



## You will need...

- Bride and groom outfits
- 2 child volunteers – no preparation needed

## The story

This term in our children's slots we are answering the question "What is church?"

Today we are finding out that church is a bride. In the Bible it says this:

"So a man will leave his father and mother and will be united with his wife and the two people will become one body.' That secret truth is very important, I am talking about Christ and the church."

This part of the Bible is telling us about marriage. But it says that whilst marriage is about a man and a woman, it is also about Jesus and the church. In fact, the reason God gave us marriage is so we would understand something important about the church and Jesus.

*[Select two child helpers from the congregation and ask them to join you now]*

There are two parts to this marriage, it is not hard to work out which is which! *[Ask one helper to put on the groom's jacket]* So here we are, here is our groom – he's the husband. This is Jesus, Jesus is like a groom. Now the thing about the groom is that he gives everything to love his wife. He thinks about what is best for his wife, not what is best for himself, and that's how he decides how to love his wife. You know what Jesus did for the church to show that he loved us – you can think about that for a minute ....

*[Ask the other child helper to hold the bride outfit in front of them].* This passage says that the bride (or the wife) is like the church. This is much harder to understand. Whether you are a girl or a boy, whether you are a man or a woman, whether you are married or not, you are part of the church which is like a wife. So here we are, we are all in there. *[Point to bride's dress]* All of us together are like one wife. You know what Jesus did for his church to show that he loved us. He chose to die, not because he wanted to, not because it was easy, not because he thought "this will be fun". He did it because it was exactly what the church needed. We needed Jesus to die for us and so that is how he chose to love us. The church has the best husband ever!

Because we are Jesus' bride we will do what the Bible tells all wives to do. We will listen to our husband because we know he would do anything for us. When Jesus tells us what is best for us



we will remember that he gave up his life for us, so we can think “Okay. That must be right”. We are like a bride; we are perfectly loved and we have the perfect husband helping us to understand the best way to live as a church. If you’re married, your marriage can help your children and the rest of the world understand more about Jesus and the church. We can look at a good marriage and say “That helps me understand how Jesus loved the church and how the church loves Jesus”.

Why don’t I pray that we would do this? Let’s pray together.

Dear Father, we thank you that Jesus is like the perfect husband. Thank you that he never did what was best for himself but he only did what was best for his wife, the church. Thank you that as a church we are like a bride, spotlessly clean, forgiven of all sin, made perfect, ready for heaven. Please help us to be a church that listens to Jesus and trusts him when he tells us how to live.

Amen.