

# The Bride Makes Herself Ready

by Robert B. Thompson

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual readiness and the transformative journey of the church as the bride of Christ in preparation for eternal life.*

**Duration:** 1:06:11

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Revelation 21:1-7

**Topics:** "End Times", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of a thousand-year period mentioned in Revelation 19. He suggests that this period may be for the purpose of preparing the bride of Christ. The speaker explains that the Lord will first deal with His church in terms of war, freeing them from bondage to the enemy. This will be accomplished in two stages, with a group of mighty men or Gideon's army gaining victory by the Spirit of the Lord and then helping the rest of the body. The speaker emphasizes that the present life is a prototype and not what God means by life, and that our hope is to be like Jesus and purify ourselves.

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## Transcript

Morning with praise and thanksgiving. How good you are, Lord, and how wonderfully you have dealt with us, Lord. As the brother said, life is a cesspool, but we don't have to live in it.

We thank you for that, Lord. Thank you for that. We pray for each family represented here, Lord, that your good guardian protection will be on each one, their loved ones, to keep them safe and healthy.

We thank you for bringing our brother Bob back safely. We pray, Lord, for those who are out, the little children, the church of the future being taught. And for those of us here, Lord, we ask your help today that the Holy Spirit will minister Jesus to each one.

We pray in His name to give you all the glory, Lord. Amen. You may be seated.

We'll turn to Revelation 21. I may repeat some of the things that I talked about Tuesday night. And so those who are here, bear with us.

And those that have heard this before, bear with us, because it takes people a while to catch on to stuff. We're going to read Revelation 21, verses 1 through 7. Revelation 21, 1 through 7. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a

bride, beautifully dressed for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes.

There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, I am making everything new. Then He said, Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.

He said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To him who is thirsty, I will give to drink without cost, from the spring of the water of life.

He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God, and he will be my son. Now, you notice the comparison with Genesis 1.1. In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. Here you have a new heaven and an earth, which tells us something important.

It tells us that this is going back over the cycle again. Up to this point, it's been the first heaven and the first earth. Now it's a new heaven and a new earth.

And this new heaven and new earth will last forever, as C.S. Lewis says, in which every chapter is better than the one previous. This is where life begins, right here. The present life, the Adamic race was never meant to be eternal.

It's written in the Psalms, and in Hebrews, the first chapter, as a vesture shall you fold them up, and they're discarded like dirty clothes and a hamper. It's a prototype. This life is a prototype.

It's not what God means by life. It's something to test us, see what we'll do under pressure, to bring forth rulers, particularly to bring forth rulers who will govern during the new world. And one of the worst mistakes anyone can make in life is to put all your eggs in one basket, to view this present world as being what it is, as being the important thing.

And the reason why it's good to know this is because sometimes if God is preparing us for an important role in his kingdom, just like when you build a very tall building, you spend a long time digging down underground before anything goes up. The taller the building, the further down you have to go. But if you're called for an important role in God's kingdom, he's going to spend a lot of time on your life, dealing with you.

You can't compare yourself with anybody else. You can't do that. You can't say, no, I won't do this, I won't do that, I will do this, I will do that.

You belong to God. He paid for you with his blood. You belong to him.

And what happens is sometimes if God is really dealing with us strenuously, it seems like we're losing everything. We're losing everything. And then you have to realize the purpose of this life.

This is not where it is. This is not the important part of your life. It's to work God's will in you, to give you a knowledge of God and his ways.

That's its purpose. And sometimes to do that, we have to go through some pretty rugged situations. Pretty rugged.

Pretty rugged. And it's good and it's a while to realize, yeah, it's true, I didn't get much out of this world. Not get much, looks like I'm going to lose everything.

Not achieve what I thought I wanted to achieve. Not obtain what I thought I wanted to obtain. But it's okay.

It's okay. Because this is not where it is for me. Life begins in the new heaven and the new earth.

Then where I will be, what I will do, what I will be like, all depends on what's happening now. So it's just like going to school. If you have a high objective to be a doctor of medicine or a psychiatrist or whatever, you can't just go through grammar school and graduate from high school and hand your certificate, whatever it is you're after, practice of medicine.

Because you have chosen a goal that is past the ordinary, you have to spend more time than the ordinary person in preparation. Those years are not fun. If you want to become a master of a musical instrument or a master of athletics or whatever you wish to perfect, you have to deny yourself a lot of things that other people don't have to.

They can get out of high school, get married, settle down, get some kind of a job, make a living all the while you're grinding the books. You're backing the stacks, looking up stuff, writing papers. Oh, I've written so many papers in my life, I hate it.

But you have to do it. This is the road that you go. You have to go that way.

There's no shortcut. You have to go that way. And so you rationalize to yourself, you say, okay, I don't get what I want now, but I have a goal out there.

Sometimes people say it isn't the goal, it's how you travel. I think that is the biggest bunch of baloney I ever heard. If the goal isn't what you're after, then it invalidates the journey.

Well, maybe, I don't want to get into that. It's good to have a goal, and the Bible holds goals out there. I press toward the mark.

And Paul wasn't very happy on the journey, okay? I'm pressing toward the mark. I want the crown. That's reality.

That's the way life is. That's the way the kingdom is. It isn't because sometimes you're not so happy on the journey, and you choose other things to do if you had your druthers.

But you have a goal, and that goal will be worth it when you get there. Believe me, it will be worth every inconvenience, every denial, everything. It will be worth it.

So, that other philosophy is that it's the way you travel that's important. That's more foolish talk. That doesn't even matter.

So, I have a goal, and that goal is when God finally gets sick. And by the way, there's been some talk that this means, first of all, this heaven here is not the spirit heaven. This is the sky.

It's talking about the sky. Problem is the Greek language has no word for sky. So, they just have or and os.

So, you have to figure out what it means. God doesn't want to make a new spiritual heaven. There's no point in that.

What he's making is a new sky and a new earth. Just like in the beginning, he created the sky, and he created the earth. The firmament.

And people have said, well, you know, that's too much for God. He's certainly not going to do away with the earth, and he's not going to do away with it. He's going to make them new.

How we limit God. If you want to take a peek at 2 Peter 3.10. I bet that old fisherman never knew someday he'd be called 2 Peter. You get hitched up to Jesus.

You become eternal. People talk about you for a long time. 2 Peter 3.10. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.

The heavens will disappear with a roar. The heavens will pass away with a roar. The elements will be destroyed by fire in the earth, and everything in it will be laid bare.

Yeah, be laid bare. All right. I don't know where the New International Version got that, but I know you said, well, how do you know it won't be this earth? Well, I know it won't be this earth because the city is 1,500 miles high, and it's gold.

You have any idea? It would throw the earth out of orbit so fast it isn't even funny. 1,500 miles. Bob, how high did you fly on your way to? Yeah.

Now, you didn't go up 1,500 miles? No, I don't think so. No, I don't think so. That is up there.

The earth will be bigger than anything we imagine at this time, a couple of million miles in diameter without a doubt, and a new heaven. Well, Peter says it will disappear with a roar. Well, now if, and all the planets go, yeah, I think that'll be a roar and a half.

Well, people say, you know, that's asking God to do an awful lot. Oh, no, it isn't. He'll just inhale, and one will be gone, exhale, and the other will be here.

No biggie. Yeah, he can solve your problems. The first heaven and the first earth had passed away, passed away.

It doesn't say that you've got a new model. When something passes away, it passes away, right? Amen. And there was no longer any sea.

Now, I said Tuesday night, that's not talking about the literal sea, and I saw a few wrinkled brows because people want me to be absolutely fundamental, and I am absolutely fundamental, but I said I wouldn't care for it if there was no sea. Now, we spent three days looking at the ocean, and I don't know, but it does a lot for me, and I've often thought what it would be like to be a whale, but I don't dwell on it. But out there, they always show up for Audrey, and sure enough, here it came to the porpoise, and I mean, that's three-fourths of the planet is water, and without that, oh, I can't even picture it.

So anyway, so I says, all right, I'll give the folks something to consider this morning. If we look at Revelation 13.1, maybe we get an idea of what the Lord is talking about. There's no more sea.

Oh, no, I want sea. Lord, please, on my brother's hand. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea.

Revelation 13.1. Now, how many believe that the Antichrist is going to be something like Godzilla suddenly arising up in the Pacific Ocean? Here he comes, be deceived. He would deceive many people. He might frighten a lot of them.

Now, the sea refers to people, and you check it out in Isaiah 57.20, and it refers to certain kinds of people. Not our kind. Not our kind at all.

Isaiah 57.20. It's amazing. These pages are so thin, it can cover so much territory that one will have the Bible for 20 years, and there'll still be pages that are stuck together. Isaiah 57.20. Let me get there.

Let me get there. Oh, thank God it wasn't stuck. 57.20. Now, if I can find it, I'll have to get somebody else to read it.

You know, the numbers keep getting smaller. That's a joke. All right.

But the wicked are like the, what? Tossing sea. So, I think what God is telling us in Revelation is that there will no longer be anybody who is wicked. There no longer will be a sea of people that can be tossed around by demagogues and brought into sin.

Everyone will have a measure of Christ. In the new earth, maybe 34, maybe 60, maybe 100, but everybody will have some, and God will be in every person, and that will fulfill the scripture. God will be all in all.

No more sea of people. Everyone will be known. There'll be no more mob, no more undifferentiated group.

Lord, save all of us purposes. All right. I saw the holy city.

First thing we notice about it is that it is holy. Very important to God. That means it is free from unclean spirits.

There's no uncleanness in it. No spiritual uncleanness in it. It's clean.

It's pure. It's holy. It's filled with God.

There's nothing unclean in it. We notice it's a city. There is a city.

Now, I think the city is both a real city and also symbolic. There's so much in it that's symbolic, that is obviously not, is talking about other things than just what one would think of. We notice there's only one street.

Well, in any great city, there's always more than one street, but there's only one way. And the precious stones in the foundation of the wall, all this attention here, is talking about the characteristics of the saints. And the gates of pearl, speaking of those who have in their personalities an entrance to God because of the things they've suffered, the irritation under their shell.

Anybody have any irritation under his shell this morning? God's making you a gate to God, a gate to God. So, I believe there's a real city and somehow the characteristics of the people are in it. Now, what is this city? This city is the church.

Now, you don't understand that. You won't understand these two chapters. This city is the church.

In fact, when Jesus said in John 14, in my Father's house, this is it. This is the Father's house. It's building. He's building. What house will you build me? This is the Father's house. This is the glorified church.

This is the wife of the Lamb. Yeah. And it's Jerusalem.

Not the same Jerusalem. A new Jerusalem, but Jerusalem nonetheless because whenever God deals in the realm that is political on the earth and has to do with people, it's always Jerusalem. God starts and he never changes because he knows the end from the beginning.

Because he knows the end from the beginning, he never starts anything wrong. He never starts anything wrong in your life because he knows the end from the beginning. You see that? If you knew what you were going to do, you knew how it would come out, you'd make up your mind whether to do it, wouldn't you? If you knew the end from the beginning.

God knows the end from the beginning. So, he knows exactly what he's doing. He doesn't keep changing his mind.

He knows what he's doing. Get in the rest. Get in the flow with God.

Move with God. You'll have a happy life if you do, but you'll be at odds with yourself if you don't. Coming down out of heaven or down through the sky from God, prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband.

That's the church. This is the bride without spot or wrinkle. Now, how did it get that way? Well, it got that way in two stages.

I want to talk about that this morning. When you have nobility, and in this case, there is nobility here. There is the King, Jesus.

And this is his bride. She's never called the bride of the King, except in Psalm 45. She's never even called the bride of Christ.

She's always the bride of the Lamb. But nonetheless, this is the kingdom of the Lord. And no bride of a king dresses herself.

She's dressed by others. Isn't it so? You've all read about that or seen it in the movies or something grabs you and you realize that this is somebody that has been dressed by others. Beautifully dressed for her husband.

Ephesians 5 tells us that the church will be without spot or wrinkle. Everybody knows that. But there's great confusion on that because of imputed righteousness.

We can't make the bridge in our mind. When does imputed righteousness become actual righteousness? How does this happen? We know this bride here is, if she's beautifully dressed for her husband, then there

are three things that are true of her. She is holy, she is righteous, and she is obedient to God.

If this wasn't true, she wouldn't be beautifully dressed for her husband because the Lord will not have a bride that is not holy, that is not righteous, and that is not obedient to God. Well, when we start off as Christians, we have something given to us called imputed righteousness, which means that God calls us righteous when we haven't done anything righteous. But God starts us that way.

So the big problem in Christian thinking, and it's never been really resolved to any great extent, there's been much speculation on it, is when do we pass from imputed or ascribed righteousness to actual righteousness? How does this happen? And generally, the church has looked at it in two ways. One, that when we die, we are automatically made righteous, holy, and obedient to God. If you stop to think of it, the Bible doesn't say that, but people assume, well, you know, I never could cut it in this light, but when I die, I'll follow the Lord, you know, which is an assumption and a comforting one, but there's a problem with that, and that is we're making an assumption that there's no sin in heaven, in the spirit realm.

The truth is, the spirit realm is the source of sin. That's where it came from. You remember in the garden, Eve was happy, wandering around with all these tree full of apples and everything, and it never bothered Adam, it never bothered Eve, until somebody came that God did not create from the dust.

A third person. And he came from the spirit realm, where sin had already become sophisticated, already been developed, and to this day, it's common knowledge, at least in the charismatic circles, that we are, our natural evil nature is intensified by what we call evil spirits, so how then can death change us from a sinful nature to a pure nature? There's no Bible for it, and it isn't logical. So, that offers us no relief in changing from imputed righteousness to actual righteousness, actual holiness, actual obedience to God.

But then, the other is that when the Lord comes, it will happen instantly, and there's no Bible for that. The idea is that when Jesus comes, well, okay, here I am, I've been a careless servant. The Lord gave me a talent.

Was that a talent of gold or a talent of silver in Matthew 25? Well, if it was gold, it was worth a lot of money. You know how much a talent weighs? 75 pounds. When was the last time you picked up 75 pounds? You ever picked up a sack of cement? Well, someone weighed 50 pounds.

I mean, you give the guy the talent, the guy says, thanks. You give me 10 talents, whoa, you know, put them on a skid or something. 75 pounds, 75 pounds of gold is a little change in your pocket there, you can put in for the mission next, 75 pounds of gold, that's a lot of money.

But the guy buried it. Why? He was fearful. No problem, because when the Lord comes, he'll wave the wand and his fearfulness will be gone.

Isn't that what the Bible says? Here this dude came with his talent, I don't think he was carrying it, but he might have been, might have been pretty husky. Where is it? Here it is. One of the angels grabbed it.

It's not to worry, friend, not to worry, because the Bible says, when I come, I will remove it all. Enter into the joy of your Lord. Isn't that what it says? What does it say? What does it say? You wicked, lazy servant! Now that doesn't sound much like when the Lord comes with a wand, he's going to remove our problem, does it? So another theory shot in the head.

And the same way with the foolish virgins, he didn't come and say, well, you were foolish, honey, but it's okay now because good old Jesus is here, and I wave my wand, and off goes the foolishness, and in comes wisdom. Now he just closed the door, that's how he solved that. He didn't want any foolish virgins around.

So how do we get from ascribed righteousness to actual righteousness, from disobedience to obedience? How do we become beautifully dressed for the king? Well, that's a problem. And I want to show it to you in two stages. Now, I've talked about this before, and I know some of you have heard it probably 37 and a half times, but it takes a while to coagulate up here.

And I know there's some here that have never heard this before. All right, we're in Revelation 19, verse 7, and lo and behold, we find another marriage! One in chapter 19, one in chapter 21. Now how in the world, or what in the world, or who in the world, it says, let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory for the wedding of the Lamb has come.

Whoa, so he must have divorced her and then married another in Revelation 21. Well, we know that isn't true. All right, so the wedding of the Lamb has come, and then we come to this very important thing.

And this is the crux, and I feel that God wanted me to stress this this morning. I really want to stress, okay, this is the burden of the Lord as far as I know. Let the prophets judge.

His bride has made herself ready. Now, if you look back at 21, it says, prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband. Revelation 19 says the bride has made herself ready.

Now, let me explain to you, explain to you what's going on here. In Revelation 19, Revelation 19 and Revelation 21 are separated by what's called a thousand years, whether that's literal thousand years or symbolic. We'll say it's literal for now so as not to add complexity.

So between Revelation 19 and 21, there's a thousand years that scholars have called the Millennium. Now, does everyone understand this? Because if there's anything in my teaching, there's a few things that people have an enormous problem with, and this is one of them. Now, do you understand? Brian, when we have that projector and I was going like this, would it be possible up there for you to make a little diagram? Oh, with that resounding reinforcement, I will continue.

I can't even draw water out of a well or something. All right, now, picture in your mind a thousand year period. The beginning is Revelation 19.

The end, the bride is beautifully dressed. Speculate that maybe the reason for that thousand years is to make her ready. Hey, that's pretty cool.

That's not bad. Okay. Here she is over here.

Here she is over here. It's a thousand years. Okay.

When we use the term the first resurrection, which is a Bible term in Revelation 20, the first resurrection, we're talking about the one. So it seems like the bride has been divided into two parts because we know Jesus isn't going to marry two brides. Okay.

No, that's not nice. All right? So we say the bride is divided into two parts. We say that's wild.

That's wild. No, it isn't. No, it is not at all.

And there are several major types of the Bible. A type of the Bible merely means a store in the Old Testament that is allegorical or metaphorical. It symbolizes something.

There's several major ones. You don't have to go looking for them with a magnifying glass and peeping and muttering. They're big ones.

And the first one is the most dramatic allegory in the Old Testament describing the coming of the Lord is the incident concerning Gideon. Now, why is this such an important thing? Because you see, you have the lamps in the clay jugs and they're broken and the light comes out, which is symbolic of our being resurrected and the inner light coming out in the day of the Lord. Now, the Midianites were gathered by a hundred thousand, maybe a million and a half Midianites or more.

They filled the whole valley. So the enemy was there in force and God came and revealed himself to Gideon. And you all know about this fleece.

Gideon couldn't believe it and put out the fleece and it was dry one time and wet the next and so on and so forth. And then God he gathered out of all the couple million Israelites, he gathered out 300 men. And through those 300, God destroyed the Midianites, joined in the battle and the spoils.

Now, that is probably the major type that when the Lord comes, there'll be a division. There'll be a small group taken from the whole. That's just one.

If there was just one, I'd say, well, I can't bank on one, but there are several. I'll give you a couple more. But how many remember that when God started out and Gideon had, what was it? 22,000 men? Something like that.

And God said, there's too many, there's too many, too many. Find out who's scared and send them home. Well, pretty near the whole crew left.

And they aren't scared. And so it got down to what? What was the second level? Does anyone remember? 10,000? I don't know. Anyway, it got down to another group and God said, test them with the water, see how they drink.

And I think that's going on today. I really think that drinking thing, because that's the test of water. And there's water in the Holy Spirit, but people, some are cautious.

They look around like the one group, put their hand down, watch for the enemy, drink, laughing like a dog. But the most of them stuck their head in the water. All they needed was someone to come give them a good kick and they'd drown.

Well, that's what's going on today. People drinking the water, but they're, you know, anything goes. I mean, you can get down on your knees and bark like a dog and someone will lead you.

And I feel sorry for, I don't need to be merciful with such people. I don't mean harm. They're doing what they think is right.

And some of them get blessed and some of them get one young fella that had guts. And I mean that young. So I'm not here to criticize what people do.

I beat their head on the wall and so on. You know, so that's better than sitting in church and then going out and doing something wrong. How many know that? So these people were drinking, they were drinking the same, they all drank the same water.

Some got real careless and just stuck their head in the water. They were all thirsty, I guess. But 300 put their hand down, brought up their mouth and laughed like a dog and out of the palm of their hand, God said, these are the ones.

So you see, there's a sifting goes on. And that tells us something important because today the accent is on numbers. My goodness, if you don't have 30,000 people in a meeting, you're not doing anything.

The Lord doesn't always work that way. He got rid of the numbers. He got himself down to an army that was impossible to whip the Midianites.

And then he whipped the Midianites. And God got the glory. There's another major type of the division of the church at the coming of the Lord.

And that is, has to do with the Ark of the Covenant, which was the holiest thing in the tabernacle. And it had been lost from the tabernacle. And so the Jews built, they moved the tabernacle from Shiloh and built it on a city 10 miles north of Jerusalem.

But it had no holy, it had no Ark and the Holy of Holies, the Holy of Holies was empty. The Holy of Holies was empty. The altar was there, the labor was there, table of showbread was there, lampstand was there, everything was there, altar of incense, everything except the Ark.

The Ark was in captivity. Well, when David became king, he sent for the Ark. You know the story, they brought it back the wrong way and then they finally brought it back the right way.

But the significant thing is, that as long as David was alive, the Ark remained in a suburb of Jerusalem called Zion. Now David was a man of God if there ever was one and he moved by the prophet, he moved by the spirit of prophecy. And there is no way under Levitical law that you could keep that Ark separate, 10 miles away from the rest of the tabernacle and be pleasing to God.

But he did. And God was pleased. And so you'll keep seeing through Psalms, Zion, Zion, like the name of our church.

Zion is a suburb of Jerusalem where the Ark was. Which tells us that God at some point, our stand for the Ark you might say, and then there's others who are going through all the things of the Christian church. Salvation, the baptism with the Holy Spirit, divine healing, you name it.

That's a very clear type. And it endured and it didn't change until David died. And they were never brought together, the Ark and the rest of the tabernacle were never brought together until something happened.

And what was that? Solomon built the temple. And then the tabernacle and the Ark were all brought and put in that temple. And what that means, that Solomon's reign symbolizes the new heaven and the new earth.

Because it's a reign of peace and a reign of glory. David's reign symbolizes the millennium because it's the time of the rod of iron. It's the time, there's still war, there's still conquest going on.

I don't call it the millennium, I call it the kingdom age because that's what it is. Christ and the saints ruling with the rod of iron. Which is a Davidic reign.

And see, the reason Solomon had so much glory was because David had won all the battles. Not Solomon. He didn't win battles.

David prepared the way for Solomon. So the thousand year kingdom age will prepare the way for the new heaven and earth. What I'm talking about is how we get from imputed righteousness to actual righteousness.

There's a third great type. See, there's major types here. That when David was anointed king three times.

Once by Samuel when Saul was still reigning. And then after Saul died, David was anointed king over Hebron I believe. He was king of Hebron over Judah.

And then some seven years later he was anointed king over the rest of Israel and reigned for 33 more years. See, these are major types. So when we say that it is prophesied in the Bible that God at some critical point, and then bring it together, divide it until certain victories are won, and then bring it together, we don't have to look for some questionable translation of one half of one verse somewhere.

We're talking about major, major types of the Bible. So, what are we looking at here? We're looking at a time when the Lord comes, but not all the church is ready for Him. Some of the teaching that goes on today, and Lloyd who's an editor of the magazine up there in Omega, Lloyd Darnton is with us this morning, and I was discussing this.

Because this is in the air, this separation, little groups of people and home groups, and I'm saying this out on the tape because I want this information needs to be spread out to God's people are so starved for God that somebody gets the idea, oh our little group is called the sons of God, and we're supposed to marry the church which is the bride of the Lamb. Or, we are the manifested sons of God, and any day now we're going to become invulnerable, and laser beams will go out from us. And everything in between is being taught today to little groups of people.

And the reason that they believe these things, which you say, well they're off the wall. Well, listen, these people are hungry for God. They're hungry for God.

And people don't know what direction to go. So they get this intimation in the spirit about the overcomers, and then it spurts out in these kind of unfruitful avenues, and it's only because they don't know any better. They're just hungry for God.

So don't despise people when they get off into these queer things. They are to be prayed for. They are to be prayed for.

They're not strong, ready to move the church. They are victims of the situation. But the spirit is talking to us today about moving on past Pentecost, about coming past Pentecost, coming out from the casual, lukewarm Christianity, and serving God like we mean it.

That's what he's asking for. That's what he's demanding. And it will cause, as God's moves always do, it will cause an uproar among people as people leave churches, and this happens, and the next thing happens.

So that's what's going on today. All right, now, back to Revelation 19. What is this? Revelation 19.

Now, I use the Old Testament figures, but we don't want to become, you know, real out into left field with them. I'll call this Zion. This is Zion.

This is like a Gideon's army in Revelation 19, 7 and 8. This is like a Gideon's army, strong people that are called out by the Lord to begin this program of changing from imputed righteousness to actual righteousness. And that's why the emphasis today, if it's coming from God, it will be on a return to righteous behavior. If a message is really coming from God today, the need today in America is a return to old-fashioned cross-carrying consecration and righteousness.

And anything that is really emphasizing anything else, be careful, because that is what the Spirit of God is talking about. Now, what God is saying to you and to me today, I want you to make yourself ready. If you look at 1 John, hold this, and look at 1 John 3. How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are.

The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God and what we will be has not yet been made known, but we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Okay, look at verse 3. Look at verse 3. Everyone who has this hope, that is a being like Jesus, in Him purifies himself, and then it gives you the standard of purification, just as He is pure.

So this is the thesis that I am advancing to you today, that this group in Revelation, it is like the whole body of Christ is bound. It is like Lazarus. It has been called forth from the grave, but it comes stumbling out because its legs and its arms are bound with grave clothes.

And there He stands. He has been raised from the dead. We have been raised from the dead by the Spirit of God.

The whole church has been raised from the dead by the Spirit of God, but it is bound. And by the way, this did not happen on the third day, representing on the fourth day, representing Pentecost. It happened on the fifth day, representing the move of God after Pentecost.

It happened on the day of trumpets. Alright, now here He stands. Now, Jesus could have said, bonds be gone, but He didn't.

He had done the thing that people could not do. He had raised the dead man. But you see, people were able to loose Lazarus after that.

So Jesus turned to them and said, loose him and let him go. Now that is where we are today. We are kind of in Ezekiel 37 to combine another allegory.

The wind is blowing on the body that is being reassembled, the dry bones, but it is bound. The body is bound. It has Him, but not actual righteousness.

Now, it's as though a hand is being loosed. And then when that hand is loose, as I understand the scripture, it will loose the rest of the body. It will loose the rest of the body.

And so what we have is, all of us, and I'm sure this is being preached in many parts of the world today, we have Christian people who have been saved by the blood, who have been baptized with the Holy Spirit,

and the next move after God, to begin the process in the church of the move from imputed righteousness, the state of grace, to actual righteousness of behavior. So the Lord is dealing with each one of us, and I'm sure you wouldn't be here unless the Lord is dealing with you. God is, and see, you're privileged, you're privileged, God has to understand so that you can cooperate with the Holy Spirit, because a church of imputed righteousness is of no use whatever for God's purposes.

It cannot show forth His glory and His praise, it's useless as a bride for the Lamb. Who wants a bride? She's dressed gloriously by imputed dressing. She actually, when you look at her, she's terrible looking, and she's in rags, but she's beautifully dressed according to the process of imputation.

Now, how would you like that? You say, but I can't, for all of my mental processes, when I look at her, I don't, it doesn't look so red hot. So that's where we are, and you are privileged to understand that, and with yourself, and the Holy Spirit is bringing us into a situation. One person.

Guys, is anything coming up in your life that is maybe not the best? That's a little better. Kids. I was a little, I can get away with that.

Did you notice anything in your personality recently that you think maybe there's a better way? If you did, if you did, you have a decision to make, don't you? I'm going to sweep it under the rug, and forget it, and pursue my imputed righteousness, or I'm going to make it known to the Lord, I'm going to get some help around here, and get this out of me. You know what you're doing? You're dressing yourself, in a white robe. You see this in Revelation 19? Alright, it says, his bride has made herself ready.

She purified herself. Now we can't do it alone, we have to have the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit is here to prompt us, and to enable us to do that. What's a good verse on that? Voila! Romans 8.13. If you through the Spirit do put to death the deeds of your body, you will live.

So the Holy Spirit is here to help you put to death the deeds of your body. Now what's it say? Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. Fine linen stands for, now notice, the righteous acts of the saints.

That is not imputed righteousness. So here we have a Gideon's army, here we have a Zion company, an Ark company, here we have the second anointing of David. Christ is already anointed, but the flesh is rule over part of the church.

In Israel, you had Israel divided, and here's another metaphor, you had Israel divided into Israel and mighty men. Israel and mighty men. And in both Kings and Chronicles, there's a lot said, they did all these marvelous things, not because God gets a nickel a word, it's telling you something.

It's telling you that out of Israel is going to come mighty men. Now the most talented race of people on the earth are the Jews. Out of them has come the most distinguished mathematicians, painters, musicians, whatever you want to name it, they got it.

But this is not what God exited. Prowess in war. Prowess in war.

They didn't have a group of Israelis separated, and mention the Bible because they were expert musicians, although they always are, there's no people as musical as the Jews, but they didn't do that. They're certainly the greatest business people in the world, but they didn't say, these are the people that are versed in business. They didn't divide Israel.

Only on the basis of prowess and meaning. And will be people who are marked. Now, they are still Israel, and all Israel will become one.

All Israel will become one. The whole house of Israel. But for a season.

People characterized by prowess in war. Now you say, where do you find that? You see the fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints. If you read down a couple of verses, you'll find in verse 14, the armies of heaven were following him riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

So as soon as they are characterized as an army by war. Okay, let's sum up what we've said. And by the way, by the way, then that leaves the thousand years as a period of time during which this company can help the rest of the church get rid of their bondages because they're expert in war.

So you have the bride over here who's made herself ready. Thousand year period. And that's all borne out in the 8th chapter, the last chapter, the Song of Solomon.

We have a little sister. She's immature. What will we do? Who's we? Well, we is Christ and his mighty man.

We're going to get at those bondages. We're going to build on her a tower. We're going to enclose her in planks of cedar.

We're going to do this. But she's still the bride. She's still the elect of God.

This is swift for you. It's on the tape. Alright, let me sum it up briefly.

Let me sum up this big tapestry briefly. The church today is in a situation called a state of grace. That means we recognize the fact that we do many wrong things, but God has forgiven us.

Okay? It's called imputed righteousness. It doesn't occupy but a very small part of the New Testament. But it occupies most evangelical teaching because that's all we've had.

The time has to come, somewhere along the line, when the Lord changes our imputed righteousness to actual righteousness if we're going to be the kingdom of God and the bride of the Lamb. That follows. Alright? We saw, one, that it does not happen by virtue of dying.

Death is not our redeemer. Two, we saw that it doesn't happen when the Lord comes. Rather, we're rewarded according to the way we behaved.

We're not then made something we weren't when he comes. That's not scriptural. Alright.

So, that means that at some point, the Lord has begun to deal with his church in terms of war because the enemy has us in bondage. The great types, the major types, show that this will be accomplished in two stages. One, the Lord will take out mighty men or Gideon's army or however you want to refer to them, and this group will gain the victory.

The Zion company will gain the victory by the Spirit of the Lord. They will dress themselves. They will move from imputed righteousness to actual righteousness.

Then, the second stage will be when this group helps the rest of the body, the strong help the weak. The firstborn son has a double portion so he can help the rest of the family until finally when God is ready for

life as he wants it to really begin. A new heaven, a new earth.

There's no more sea. Shall we stand? Hallelujah. Now, the hallel call this morning is simple and straightforward.

If God is dealing with you about something, you don't sweep it under the rug. The issue of the day is this beginning of God. This is the beginning of the kingdom which follows the type of the feasts of trumpets and all we've been into.

This is the beginning of the kingdom, the change from imputed to actual righteousness. Now, you and I are privileged for the Lord to give us understanding and the grace to begin to move in this direction. We must not be slow-fooled.

This is extremely important. It affects not only us, and I'm not referring to this church by us, I'm talking about whoever God is speaking to today. It is important for God, it's important for Christ, it's important for us, for his kingdom, for the rest of the church, and for the whole world.

Because the world is the last thing to be reclaimed by the Lord. But nothing can happen until the bride begins to make herself ready. And if God is speaking to you today about something in your life, I want you to come and get it dealt with if you need prayer.

But we must get it dealt with this morning. Bob Porcelli said something very significant, I don't know if you heard it. He said, trouble is coming.

That's very unlike Bob. I've never heard him say a thing like that. But believe me, the Lord has been speaking to me over and over that he's going to punish this nation because the Christians are not keeping this commandment.

So I don't know how long things are going to go. I know the Attorney General has said this threat of terrorism is very real, the German warfare and all the rest of it. So I'm not trying to scare anybody, but I'm trying to move you for a moment out of the framework of business as usual.

So you'll realize this is the time, not tomorrow, not some other time. If God is dealing with you about something, now is the time. So Stan, if you'll give us a little music to arrange for it.

I want, surely in this great, illustrious group here, there's somebody, God's dealing with you about something in your life, and I want you to come and get it straightened out. Please, let's come and let the Lord deal with us. He didn't put all this on my heart for no purpose.

And this is what God wanted preached. This is exactly what God wanted preached. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. You know, all you have to do is come up and name it, tell God about it, this has got to go, put it to death in the Spirit, take a stand against it. Whatever's come up in your life.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. I'm not going to draw it out.

If you're here and you need that kind of dealing with your life, say, I've been up before. Yeah, I know, I've been confessing my sins for the last 50 years. So, it takes a while to go through the labyrinth of our personality.

You know, something in your personality has come up in the last week. It's not right, you know it's not right. Don't stand there like the sphinx of Egypt and unblinking majesty.

Come forward and tell the Lord about it. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

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