

## KEY STATEMENTS FOR THE 2025 MEMORIAL DAY BLENDING CONFERENCE

**The Bible is a romance,  
in the most pure and the most holy sense,  
of a universal couple—God in Christ as the Bridegroom  
and God’s redeemed people as the bride—  
the goal of the Lord’s recovery.**

**The Lord’s primary work in the recovery  
is His genuine work to prepare us to be His glorious bride;  
apart from the continual, dispositional sanctification spoken of in Ephesians 5:26,  
there is no way for the bride to be prepared and, hence,  
no way for Revelation 19:7-9 to be fulfilled.**

**As used in the New Testament, the word *mature* refers to  
the believers’ being full-grown and perfected in the life of Christ,  
which they received at the time of regeneration.**

**The Lord’s recovery is for the preparation of the bride of Christ;  
ultimately, we will be conformed to be the wonderful Shulammite, who,  
as the duplication of Solomon, is the greatest and ultimate figure  
of the New Jerusalem as the counterpart, the bride, of Christ.**

**Outline of the Messages  
for the Memorial Day Blending Conference  
May 23-26, 2025**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
THE PREPARATION OF THE BRIDE**

Message One

**The Bride—the Goal of the Lord's Recovery**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 19:7-9; John 1:29; 3:29; S. S. 1:2-3; 8:14

**I. The Bible is a romance, in the most pure and the most holy sense, of a universal couple—God in Christ as the Bridegroom and God's redeemed people as the bride—John 3:29; Matt. 25:6; Rev. 19:7; 21:2; 22:17:**

- A. Throughout the centuries God has had a romance with man; He created man with the purpose of having a counterpart—Gen. 1:26.
- B. God is a lover, and He created man in the image of Himself as a lover; this means that He created us so that we would love Him—Mark 12:30; Eph. 3:14-19.
- C. The entire Bible is a divine romance, and Song of Songs is an abridged form of this romance—1:2-3; 8:14:
  - 1. The Bible is a romantic book, and our relationship with the Lord should become more and more romantic.
  - 2. If there is no romance between us and the Lord Jesus, then we are religious Christians, not romantic Christians—S. S. 1:2-3.
  - 3. As a whole, *romance* is a word of the divine courtship; in the Bible we see that God is seeking our love—2 Cor. 11:2.
  - 4. Song of Songs is more than a romance; it is a fantastic romance.
- D. Whatever we love, our whole heart, even our entire being, is set on and occupied and possessed by—1 Tim. 6:10-11; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; 4:8, 10a; Titus 1:8:
  - 1. "To love God means to set our entire being—spirit, soul, and body, with the heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30)—absolutely on Him, that is, to let our entire being be occupied by Him and lost in Him" (footnote 3 on 1 Cor. 2:9).
  - 2. To love the Lord Jesus is to appreciate Him, to direct our being to Him, to open to Him, to enjoy Him, to give Him the first place, to be one with Him, to live Him, and to become Him—Matt. 26:6-13; 2 Cor. 3:16; Mark 12:30; Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 6:17; Phil. 1:20-21; *Hymns*, #477, stanza 2.

**II. Revelation 19:7-9 unveils Christ as the Bridegroom:**

- A. The marriage of the Lamb is the issue of the completion of God's New Testament economy, which is to obtain for Christ a bride, the church, through His judicial redemption and by the organic salvation in His divine life—Gen. 2:22; Rom. 5:10; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9-11.
- B. The bride of Christ in Revelation 19 is composed of all the overcomers—vv. 7-9; cf. Gen. 2:22; Matt. 16:18.
- C. All the overcomers will be the New Jerusalem as the bride of Christ for one thousand years in its initial and fresh stage—Rev. 19:7.
- D. Eventually, all the believers will join the overcomers to consummate and complete the New Jerusalem in full as the wife of Christ in the new heaven and new earth for eternity—21:2, 9-11.

**III. The bride is the goal of the Lord's recovery—19:7-9:**

- A. "The marriage of the Lamb has come"—v. 7b:

1. In the beginning of his Gospel, John speaks of the Lamb and the Bridegroom, and in Revelation he says that the marriage of the Lamb has come—John 1:29; 3:29.
  2. After the rapture of the majority of the saints (Rev. 14:16; 1 Thes. 4:15-16) and the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ for the giving of the reward (Rev. 11:18; 2 Cor. 5:10), the events that immediately follow should include the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7b):
    - a. If we are rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ, we will participate in the wedding feast.
    - b. If we are not rewarded but are disapproved of by the Lord, we will not perish but will suffer a loss like that described in 1 Corinthians 3:15.
- B. “His wife has made herself ready”—Rev. 19:7c:
1. *His wife* refers to the church (Eph. 5:24-25, 31-32), the bride of Christ (John 3:29).
  2. According to Revelation 19:8-9, the wife, the bride of Christ, consists only of the overcoming believers during the millennium, whereas the bride, the wife, in 21:2 is composed of all the saved saints after the millennium for eternity.
  3. The readiness of the bride depends on the maturity in life of the overcomers—19:7; Heb. 6:1; Phil. 3:12-15; Eph. 4:13.
  4. We need to adorn and consummate the New Jerusalem as the bride of Christ with God the Father as the gold, God the Son as the pearl, and God the Spirit as the precious stones—Rev. 21:2, 19a; 1 Cor. 3:12; S. S. 1:10-11.
  5. The overcomers are not separate individuals but a corporate bride.
  6. The overcomers not only are mature in life but also are built together as one bride.
- C. “It was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints”—Rev. 19:8:
1. *Clean* refers to the nature, and *bright* refers to the expression.
  2. The Greek word translated “righteousnesses” may also be rendered “righteous acts.”
  3. The righteousnesses do not refer to the righteousness that we received for our salvation—1 Cor. 1:30.
  4. The righteousness we received for our salvation is objective and enables us to meet the requirement of the righteous God, whereas in Revelation 19:8 the righteousnesses of the overcoming saints are subjective (Phil. 3:9) and enable them to meet the requirement of the overcoming Christ.
  5. Thus, the fine linen indicates our overcoming life, our overcoming living; it is the Christ whom we live out of our being.
- D. “Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb...These are the true words of God”—Rev. 19:9:
1. The marriage dinner of the Lamb is the wedding feast, the kingdom of one thousand years, which is one day in the eyes of God, as a reward to the overcoming believers—v. 9; Matt. 22:2, 11-14; 2 Pet. 3:8.
  2. To be called to the marriage dinner of Christ, which will usher the overcoming believers into the enjoyment of the millennium, is to be blessed—Rev. 19:9.
  3. The marriage dinner of the Lamb in Revelation 19:9 is the wedding feast in Matthew 22:2; it will be a reward to the overcoming believers:
    - a. To be called is to receive salvation (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 4:1), whereas to be chosen is to receive a reward.
    - b. Only the overcomers will be called to the marriage dinner as a reward to them; not all the saved ones will participate in it.
    - c. The overcoming believers, who will be called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb, will also be the bride of the Lamb—Rev. 19:8-9.

## Message Two

### The Building of the Bride

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26; 2:7-10, 18-25; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:9-11

**I. The building of God is the central matter in the entire Bible; the bride of Christ is the building of the Triune God—"Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man"—Gen. 2:22:**

- A. The entire Bible may be likened to a building manual; the revelation concerning the garden of Eden, as the beginning of the divine revelation in the Holy Scriptures, and the revelation concerning the New Jerusalem, as the ending of the divine revelation in the Holy Scriptures, reflect each other.
- B. What is revealed in these two parts of the Scriptures is the central thought of God, the central line of the divine revelation, and a controlling principle of the interpreting and understanding of the Holy Scriptures:
  - 1. Genesis 1 and 2 are the blueprint of God's organic architectural plan to have His divine building (Heb. 11:10); God's desire is to build Christ into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ; in this way God may gain a corporate man to express Him in His image and to represent Him with His authority (Gen. 1:26; 1 Cor. 3:9; Matt. 16:18; 2 Sam. 7:12-14a).
  - 2. Revelation 21 and 22 are the photograph of the finished building, the corporate expression of the Triune God; the New Jerusalem is the reflection and fulfillment of the divine revelation concerning the garden of Eden.
  - 3. Christ will come back as the Bridegroom to marry His bride, who will be the totality of the overcomers; this building up by the overcomers in this age is for the initial consummation of the New Jerusalem in the kingdom age (19:7-9) and eventually for the full consummation of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth (21:2).
  - 4. By the continual working of the Holy Spirit through all the centuries, this goal will be attained at the end of this age; then the bride, the overcoming believers, will be ready, and the kingdom of God will come—Matt. 26:29; 13:43.
  - 5. The corporate bride, the New Jerusalem, will fulfill the two aspects of the purpose of God (Gen. 1:26); first, the New Jerusalem will be the full expression of God in God's full image for His glory (Rev. 21:11; cf. 4:3); second, this New Jerusalem will subdue the enemy, conquer the earth, and exercise God's authority with His dominion over the entire universe (Gen. 1:26; Rev. 22:5; cf. 20:10, 14-15).
- C. When we as God's people enter into a love relationship with God, we receive His life, just as Eve received the life of Adam; it is this life that enables us to become one with God and makes Him one with us—Gen. 2:21-22.

**II. For God and His people to be one, there must be a mutual love between them; the love between God and His people unfolded in the Bible is primarily like the affectionate love between a man and a woman—John 14:21, 23; Jer. 2:2; 31:3:**

- A. As God's people love God and spend time to fellowship with Him in His word, God infuses them with His divine element, making them one with Him as His spouse, the same as He is in life, nature, and expression—Psa. 119:140, 15-16.
- B. God first loved us in that He infused us with His love and generated within us the love with which we love Him and the brothers—1 John 4:19-21.

- C. The life which we have received from God is a life of love; Christ lived in this world a life of God as love, and He is now our life so that we may live the same life of love in this world and be the same as He is—3:14; 5:1; 2:5-6; 4:17.
- D. Our natural love must be put on the cross; one difference between God's love and our natural love is that it is very easy for our natural love to be offended.
- E. We must be persons who are flooded with and carried away by the love of Christ; the divine love should be like the rushing tide of great waters toward us, impelling us to live to Him beyond our own control—2 Cor. 5:14.
- F. The commandment regarding brotherly love is both old and new: old, because the believers have had it from the beginning of their Christian life; new, because in their Christian walk it dawns with new light and shines with new enlightenment and fresh power again and again—1 John 2:7-8; 3:11, 23; cf. John 13:34.
- G. The Body builds itself up in love to become Christ's bride (Eph. 4:16); our God-given, regenerated spirit is a spirit of love; we need a burning spirit of love to conquer the degradation of today's church (2 Tim. 1:7).
- H. "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Cor. 8:1b; cf. 2 Cor. 3:6); loving one another is a sign that we belong to Christ (John 13:34-35); loving to be first in the church is versus loving all the brothers (3 John 9).
- I. Just as the Lord Jesus laid down His soul-life so that we might have the divine life, we need to lose our soul-life and deny the self to love the brothers and minister life to them in the practice of the Body life for the preparation of Christ's bride—1 John 3:16; 4:17 and footnote 5; John 10:11, 17-18; 15:13; Eph. 4:29—5:2; 2 Cor. 12:15; Rom. 12:9-13.
- J. Love is the most excellent way for us to be anything or do anything for the building up of the church as the organic Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:31b—13:8a.

### **III. We need to see what God did in order to produce a counterpart for Himself; Genesis 2 reveals a picture of Christ and His bride in the types of Adam and Eve:**

- A. Adam typifies God in Christ as the real, universal Husband, who is seeking a wife for Himself—Rom. 5:14; cf. John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:31-32; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:9-11.
- B. "Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart"—Gen. 2:18:
  - 1. Adam's need for a wife typifies and portrays God's need, in His economy, to have a wife as His counterpart, His complement (lit., His parallel); although God, Christ, is absolutely and eternally perfect, He is not complete without the church as His wife.
  - 2. God desires to have both Adam, typifying Christ, and Eve, typifying the church; His purpose is to "let them have dominion" (1:26); it is to have a victorious Christ plus a victorious church, a Christ who has overcome the work of the devil plus a church which has overthrown the work of the devil; God wants Christ and the church to have dominion (Rom. 5:17; 16:20; Eph. 1:22-23).
- C. From the ground God formed every animal of the field and every bird of heaven and brought them to Adam, "and the man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of heaven and to every animal of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper as his counterpart"—Gen. 2:19-20.
- D. The wife must be the same as the husband in life, nature, and expression; among the cattle, the birds, and the animals Adam did not find a complement for himself, one that could match him—v. 23.
- E. In order to produce a complement for Himself, God first became a man, as typified by God's creation of Adam—John 1:14; Rom. 5:14.

- F. “Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place”—Gen. 2:21:
1. Adam’s deep sleep for the producing of Eve as his wife typifies Christ’s death on the cross for the producing of the church as His counterpart—Eph. 5:25-27.
  2. In the Bible, sleep means death—1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thes. 4:13-16; John 11:11-14.
  3. Christ’s death is the life-releasing, life-imparting, life-propagating, life-multiplying, and life-reproducing death, which is signified by the grain of wheat falling into the ground to die and to grow up in order to produce many grains (12:24) for the making of the loaf which is the Body, the church (1 Cor. 10:17).
  4. Through Christ’s death the divine life within Him was released, and through His resurrection His released divine life was imparted into His believers for the constituting of the church—Luke 12:49-50; cf. Rom. 12:11; Rev. 4:5.
  5. Through such a process God in Christ has been wrought into man with His life and nature so that man can be the same as God in life and nature in order to match Him as His counterpart.
- G. “And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man”—Gen. 2:22:
1. The rib taken from Adam’s opened side typifies the unbreakable, indestructible eternal life of Christ (Heb. 7:16; John 19:32-33, 36; Exo. 12:46; Psa. 34:20), which flowed out of His pierced side (John 19:34) to impart life to His believers for the producing and building up of the church as His counterpart:
    - a. Out of Christ’s side came blood and water, but all that came out of Adam’s side was the rib without the blood.
    - b. This is because at Adam’s time there was no need of redemption through the blood, because there was no sin; by the time that Christ was “sleeping” on the cross, there was the problem of sin; thus, the blood that came out of Christ’s side was for our judicial redemption.
    - c. Following the blood, the water came out, which is the flowing life of God for our organic salvation (Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; Num. 20:8); this divine, flowing, uncreated life is typified by the rib taken out of Adam’s side (Rom. 5:10).
  2. Genesis 2:22 does not say that Eve was created but that she was built; the building of Eve with the rib taken from Adam’s side typifies the building of the church with the resurrection life released from Christ through His death on the cross and imparted into His believers in His resurrection—John 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:3.
  3. The church as the real Eve is the totality of Christ in all His believers; the church is the reproduction of Christ; other than Christ’s element, there should be no other element in the church—Gen. 5:2.
- H. Only that which comes out of Christ with His resurrection life can be His complement as His bride (1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:6; 5:28-30); the church is a pure product out of Christ; the church is “Christly,” “resurrectionly,” and heavenly.
- I. Adam and Eve, being one, lived a married life together as husband and wife (Gen. 2:24-25); this portrays that in the New Jerusalem the processed and consummated Triune God as the universal Husband will live a married life with the redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified humanity as the wife, forever (Rev. 22:17a).
- J. In the eternity that is without end, by the divine, eternal, and surpassingly glorious life, they will live a life that is the mingling of God and man as one spirit, a life that is superexcellent and that overflows with blessings and joy.

## Message Three

### The Maturity of the Bride

Scripture Reading: Rev. 19:6-9; John 3:29; James 5:7;  
Matt. 5:48; Col. 1:28-29; 3:10-11

#### **I. The meaning of the word *mature* in Greek is “at the end point”:**

- A. To be transformed is to be metabolically changed in our natural life; to be matured is to be filled with the divine life that changes us—Heb. 6:1; Col. 4:12; Rom. 12:2; 2 Pet. 1:3.
- B. The last stage of transformation is maturity, the fullness of life—v. 4.
- C. A mature believer knows and cares for the Body of Christ, being Body-conscious and Body-centered—1 Cor. 12:16, 18-19, 21, 24.

#### **II. As used in the New Testament, the word *mature* refers to the believers’ being full-grown and perfected in the life of Christ, which they received at the time of regeneration—Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:3, 23; Matt. 5:48:**

- A. We should never be content with ourselves but pursue growth and maturity in the life of Christ—Phil. 3:12, 14.
- B. We need to go on, to be brought on, to maturity by forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, pursuing toward the fullest enjoyment and gaining of Christ for the uttermost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom—vv. 12-15.
- C. The prerequisite for maturity in the spiritual life is to grow continually in the divine life—Eph. 4:15.
- D. The ultimate issue of the believers’ growth and maturity in the life of Christ is the full-grown man—the church as the Body of Christ growing into a mature man—v. 13.

#### **III. In his Epistle, James uses the illustration of a farmer awaiting with long-suffering the precious fruit of the earth—5:7:**

- A. The Lord Jesus is actually the real Farmer, the unique Farmer—Matt. 13:3.
- B. While we are awaiting with long-suffering the Lord’s coming, He, as the real Farmer, is awaiting with patience our maturity in life, as the firstfruits and harvest of His field—Rev. 14:4, 14-15.
- C. If we pray, “Lord, come back quickly,” the Lord may say, “While you are awaiting My coming back, I am awaiting your maturity; only your maturity can hasten My coming back.”
- D. It is a great help for us to realize that if we are serious about awaiting the Lord’s coming back, we need to grow in life unto maturity.

#### **IV. To be mature is to have Christ fully formed in us; it also means that we have been fully transformed into His image—Gal. 4:19; 2 Cor. 3:18:**

- A. Since the time of our regeneration, the Lord has been working in us so that we may have His image—v. 18; Rom. 8:29.
- B. When the Lord has fully worked His image into us and is fully expressed through us, we will be mature in life—Eph. 3:16-17.

**V. Chapter 3 of Song of Songs shows us the maturity of the seeking one, and chapter 4 continues by explaining that such maturity is reached by the subduing of the will; the secret of the maturity of the seeking one is that her will has been completely subdued and resurrected—v. 4:**

- A. The neck signifies the human will under God; the Lord considers the submission of our will a most beautiful thing—vv. 1a, 4.
- B. If we have a submissive will, our will is expressed like the tower of David that holds all kinds of weapons:
  - 1. First, our will must be subdued; then it will be strong in resurrection and like the tower of David, the armory for the spiritual warfare—Eph. 6:10.
  - 2. The weapons for spiritual warfare are kept in our subdued and resurrected will—2 Cor. 10:3-5.

**VI. The goal of Paul's ministry was to present every man mature, full-grown, in Christ for the one new man—Col. 1:28-29; 3:10-11:**

- A. The Greek word rendered “full-grown” in Colossians 1:28 may also be translated “perfect,” “complete,” or “mature.”
- B. Paul's ministry was to dispense Christ into others so that they would be perfect and complete by maturing in Christ unto full growth.

**VII. Genesis 37—47 is a record of the process of Jacob's maturity:**

- A. In Genesis 27 we see a supplanter; in chapter 37, a transformed man; and at the end of chapter 47, a mature person.
- B. The last stage of transformation is maturity, the fullness of life:
  - 1. God's eternal purpose can only be accomplished through our transformation and maturity—1:26; Col. 1:28; 2:19.
  - 2. Maturity is a matter of having the divine life imparted into us again and again until we have the fullness of life—John 10:10.
- C. Maturity is a matter of the enlargement of capacity—Psa. 4:1:
  - 1. Maturity in life is the sum total of receiving the discipline of the Holy Spirit—Heb. 12:5-11.
  - 2. Others may see a person who has matured in life, but they cannot see the accumulated discipline of the Holy Spirit which that person has received secretly day after day throughout the years—2 Cor. 1:8-10; Gen. 47:7, 10.
- D. God will sovereignly use persons, things, and events to empty us of everything that has filled us and to take away every preoccupation so that we may have an increased capacity to be filled with God—Luke 1:53; Matt. 5:6.
- E. The life of Jacob reveals that everything that happens to us is under God's sovereignty for our transformation and maturity; nothing is accidental:
  - 1. In order to become mature, Jacob first had to suffer the loss of Joseph, the treasure of his heart—Gen. 37:31-35.
  - 2. A mature believer has learned that God is merciful and all-sufficient to meet his needs in every kind of situation—43:11, 13-14; 17:1; Phil. 1:19-21a; 4:11-12; cf. 1 Tim. 6:6-8.
  - 3. His trust and rest are altogether in the mercy of his all-sufficient God, no longer in himself or in his ability—Rom. 9:16.



4. The strongest sign of Jacob's maturity was his blessing others—Gen. 47:7, 10; 48:14-16; Heb. 7:7.

**VIII. The mature bride is the goal of God's will and purpose—Rev. 19:7-9:**

- A. The readiness of the corporate bride depends on the maturity in life of the overcomers—v. 7; Heb. 6:1; Phil. 3:12-15; Eph. 4:13.
- B. The marriage of the Lamb is the issue of the completion of God's New Testament economy, which is to obtain for Christ a bride, the church, through His judicial redemption and by His organic salvation in His divine life—Gen. 2:22; Rom. 5:10; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2.
- C. In the Gospel of John, Christ is revealed both as the Lamb who came to take away sin and as the Bridegroom who came that He might have the bride—3:29.
- D. Christ's goal is not to remove sin; it is to have the bride:
  1. In the book of Revelation, we see that Christ is the Lamb and the coming Bridegroom; therefore, as the Bridegroom, He must have a wedding—19:7-9.
  2. The wedding of the Lamb will be a universal wedding; it will be the marriage of the Redeemer and the redeemed.
  3. Christ is coming as the Bridegroom, and we are going as the bride.
- E. A very crucial matter is the readiness of the bride—v. 7:
  1. According to Revelation 19:8 and 9, the wife, the bride of Christ, here consists only of the overcoming believers during the millennium.
  2. The readiness of the bride depends on the maturity in life of the overcomers, who are not separate individuals but the corporate bride.
  3. In Revelation 19:6 the voice of the great multitude proclaims, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns":
    - a. The reign of God, the kingdom, is related to the marriage of the Lamb.
    - b. The wedding will bring in the reign of the Lord, the kingdom, because all the guests called to the wedding will be both the corporate bride and the co-kings of the Bridegroom; all His co-kings will be His corporate bride.
    - c. To the overcomers, the thousand years of the millennial kingdom will be a wedding feast.
    - d. Everyone invited to the wedding feast will also participate in the thousand-year reign as kings.
    - e. For the overcomers, reigning with Christ in the kingdom will be the wedding feast—v. 9.

## Message Four

### The Beauty of the Bride

Scripture Reading: Rom. 6:19, 22; Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:7-9; 1 Thes. 5:23; S. S. 8:13-14

**I. The process of dispositional sanctification is the process of our organic salvation as our beautification to become the beautiful, holy, and glorious bride for Christ—1 Thes. 4:3a; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Eph. 1:4-5; 5:25-27; 1 Thes. 5:23-24; Rom. 6:19, 22:**

- A. Ephesians 5:25-27 reveals the entirety of God's complete salvation in presenting Christ to us in three stages:
1. In the past, Christ as the Redeemer gave Himself up for the church for our judicial redemption—"Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her"—v. 25.
  2. In the present, Christ as the life-giving Spirit is dispositionally sanctifying the church by saturating her with His element so that she may be His counterpart; this is organic salvation as bride beautification and bride preparation—"That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word"—v. 26.
  3. In the future, Christ as the Bridegroom will present the church to Himself as His counterpart for His satisfaction—"That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish"—this is our glorification for bride presentation—v. 27.
  4. In the past, Christ gave Himself up for the church; in the present, He is sanctifying the church; and in the future, He will present the church to Himself as His counterpart for His satisfaction; therefore, His loving the church is to sanctify her, and His sanctifying the church is for His presenting the church to Himself glorious.
- B. The beauty of the bride comes from the very Christ who is wrought into the church and shining out from the church to be expressed through the church—Isa. 43:7; Eph. 3:21.
- C. Christ is a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the remnant of His people—Isa. 28:5:
1. A crown is like a hat or turban, whereas the diadem is the headband as the most beautiful, glorious part of the crown—Exo. 28:36-39; 29:6; Isa. 62:3.
  2. We need to continually behold the beauty of the Lord in the church as the house of His beauty so that we may be transformed from glory to glory, beautified by the Lord, to become His beautiful bride with Him as our diadem of beauty—2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 19:7-9; Isa. 28:5; Psa. 27:4; Isa. 60:1, 7, 9, 13, 19; 62:3; Rev. 21:11.

**II. The Lord's primary work in the recovery is His genuine work to prepare us to be His glorious bride; apart from the continual, dispositional sanctification spoken of in Ephesians 5:26, there is no way for the bride to be prepared and, hence, no way for Revelation 19:7-9 to be fulfilled:**

- A. The church is being beautified through the process of sanctification by Christ as the life-giving Spirit cleansing us by the washing of the water in His word—Eph. 5:26-27:
1. This indicates that in the word of Christ is the Spirit as the water of life; the words that He speaks to us are spirit and life—John 6:63.
  2. As the life-giving Spirit, Christ is the speaking Spirit; whatever He speaks is the word that washes us; this does not refer to *logos*, the constant word, but to *rhema*, which denotes an instant word, the word that the Lord presently speaks to us—Matt. 4:4; John 6:63; Rev. 2:7; 22:17a; cf. Isa. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:14-15; Acts 28:25-31.
  3. Christ's speaking is the Spirit; His speaking is the very presence of the life-giving Spirit—John 6:63; Eph. 6:17.

4. The indwelling Christ as the life-giving Spirit is always speaking an instant, present, living word to metabolically cleanse away the old and replace it with the new, causing an inward transformation.
- B. Through such a washing process we are saturated with Christ and beautified by Christ to be His holy, beautiful, God-expressing bride, a bride without blemish or imperfection—Rev. 19:7; cf. S. S. 6:13; 8:13-14.
- C. Christ as the life-giving Spirit sanctifies the church by cleansing her according to the washing of the water in the word; according to the divine concept, *water* here refers to the flowing life of God typified by flowing water (Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; John 7:37-39; Rev. 7:17; 21:6; 22:1, 17); we are now in such a washing process in order that the church may be holy and without blemish.
- D. The Greek word for *washing* in Ephesians 5:26 is literally *laver*; in the Old Testament the priests used the laver to wash away their earthly defilement (Exo. 30:18-21); day by day, morning and evening, we need to come to the Bible and be cleansed by the laver of the water in the word.
- E. Paul uses the Greek word *rhema* when he speaks of the word with its washing process (Eph. 5:26); *logos* is God's Word objectively recorded in the Bible; *rhema* is the word of God spoken to us on a specific occasion (Mark 14:72; Luke 1:35-38; 5:5; 24:1-8).
- F. The *rhema* reveals something to us personally and directly; it shows us what we need to deal with and what we need to be cleansed from (the laver of bronze was a mirror that could reflect and expose—Exo. 38:8); the important thing for each one of us is this—is God speaking His word to me today?
- G. One thing that we always treasure is that the Lord still speaks to us personally and directly today; true growth in life depends upon our receiving the word directly from God; only His speaking in us has true spiritual value—Heb. 3:7-11, 15; 4:7; Psalms 95:7-8.
- H. The central point of our prayers should be our longing for the Lord's speaking, which enables us to fulfill the goal of His eternal economy according to His heart's desire to have a bride as His counterpart—Rev. 2:7; cf. 1 Sam. 3:1, 21; Amos 3:7.
- I. In a very practical sense, the Lord's presence is one with His speaking; whenever He speaks, we realize His presence within us; Christ's speaking is the very presence of the life-giving Spirit.
- J. The speaking of the indwelling Christ as the life-giving Spirit within us is the cleansing water that deposits a new element into us to replace the old element in our nature and disposition; this metabolic cleansing causes a genuine and inward change in life, which is the reality of dispositional sanctification and transformation.
- K. We must be beautified by Christ as the life-giving, speaking Spirit in our spirit; through the Lord's speaking within us as the life-giving Spirit, we are becoming His glorious church—Eph. 5:26-27; Rev. 2:7.

### **III. Ephesians 5:27 reveals that the church as the bride of Christ will eventually become a glorious church, a God-expressing church, “not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish”:**

- A. Our only beauty is the shining out of Christ from within us; what Christ appreciates within us is the expression of Himself—Psalms 50:2; 2 Cor. 3:15-18; cf. Exo. 28:2:
  1. “Your eyes will see the King in His beauty” (Isa. 33:17a); “the King will desire your beauty” (Psalms 45:11a).
  2. “You are as beautiful, my love, as Tirzah, / As lovely as Jerusalem, / As terrible as an army with banners”—S. S. 6:4.

- B. For the bride to be prepared means that she is clothed in “fine linen, bright and clean,” which is “the righteousnesses of the saints” (Rev. 19:8); this fine linen is the beauty of the bride.
- C. On the day of his wedding, a bridegroom cares much more for the beauty of his bride than for her ability; the Lord Jesus, our God, cares primarily for the beauty of Himself expressed through our humanity; we need to be beautified by Christ day by day so that we can be prepared to be presented to Him as His lovely bride.
- D. Whenever we take time to behold the beauty of the Lord in His word by pray-reading and musing upon His word (Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15), He becomes our beauty, and we are beautified by Him to become the house of His beauty so that He also may be beautified (27:4; 2 Cor. 3:18; Isa. 60:7b, 9b, 13b, 19b, 21b).
- E. The washing of the water in the word in Ephesians 5:26 deals mainly with spots and wrinkles; spots refer to something of the natural life, and wrinkles are related to oldness; only the water of life can metabolically wash away such defects by the transformation of life.
- F. To be holy is to be saturated with Christ and transformed by Christ, and to be without blemish is to be spotless and without wrinkle, having nothing of the natural life of our old man—cf. S. S. 4:7.
- G. Also, the church will not have “any such things,” which means that she will not have “this or that kind of defect”; God will bring the church to the place where nothing can be said against her in any respect—Eph. 5:27.

**IV. Ephesians 5:26-27 matches Song of Songs 8:13-14; both reveal that it is by the Lord’s speaking to us that we are prepared to be His glorious bride with the desire for His second coming—“O you who dwell in the gardens, / My companions listen for your voice; / Let me hear it. / Make haste, my beloved, / And be like a gazelle or a young hart / Upon the mountains of spices”:**

- A. In Song of Songs the loving seeker of Christ asks Him who dwells in the believers as His gardens to let her hear His voice while her companions listen for His voice—8:13; cf. 4:13-16; 5:1; 6:2:
  - 1. This indicates that in the work that we as the lovers of Christ do for Him as our Beloved, we need to maintain our fellowship with Him, always listening to Him—Luke 10:38-42.
  - 2. Our lives depend on the Lord’s words, and our work depends on His commands (Rev. 2:7; 1 Sam. 3:9-10; cf. Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6); without the Lord’s words we will not have any revelation, light, or personal knowledge of Christ as our King (Isa. 6:1, 5), our Lord (2 Cor. 5:14-15), our Head (Col. 2:19), and our Husband (2 Cor. 11:2); the life of the believers hinges totally upon the Lord’s speaking (Eph. 5:26-27).
- B. As the concluding prayer of this poetic book, the Song of Songs, the lover of Christ prays that her Beloved would make haste to come back in the power of His resurrection (gazelle and young hart) to set up His sweet and beautiful kingdom (mountains of spices), which will fill the whole earth—8:14; Rev. 11:15; Dan. 2:35:
  - 1. Such a prayer portrays the union and communion between Christ as the Bridegroom and His lovers as the bride in their bridal love, in the way that the prayer of John, a lover of Christ, as the concluding word of the Holy Scriptures, reveals God’s eternal economy concerning Christ and the church in His divine love—Rev. 22:20.
  - 2. “Come, Lord Jesus!” is the last prayer in the Bible (v. 20); the entire Bible concludes with the desire for the Lord’s coming expressed as a prayer.

## Message Five

### **The Righteousness of the Bride**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 19:7-9; Matt. 5:20; 6:33; 22:2; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 John 1:7, 9; Rev. 15:3

#### **I. The righteousness of God is what God is in His action with respect to justice and righteousness—Rev. 15:3; Rom. 1:16b-17a; John 3:16; 1 John 1:9:**

- A. Our experience of Christ rests upon the foundation of God's righteousness.
- B. The foundation is God's righteousness, the unshakable foundation of God's throne—Psa. 89:14.

#### **II. There are four aspects of the definition of righteousness:**

- A. Righteousness is to be right with persons, things, and matters before God according to His righteous and strict requirements—Matt. 5:20.
- B. Righteousness is the outward expression of the Christ who lives in us as the Spirit—2 Cor. 3:8-9:
  - 1. This is righteousness as God's image—Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.
  - 2. The ministry of righteousness is a ministry of the Lord's image—2 Cor. 3:9.
- C. Righteousness is a matter of God's kingdom—Matt. 6:33; Psa. 89:14:
  - 1. God's kingdom is righteousness.
  - 2. Righteousness is related to God's government, administration, and rule.
- D. Righteousness is a matter of our being right with God in our being—2 Cor. 5:21:
  - 1. To be right with God in our being is to have an inner being that is transparent and crystal clear, an inner being that is in the mind and will of God.
  - 2. This is a matter of our being the righteousness of God in Christ—v. 21.

#### **III. Righteousness is related to God's outward acts, ways, actions, and activities—Rev. 15:3:**

- A. Everything God does is righteous—Rom. 1:16-17.
- B. Whatever God is in His justice and righteousness constitutes His righteousness.

#### **IV. God is righteous in the blood of Jesus His Son—1 John 1:7, 9:**

- A. God is faithful in His word (v. 10) and righteous in the blood of Jesus His Son.
- B. His word is the word of the truth of His gospel (Eph. 1:13), which tells us that He will forgive us our sins because of Christ (Acts 10:43); the blood of Christ has fulfilled His righteous requirements that He might forgive us our sins (Matt. 26:28).
- C. To forgive us is to release us from the offense of our sins, whereas to cleanse us is to wash us from the stain of our unrighteousness.

#### **V. Righteousness is related to the kingdom of God—Rom. 14:17:**

- A. The church life is the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of God is righteousness.
- B. God's throne is established with righteousness as the foundation—Psa. 89:14.
- C. Where God's righteousness is, there His kingdom is also—Isa. 32:1; Heb. 1:8-9.
- D. In the Old Testament, righteousness is often synonymous with the kingdom.
- E. Where there is righteousness, everything is headed up in a proper way; this is the kingdom.
- F. Righteousness first issues in the image of God, and then righteousness establishes the kingdom of God:
  - 1. In Romans 8 we have righteousness and God's image.
  - 2. In Romans 14 we have righteousness and God's kingdom.
  - 3. Both the image and the kingdom are based on righteousness.

- G. To say that righteousness will dwell in the new heavens and new earth (2 Pet. 3:13) means that everything will be in order, headed up, and regulated:
1. Everything will be governed, controlled, and under the proper rule, for the throne of God, the kingdom, the divine administration, will be there.
  2. The result will be peace and joy.

## **VI. In Revelation 19:7-8 we see the righteousness of the bride:**

- A. There are two aspects of Christ being righteousness to the believers:
1. The first aspect is to be the believers' righteousness for them to be justified before God objectively at the time of their repenting unto God and believing into Christ—Rom. 3:24-26; Acts 13:39; Gal. 3:24b, 27.
  2. The second aspect is to be the believers' righteousness lived out of them as the manifestation of God, who is the righteousness in Christ given to the believers for them to be justified by God subjectively—Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 2:24a; James 2:24; Matt. 5:20; Rev. 19:8.
  3. As our objective righteousness, Christ is the One in whom we are justified by God—Rom. 3:24, 28; 4:25; 5:1, 9, 16, 18.
  4. As our subjective righteousness, Christ is the One dwelling in us to live for us a life that can be justified by God and that is always acceptable to God—Matt. 5:6, 20.
- B. Christ lived out of the saints as their subjective righteousness becomes their wedding garment—Rev. 19:8:
1. The righteousness we received for our salvation is objective and enables us to meet the requirement of the righteous God, whereas the righteousnesses of the overcoming saints are subjective and enable them to meet the requirement of the overcoming Christ—1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 3:9.
  2. The wedding garment in Matthew 22:11-12 signifies the Christ whom we live out and who is expressed through us in our daily living as our surpassing righteousness—5:20; Rev. 3:4-5, 18.
- C. The Lord's bride, His wife, "has made herself ready. And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints"—19:7b-8:
1. Revelation 19:8 clearly associates clothing with righteousness.
  2. The word *righteousnesses* in verse 8 is plural and can be translated as "righteous acts."
  3. The righteousnesses do not refer to Christ as our righteousness, whom we received for our salvation—1 Cor. 1:30.
  4. The fine linen indicates our overcoming life, our overcoming living.
  5. The fine linen is the Christ whom we live out of our being.
- D. "Blessed are they [the overcoming saints] who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb"—Rev. 19:9:
1. The marriage dinner of the Lamb here is the wedding feast in Matthew 22:2.
  2. To be called to the marriage dinner of Christ is to be blessed.
  3. The overcoming believers, who will be called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb, will also be the bride of the Lamb—Rev. 19:7.

## Message Six

### **The Bride as the Corporate Warrior**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:10-20

#### **I. Ephesians 6:10-20 reveals that the bride is a corporate warrior fighting against the enemy of God for God's kingdom:**

- A. When the overcoming lover of Christ becomes one with God to be God's dwelling place, in the eyes of God she is as beautiful as Tirzah and as lovely as Jerusalem; however, to the enemy she is as terrible as an army with banners—S. S. 6:4:
  - 1. Banners indicate a readiness to fight and also are a sign that the victory is won; a terrible army signifies that the overcomers of the Lord terrify God's enemy, Satan.
  - 2. This army fights the battle for God's kingdom in the degradation of God's people to become the overcomers who answer the Lord's call (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21); eventually, the overcomers will become a bride collectively to marry Christ (19:7-9); after their wedding, this bride will become an army to fight alongside Christ, her Husband, to defeat Antichrist with all his followers (vv. 11-21).
- B. The church as the bride is actually the corporate man in God's intention, who will fulfill the twofold purpose of expressing God and dealing with God's enemy—Gen. 1:26.
- C. Not only must God's eternal purpose be fulfilled and the desire of Christ's heart be satisfied, but God's enemy must be defeated; for this, the church must be a warrior.
- D. Our walk is for the fulfillment of God's purpose, our living is for the satisfaction of Christ, and our warfare is for the defeat of God's enemy—Eph. 4:1; 5:2, 8; 6:10-11.

#### **II. The testimony of Jesus during the millennium is the bride of Christ—the overcomers who are the co-kings of Christ—Rev. 19:7-9; 20:4, 6:**

- A. The Lord's recovery is for the preparation of the bride of Christ (19:7-9; 21:2); ultimately, we will be conformed to be the wonderful Shulammite, who, as the duplication of Solomon, is the greatest and ultimate figure of the New Jerusalem as the counterpart, the bride, of Christ (S. S. 6:13; Rev. 21:2, 9-10; 22:17a).
- B. The Shulammite is likened to the dance of two camps, or two armies (Heb. *mahanaim*), in the sight of God; after Jacob saw the angels of God, the two armies of God, he named the place where he was Mahanaim and divided his wives, children, and possessions into "two armies"—S. S. 6:13; Gen. 32:1-10:
  - 1. The spiritual significance of the two armies is the strong testimony that we more than conquer, we "super-overcome," through Him who loved us according to the principle of the Body of Christ—Rom. 8:37; 12:5; Deut. 32:30; Eccl. 4:9-12.
  - 2. God does not want those who are strong in themselves; He wants only the feeble ones, the weaker ones, the women and children; those who are counted worthy to be overcomers will be the weaker ones who depend on the Lord—1 Cor. 1:26-28; 2 Cor. 12:9-10; 13:3-5; S. S. 8:6.
  - 3. God needs a people who are one with Him, a people who are submissive to Him, signified by the plaited hair (1:11), and obedient to Him with a flexible will, signified by the neck with strings of jewels (v. 10).
  - 4. When we consider how to arrive at the highest peak of the divine revelation, we should not trust in ourselves but depend on the Lord as love, power, and mercy to make us vessels of mercy, honor, and glory—Rom. 9:16, 21-23.

#### **III. Spiritual warfare is necessary because Satan's will is in conflict with God's will—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; Matt. 6:10:**

- A. In addition to God's intention, God's will, there is a second intention, a second will, for the satanic will is set against the divine will—Isa. 14:12-14.
- B. All warfare has its source in the conflict between Satan's will and God's will.
- C. Spiritual warfare is the warfare between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan; in order for the kingdom of the heavens to be established, there is the need of spiritual fighting—Matt. 12:26, 28; Rev. 12:11.
- D. We walk according to truth and by grace, we live in love and light, and we fight to subdue the satanic will—Eph. 4:1; 5:2, 8; 6:12.

**IV. To deal with God's enemy, we need to be empowered with the greatness of the power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the heavenlies, far above all the evil spirits in the air—v. 10; 1:19-22:**

- A. The fact that we need to be empowered in the Lord indicates that in ourselves we cannot fight the spiritual warfare against Satan and his evil kingdom; we can fight only in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
- B. The charge to be empowered implies the need to exercise our will; if we would be empowered for spiritual warfare, our will must be strong and exercised—S. S. 4:4; 7:4.

**V. The warfare between the church and Satan is a battle between us who love the Lord and who are in His church and the evil powers in the heavenlies—Eph. 6:12:**

- A. The rulers, the authorities, and the world-rulers of this darkness are the rebellious angels, who followed Satan in his rebellion against God and who now rule in the heavenlies over the nations of the world—Col. 1:13; Dan. 10:20.
- B. We need to realize that our warfare is not against human beings but against the evil spirits, the spiritual powers in the heavenlies.

**VI. Spiritual warfare is not an individual matter; it is a matter of Christ's bride being a corporate warrior—Eph. 6:13:**

- A. The church is a corporate warrior, and the believers together make up this corporate warrior; after we have been formed corporately into an army, we will be able to fight against God's enemy.
- B. God's strategy is to use the church as His army to fight against the enemy; Satan's strategy is to isolate us from the church as God's army.
- C. The whole armor of God is for the Body, not for individuals; only the corporate warrior can wear the whole armor of God.

**VII. To fight the spiritual warfare, we need to put on the whole armor of God—v. 11:**

- A. God in Christ as the reality in our living is the girdle that strengthens our whole being for the spiritual warfare—v. 14a.
- B. The breastplate of righteousness that covers our conscience and guards us from Satan's accusations is Christ as our righteousness—v. 14b; 1 Cor. 1:30.
- C. Christ is the peace for us to be one with God and with the saints; this peace is the firm foundation that enables us to stand against the enemy—Eph. 2:15; 6:15.
- D. Faith is a shield against the flaming darts of the enemy; Christ is the Author and Perfector of such faith—v. 16; Heb. 12:2.
- E. The helmet of salvation that covers our mind is the saving Christ whom we experience in our daily life—Eph. 6:17a; John 16:33.
- F. The sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God, is our offensive weapon with which we cut the enemy to pieces—Eph. 6:17b.
- G. Prayer is the unique, crucial, and vital means by which we apply the whole armor of God, making every item of the armor available to us in a practical way—v. 18.



**VIII. By putting on the whole armor of God, we are able to stand against the stratagems, the evil plans, of the devil—vv. 11, 13-14:**

- A. To sit with Christ is to participate in all His accomplishments, to walk in His Body is to fulfill God's eternal purpose, and to stand in His power is to fight against God's enemy—2:6; 4:1; 5:2, 8; 6:11, 13-14.
- B. In fighting against the enemy, the most important thing is to stand; having done all, we need to stand to the end.

**IX. We all need to see that in the Lord's recovery today we are on a battlefield; we must cooperate with the Lord to fight against Satan's aerial forces so that we can gain more of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ and the preparation of the bride of Christ, setting up and spreading the kingdom of God so that Christ can come back to inherit the earth.**