

2022 PENNSYLVANIA BLENDING CONFERENCE

June 17-19, 2022

Message 4

Building Up the Church as a Prepared Bride and as a City with Gates

- I. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem...prepared as a bride” (21:2):
 - A. The Lord’s recovery is for the preparation of the bride of Christ (19:7-9).
 - B. The bride must be mature in the divine life (vv. 7-9; Eph. 4:13-15):
 1. The readiness of the corporate bride depends on the maturity in life of the overcomers (Rev. 19:7; Heb. 6:1; Phil. 3:12-15; Eph. 4:13).
 2. 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 (v. 13).
 3. 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).
 - C. The bride is a corporate person; for this, building is necessary (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; 4:15-16; 5:23, 27):
 1. The central and divine thought of the Scriptures is that God is seeking a building as the mingling of Himself with humanity (Gen. 2:22-23; Rev. 21:2, 9-11).
 2. The goal of the Lord’s recovery is to recover Christ as life and everything to us so that we may be built up (Eph. 3:8; 4:16).
 3. To be built up with fellow believers is the Lord’s supreme and highest requirement of His faithful seekers (vv. 15-16).
 4. Being built up with the fellow partakers of the divine life is the highest virtue of one who pursues Christ in God’s eternal economy (1 Tim. 1:4).
 - D. Revelation 19:7-8 unveils the righteousness of the bride (Matt. 5:20; 22:11-13):
 1. As our objective righteousness, Christ is the One in whom we are justified by God (Rom. 3:24, 28; 5:1, 9; 4:25; 5:16, 18).
 2. 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).
 3. The righteousness in Philippians 3:9 signifies a daily living that is right with God and man; this righteousness is of God and actually is God Himself.
 4. The living that is right with both God and man must be God as our expression in our daily living (2 Cor. 3:9; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).
 5. Christ lived out of the saints as their subjective righteousness becomes their wedding garment (Rev. 19:8; Phil. 3:9; Matt. 5:20; 22:11-13).
 - E. As the bride, the church needs beauty; the beauty in Ephesians 5:27 is for the presentation of the bride (cf. S.S. 4:7; 6:4a, 10a; 7:6):
 1. Ephesians 5:27 reveals the beauty of the bride, saying that Christ will “present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.”
 2. The beauty of the bride comes from the Christ who is wrought into the church and who is then expressed through the church; our only beauty is the shining out of Christ from within us (3:17a; S.S. 4:7).
- II. The twelve gates of the New Jerusalem are twelve pearls (Rev. 21:21a):
 - A. Pearls are produced by oysters in the waters of death; when an oyster is wounded by a grain of sand, it secretes its life-juice around the grain of sand and makes it into a precious pearl.
 - B. This depicts Christ as the living One coming into the death waters, being wounded by us (Isa. 53:5) and secreting His life over us to make us into precious pearls for the building of God’s eternal expression.

- C. That the twelve gates of the holy city are twelve pearls signifies that regeneration through the death-overcoming and life-secreting Christ is the entrance into the city.
- D. Just as the grain of sand remains in the inward wound of the oyster, we need to remain in the death of Christ; His death is our abode, our dwelling, our residence, our rest, and our unique place of protection:
 - 1 As long as we remain and stay in the death of Christ, we will never lose our temper; we can gain the victory over sin, over our temperament, over the world, and over Satan in the death of Christ.
 - 2 If the grain of sand stays away from the wound of the oyster, it is not in the position to enjoy the secretion of the life-sap of that oyster; this picture shows us that we are imprisoned in the death of Christ by His secreting power and that this secretion is the move of His resurrection life.
 - 3 As long as we remain in His wound, in the death of His cross, His life reacts, and this reaction is a secretion of His resurrection life; the secretion of His resurrection is in the life-giving Spirit, who is the reality of His resurrection.
 - 4 Because of His great love with which He loved us, His wound (His death) caused by us became our prison; as we stay in the Lord's death and enjoy His life-secreting resurrection, there is a further entering into and becoming of the New Jerusalem.
- E. Pearls signify the issue of Christ's secretion in two aspects: His redeeming and life-releasing death and His life-dispensing resurrection:
 - 1. Both kinds of secretion (dispensing) require the seeking believers' daily experience of the death of Christ subjectively by the power of Christ's resurrection that they may be conformed to the death of Christ (Phil. 3:10) and their daily experience of the resurrection of Christ subjectively by the bountiful supply of the Spirit (the reality of resurrection) of Jesus Christ that they may be conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God (1:19; Rom. 8:29).
 - 2. We can experience His death only by the power of the resurrection of Christ; by the power of the resurrection of Christ, we have the ability and the power to keep our pitiful self on the cross.
 - 3. Christ's death can be experienced only through Christ's resurrection, and Christ's resurrection can be real to us only by the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19-21a).
 - 4. It is only through prayer that we can remain on the cross by touching Christ in our spirit continually as the life-giving Spirit, the Spirit who is the reality of His resurrection (1 Thes. 5:17).
- F. Song of Songs depicts that Christ wants His seeker to remain in the cross, to remain in His death, to remain in a crucified condition continually (2:14; Gal. 2:20; 1 Cor. 15:31; 2 Cor. 4:10-11):
 - 1. It is by the power of Christ's resurrection, not by our natural life, that we, the lovers of Christ, determine to take the cross by denying our self (Matt. 16:24).
 - 2. It is also by the power of Christ's resurrection that we are enabled to be conformed to His death by being one with His cross (Phil. 3:10).
 - 3. The reality of resurrection is the pneumatic Christ (John 11:25; 20:22), who as the consummated Spirit indwells and is mingled with our regenerated spirit (1 Cor. 6:17); it is in such a mingled spirit that we participate in and experience the resurrection of Christ, which enables us to be one with the cross in order to be delivered from the self and transformed into a new man in God's new creation for the fulfillment of God's economy in the building up of the organic Body of Christ.

(HWMR - Aspects of the Christian Life and Church Life Seen in the New Jerusalem. LSM).