

(Knowing God's Way) 17. the Seven Pillars of Wisdom

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the characteristics of the Bride of Christ, represented by the Seven Pillars of Wisdom, and the importance of seeking Divine wisdom to build the true church.

Scripture: Revelation 17:1

Topics: "Wisdom", "The Bride of Christ"

Description

Zac Poonen contrasts the spiritual states of Babylon the Harlot and Jerusalem the Bride of Christ, emphasizing the importance of purity and separation from worldly influences. He outlines the seven pillars of wisdom that define the true church: purity, peaceableness, consideration, willingness to yield, fullness of mercy, steadfastness, and freedom from hypocrisy. Poonen encourages believers to seek divine wisdom, which is essential for building these pillars and becoming part of the Bride of Christ. He stresses that true wisdom is not merely knowledge but a heart transformed by God, leading to genuine actions and relationships. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to pursue wisdom through faith and surrender to God.

Transcript

The great contrast that we see in the closing pages of the Bible is between Babylon the Harlot (Rev.17,18) and Jerusalem the Bride of Christ (Rev. 21 & 22).

The Bible says that those who are "friends of the world are adulteresses (harlots)" (Jas.4:4). In contrast, the bride consists of those who have separated themselves from the world, keeping themselves chaste and pure for their Heavenly Bridegroom. (Read 2 Cor.11:1-3).

In Proverbs 8:1,27, the Bridegroom is called 'Wisdom'. And then in the next chapter the Bride is also called 'Wisdom' (Proverbs 9:1), because she is one with her Bridegroom in every way and has His Name ('Wisdom') written on her forehead - being an overcomer like her Bridegroom was (See Rev.3:12,21 and 14:1).

In Proverbs chapter 9, we see the Bride and the Harlot clearly contrasted. In the first 12 verses of that chapter, the Bride invites all the foolish to turn from their foolish ways and to quit their sinful company (v.6) and to learn the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom (v.10). In the last 6 verses of that chapter, we read of the call of the Harlot. Many respond to the harlot's call and end up in spiritual death

(v.18).

The Bride (Wisdom), we read there, builds her house on SEVEN PILLARS. These seven pillars are listed for us in James 3:17, and the true church is built on these pillars. By these characteristics, we can identify the Bride of Christ anywhere:

1. Purity

The first and most important pillar in the true church is purity. This is not a hollow pillar of a merely external purity. No. It is solid through and through. It is purity of the heart, and it grows from the seed of the fear of God deep within the heart. It is not by clever brains but by pure hearts that the true church of Christ is built. We cannot build the church if we don't have spiritual revelation on God and His ways - and only the pure in heart will be allowed to see God in their hearts (Matt.5:8).

2. Peaceableness

Righteousness and peace always go together. They are twins. The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace (Rom.14:17). True wisdom is never argumentative or quarrelsome. It does not strive. It maintains harmonious relationships with everyone, as far as possible. It is impossible to quarrel with a man who is filled with Divine wisdom, for such a man is a peaceable man. He may be firm and he may be hated by compromisers. But he is always peaceable. Jesus told His disciples that when they travel to preach the gospel, they should stay only in the house of "men of peace" (Luke 10:5-7). We must be men of peace, if we are to build God's house.

3. Consideration

The Bride of Christ is always fair to others, gentle, patient, forbearing and courteous. She is never harsh or rough but always considerate of the feelings of others. When the church is supported by this pillar, it becomes easy to bear with one another - even if some are slow of understanding or crude in their manners. The problem, we begin to realise, is not the crudeness of our brother or sister, but the impatience that dwells within us. And so we fight the right enemy - our Self-life - and not our brothers and sisters.

4. Willingness to yield

One who cannot receive admonishment and exhortation, or who feels that he has gone beyond that stage, is truly foolish, even if he is an elder or an older man (See Eccl.4:13). In India especially, many people have the heathen idea that "older people are wiser". This may be true in earthly matters but certainly not in spiritual matters. Jesus did not choose any of the older people in the synagogues to be his apostles. He chose young men. Older people in the church often find it difficult to receive exhortation from a younger brother who may be the elder in the church and also far more godly. But that is because of their pride. Those who are willing to receive correction become wise (Prov.13:10). And so where the brothers and sisters in a church are eager to receive exhortation and correction, a truly glorious church will be built. The wise man loves those who exhort him faithfully and will eagerly seek out their company. 'Submit to one another' (Eph.5:21) are the words written on this pillar.

5. Fulness of mercy and its good fruits

The Bride of Christ is full of mercy - not just occasionally merciful. She has no problem forgiving anyone, freely and cheerfully from the heart. She does not judge or condemn others, but rather exercises compassion towards them like her Bridegroom. This mercy is not just a mental attitude but finds expression in good fruits that are brought forth in her actions. She does good in all the ways she can to all the people she can at all the times she can.

6. Steadfastness

A brother who has Divine wisdom will be free from all crookedness. He will be wholehearted and straightforward, with a single eye, free from doubts and hesitation. He will not be double-minded, but strong in faith in God, and he won't be looking at his own weaknesses, but at the promises of God. Such a brother knows that victory over all conscious sin is possible here and now. He is a dependable person - who can be trusted at all times to keep his word. He is steadfast and unmovable. You cannot make him bend his convictions or to compromise in any matter. He is straight and upright as a rod.

7. Freedom from hypocrisy

The Bride has more spiritual content inwardly than others can see in her externally. Her hidden life is better than the opinion that others have of her external life. This is the exact opposite of the 'spiritual adulteress' or the 'Harlot,' whose so-called spirituality is only meant for receiving the honour of men. What she has is actually 'religiosity' and not true spirituality. The bride watches her inner thoughts, motives and attitudes far more than her external words and actions. She longs for God's approval over her inner life and cares nothing at all for man's approval of her external life. By this test, each of us can know whether we are part of the Bride or of the Harlot.

Seek God for Wisdom

The Bride of Christ has the seed of wisdom implanted in her heart and so she will have these seven characteristics growing in her year by year. Although she is still far from perfect, she is pressing on and growing towards perfection. But where these characteristics are not found at all, it is presumptuous for any person or so-called 'church' to consider himself/itself a part of the Bride of Christ. Where there are contentions and jealousies and impurity and unbelief and pride, there you certainly have the 'Harlot,' not the Bride.

The Bible says that Divine wisdom can be obtained only if we seek for it as we would for hidden wealth (Prov. 2:4). Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven was like a treasure hidden in a field that a man, when he discovered it, sold everything he had, in order to obtain it (Mt. 13:44). It is only those who forsake all, who give up everything to God, who count everything else on earth as rubbish compared to Divine wisdom, (as Paul did - Phil.3: 8), who will obtain this wisdom and be able to build these seven pillars. And only through such people will the true church of Jesus Christ be built.

It is easy to accumulate knowledge or to be an eloquent speaker. But this will only make you a scribe. Jesus said that every scribe must become a disciple (Mt.13:52). And for this, the scribe has to forsake everything - including his own Adamic life and his right to choose his own way (Lk.14:26,33). Only thus will he receive the wealth (the Divine life and wisdom) that God gives. Then he will be able to give forth from his wealth to others, from his heart and not from his head . He will be able to share with others both what is new (fresh wisdom and revelations from the Word) as well as what is old (old truths, but that are yet fresh, like the manna that was kept for forty years in the ark, and that never stank) (Mt.13:52).

When we see this high calling and the standard God expects of us, we can feel overwhelmed. And so the Holy Spirit also gives us an encouraging word in James 1:5. If we lack this WISDOM (and who among us can say that we do not need any more wisdom?), we are commanded to ask God. It is the Lord Who gives WISDOM (Prov.2:6). But we are to ask in faith. If we ask in faith, we shall certainly receive these seven pillars in our life and God's House will be built in us and through us.

He who has ears to hear let him hear.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/knowing-gods-way-17-the-seven-pillars-of-wisdom/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net