

Message Three

To Prepare the Bride as the Counterpart of the Bridegroom

(1)

The Readiness of the Bride

Scripture Reading: Rev. 19:7-9, 11-16; 21:2; Heb. 6:1; Eph. 4:13, 15-16; 5:27; S. S. 4:7

- I. The direction of the Lord's move today is to prepare the bride as the counterpart of the Bridegroom for the eternal marriage of the redeeming God with His redeemed—John 3:29; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9-11.**
- II. 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; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2; Rom. 5:10.**
- III. The Lord's recovery is for the preparation of the bride, who is composed of all His overcomers—Rev. 19:7-9; Rom. 8:37:**
 - A. 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.
 - B. 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.
- IV. 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:**
 - A. In the maturity of the divine life, the lover of Christ becomes the Shulammitte, signifying that she has become the reproduction and duplication of Christ to match Him for their marriage—S. S. 6:13; Rev. 21:9-10.
 - B. In the New Testament the word *mature* is used to refer to the believers' being full-grown and perfected in the life of God, indicating that we need to grow and mature unto perfection in the divine life—Matt. 5:48.
 - C. We need to continue to grow until we are matured in the divine life to become a full-grown man, arriving at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ—Eph. 4:13.
 - D. We need to learn of the apostle Paul to pursue the growth and maturity in the life of Christ—Phil. 3:12-15; Col. 1:28.
 - E. A mature believer knows the Body, cares for the Body, and honors the Body, being Body-conscious and Body-centered—1 Cor. 12:8-19, 21, 24; Col. 3:15.
- V. The overcomers who constitute the bride are not separate individuals but a corporate bride; for this aspect of the bride, building is needed—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:15-16:**
 - A. The overcomers are not only mature in life but also built together as one bride—Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9-11.
 - B. The central and divine thought of the Scriptures is that God is seeking a divine building as the mingling of Himself with humanity; He is seeking a living

composition of living persons redeemed by and mingled with Himself—Matt. 16:18; John 14:20; Eph. 4:16; 1 John 4:15; Rev. 21:2.

- C. The principle of God's building is that God builds Himself into man and builds man into Himself; God mingling with man is God building Himself into man, and man mingling with God is man being built into God—Eph. 3:17a.
- D. God's building is the corporate expression of the Triune God—1 Tim. 3:15-16; John 17:22; Eph. 3:19b, 21.
- E. To be built up with fellow believers is the Lord's supreme and highest requirement of His faithful seekers according to one of the divine attributes—the divine oneness—John 17.

VI. As the bride, the counterpart of the Bridegroom, the church needs beauty—3:29; S. S. 1:15-16; 4:1-5, 7; Psa. 45:11a; 50:2:

- A. "Your eyes will see the King in His beauty" (Isa. 33:17a); "the King will desire your beauty" (Psa. 45:11a).
- B. In the corporate constitution of the Body of Christ, there is much beauty, excellency, and virtue—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; S. S. 1:15-16; 4:1-5, 7.
- C. The virtues manifested by us Christians should be the manifestation of the glory and beauty in the divine attributes; a Christian is one who has divinity as his element and reality, from which the divine glory and beauty are expressed through the human virtues—1 Cor. 10:31; Phil. 1:20-21a; 4:5, 8.
- D. The beauty of the bride is for the presentation of the bride to Christ as the Bridegroom—Eph. 5:27; John 3:29; Rev. 19:7-9:
 - 1. The beauty of the bride comes from the Christ who is wrought into the church and who is then expressed through the church—Eph. 5:27; 3:17.
 - 2. Our only beauty is the shining out of Christ from within us—Psa. 50:2; 90:16.
 - 3. What Christ appreciates in us is the expression of Himself—S. S. 4:7.

VII. According to Revelation 19:11-21, Christ will come as the fighting General with His bride, the overcoming believers who are His army, to fight against Antichrist, the kings under him, and their armies at Armageddon:

- A. When Christ comes with His army to fight against Antichrist and his armies, He will come as the Son of Man, and as the Son of Man, He will need a counterpart, His bride, to match and complete Him—14:14; 19:7-8, 11-13.
- B. Before His coming back, Christ will have a wedding, uniting His overcomers to Himself as one entity—vv. 7-9:
 - 1. Christ will marry the one who has been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years—Eph. 5:27; 6:10-18.
 - 2. In Revelation 19 Christ will marry the overcomers, who have already overcome the evil one.
- C. After His wedding Christ will come with His bride to destroy Antichrist—vv. 11-13.
- D. The wedding garment—Christ lived out of us as our subjective righteousness—qualifies us not only to attend the wedding but also to join in the army to fight with Christ against Antichrist in the ultimate war—the war at Armageddon—vv. 8, 14.