all — free will. But what is free will without any choices to make? So entered Satan, the tempter, the great deceiver, unwittingly a tool in God's hand to accomplish his ultimate intention. I have often wondered what the first man, Adam, was like before he ever made his choice to go

after the knowledge of good and evil instead of continuing on in an ever deepening relationship with God. He must have been awesome. The truth of the matter is that it was necessary for this race of humans to fall from their first estate in order for them to evolve into a race of beings that could actually choose, with the full knowledge of all their options, God's way. Paul speaks a lot about this unique, one-flesh relationship shared in the holy state of matrimony. Its level of intimacy between the bride and groom is unique among all other covenant relationships in the Word, but is actually a metaphoric view of Jesus and his Bride.

When Jesus came along it was the perfect timing of God. Once God actually became the sacrifice for the sin that separated them from each other he could then redeem them from the influence of the tempter and bring them into a place of eternal security. Once that was accomplished through his work on our behalf on the cross then this God, who clothed himself in humanity to become the progenitor of a new species, could, after his resurrection from the dead, send his own uncreated Spirit into the lives that he had purchased with his own precious blood. This act would eventually create a race of men and women that had never before walked upon planet earth. Jesus was the first one of this race, but he would not be the last. Now that his plan was successful he would give birth to a whole race of people just like him. People who, though they lived in this world, were not of this world and it would be evident by their love and the power they wielded.

Though this race would span thousands of years and hundreds of cultures, they would share one thing that would forever bind them together irrevocably, God's uncreated eternal Spirit — The Holy Spirit. This is possibly the most powerful thought or statement made in Scripture. The Word says that when one member rejoices we all rejoice and when one suffers we all suffer. Because we live out our lives in these isolated biological forms we call "bodies" we have adopted the idea that we are somehow not truly a part of each other, but in reality nothing could be further from the truth. That is what God has been trying to reveal to us for thousands of years. If we ever truly grasp the impact of this we will see the face of the Church changed overnight and the Bride will have made herself ready. I am at a loss for words to declare what this Bride means to her lover Jesus, but I know that it is only the Spirit and the Bride that have the ability to call Jesus down from the heavens — for it is the Spirit and the Bride that say COME!