

HIS BRIDE HAS MADE HERSELF READY

(REVELATION 19:6-8)

Rev. 19:6-8 (NKJV) And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

I. GOD IS PREPARING A BRIDE FOR HIS SON

- A. Bible gives many prophetic pictures of what the church is. The Body of Christ, God's army, nation of kingly priests. The emphasis in the End Times, before Jesus returns, will be that of Jesus, the Bridegroom, and the Church as the Bride.

Rev. 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

- B. God is leading all of history to a focal point, an ultimate end. God's ultimate purpose and goal of creation is to provide an equally yoked Bride that is suitable to Him. The main purpose of the created order is to select, prepare and train the eternal companion for royal authority.

Eph 1:4 Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

- C. All of history is in fact, orchestrated in order that people would seek the uncreated God. So that they would grope (NAS, NKJV), handle, touch, feel, looking for God. Not that God is far. He is near, but people do not seek Him.

Acts 17:26-27 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.

Mark 12:30 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

II. THE 3 SOURCES OF PRESSURE IN LIFE PRODUCES VOLUNTARY LOVE IN OUR HEARTS

There are 3 sources of pressures in our lives: Satan's rage, our own sin and folly, and God's discipline. We are to respond to each one differently.

- A. Sometimes, pressures in life come from Satan's rage. We have to resist it.

James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

You didn't do anything wrong necessarily, but the enemy is after you. In fact, it might be because you're doing something good, and you're doing damage to the kingdom of darkness (Eph. 4:26-27). Don't give the enemy any ground. This is when you need to take a stand in faith (1 Sam. 17:45). *You* resist him, then he leaves.

- B. Our own sin and folly: we have to repent of it (1 Jh. 1:9-10; Luke 3:8). You can't blame the devil and spiritual warfare for everything. Repentance is not "feeling sorry for your sins." (1 Joh. 1:9-10). The Lord does not forgive and redeem excuses; rather, He forgives sins that are confessed (Luke 3:8).
- C. The 3rd source of pressures is from God. God's training plan to bring us forth in love. There's discipline in it. Endure it.

Heb. 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? (NIV: Endure hardship as discipline)

- D. All 3 of these forces work together in our circumstances. We can't know which is involved in every circumstance. Between the 3, God is producing voluntary love in our hearts. God's purpose is to select and train a Bride who would be prepared by voluntary love to reign with Jesus.

Rom 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

- E. Equally yoked in love: God wants us to love Him like He loves us, with everything.

Rom. 5:5 The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit...

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.