

## **What the Bible Teaches About Eucharist, Part 3**

### **By Jim Penrice**

The Scriptures speak of the relationship between God and his people as a marriage:

“And it shall be, in that day,  
Says the LORD,  
That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’  
And no longer call Me ‘My Master’...  
I will betroth you to Me forever.” (Hosea 2:16, 19)

“As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,  
So shall your God rejoice over you.” (Isaiah 62:5)

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”  
(Revelation 19:7)

St. Paul makes a particular point of this to the Ephesians:

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”  
(Ephesians 5:31-32)

It is abundantly clear from the Scriptures that the relationship between God and His people is a marriage. In the Old Testament it was between God and the Israelites. In the New

Testament it is Jesus and the Church. As Paul taught the Ephesians, just as husband and wife become one flesh, so do Jesus and the Church. There is no closer relationship than to be one flesh with another. Husband and wife reach this through sexual union; Jesus and the Church through the Eucharist.

A marriage is considered consummated only once through the first act of sexual union, yet many more are needed to strengthen the bond and to lead the union towards its intended purpose. So it is with the union of flesh between Christ and the Church. It was consummated only once, but is entered into many more times whenever the Eucharist is celebrated.