

Sermon Outline
The Rev. Dr. S. Edd Cathey
The Best Man and the Groom
February 14, 2016

Sermon Text: John 3:22-36

1. The setting

[22] After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. [23] John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized [24] (for John had not yet been put in prison). [25] Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification.

Baptism as a purification ritual was sometimes performed on Gentiles who wanted to enter the fold of Israel. But John was baptizing Jews as if they needed to be cleansed!

2. The Provocative Changes in John's Ministry

[26] And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him."

3. The Development of John's Self-understanding

[27] John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. [28] You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.'

[29] The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete.

Psalm 45:10-15

Isaiah 54:5

Hosea 2:16-20

Ezekiel 16

Song of Solomon 1

BEST MAN DUTIES (internet web site)

Best Man, called the "soshben"

[30] He must increase, but I must decrease."

4. The Challenge of the Message John's summary/sermon

[31] He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all. [32] He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony.

Decisive Conversion

[33] Whoever **receives** [F. F. Bruce (*aorist participle*) “a decisive act whereby a man decides to accept Jesus”] his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true.

Seal = authenticates his decision and God’s ownership!

[34] For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. [35] The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. [36] Whoever believes in the Son *has* (present possession) eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.