

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Propheying

Message Four : The Beauty of the Bride

I. Overview:

Ephesians 5:25-27 reveals the entirety of God's complete salvation. In the past, Christ as the Redeemer gave Himself up for the church for our judicial redemption. In the present, Christ as the life-giving Spirit is disposition ally sanctifying the church; this is organic salvation. In the future, Christ as the Bridegroom will present the church to Himself as His counterpart for His satisfaction and as the glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such things. Christ as the life-giving Spirit sanctifies the church by cleansing her according to the washing of the water in the word. Paul uses the Greek word *rhema* when he speaks of the word with its washing process; *rhema* denotes the word that the Lord presently speaks to us. Our only beauty is the shining out of Christ from within us. On the day of his wedding, a bridegroom cares much more for the beauty of his bride than for her ability; we need to be beautified by Christ day by day so that we can be prepared to be presented to Him as His lovely bride. In Song of Songs the loving seeker of Christ asks Him who dwells in the believers as His gardens to let her hear His voice. Christ prays that her Beloved would make haste to come back in the power of His resurrection to set up His sweet and beautiful kingdom.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the words in Ephesians 5:25 through 27, how to realize them.

In these verses Paul is saying that husbands should love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her. He did this that He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of water in the word in order that He might present the church to Himself glorious, without spot, wrinkle, or any such things. Sanctifying is by cleansing, cleansing is by washing, washing is by water, and water is in the word.

B. Expound the work of Christ in Ephesians 5:25 through 27.

In the past, Christ as the Redeemer gave Himself up for the church for redemption and the impartation of life; in the present, He as the life-giving Spirit is sanctifying the church through separation, saturation, transformation, growth, and building up; and in the future, He as the Bridegroom will present the church to Himself as His counterpart for His satisfaction.

Day 2 —

A. Expound that in Isaiah 28:5 Christ is revealed as a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty.

In Isaiah 28:5 Christ is revealed as a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty. We need to consider the difference between a crown and diadem. This is Isaiah's marvelous writing. A crown is like a hat or turban, whereas the diadem is the most beautiful, glorious part of the crown. The diadem is the beauty of the glorious crown.

B. Testify that Christ is our crown and diadem, our glory and beauty.

We need to remember that the age of grace is a miniature and a foretaste of the coming age of restoration. Today we enjoy a foretaste of Christ as our crown and diadem. Regretfully, some Christians may talk about other persons or things in a glorious way, but when we tell people that we are Christians, we should consider that Christ is our crown and diadem, our glory and beauty.

Day 3 —

A. Explain that Revelation 19 will be completely fulfilled.

Revelation 19 will be completely fulfilled. Furthermore, we believe that the process of fulfilment is taking place today. The bride, however, cannot be prepared quickly. This preparation is a gradual work that takes place over a period of time. Certainly the Lord must be doing a work on earth to prepare His bride. This preparation, I believe, involves the work of building corporately.

B. Expound the words in Ephesians 5:26, and how to realize it.

According to Ephesians 5:26, Christ gave Himself up for the church so that "He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in

resurrected and in resurrection became the life-giving Spirit. As the life-giving Spirit, He is the speaking Spirit. Whatever He speaks is the word that washes us.

Day 4 —

A. State the water in Ephesians 5:26, and its spiritual significance.

In Ephesians 5:26 Paul says that Christ sanctifies the church by cleaning her by the washing of the water in the word. According to the divine concept, water here refers to the flowing life of God, which is typified by flowing water. The redeeming blood washes away our sins, whereas the water of life washes away the blemishes of the natural life of our old man, such as spot or wrinkle or any such things.

B. Expound the cleansing by the washing of the water of life being in the word.

The cleansing is the sanctifying. The cleansing by the washing of the water of life is in the word. The word in Ephesians 5:26 denotes an instant word. The indwelling Christ as the life-giving Spirit is always speaking an instant, present, living word to metabolically cleanse away the old and replace it with the new, causing an inward transformation. The water is typified by the laver between the altar and the tabernacle.

Day 5 —

A. Explain the beauty of the bride.

Christ is now preparing us to be His bride. The time is coming when He will present the bride to Himself. In His bride Christ will behold nothing but beauty. This beauty will be the reflection of what he is. The beauty of the bride comes from the very Christ who is wrought into the church and who is then expressed through the church.

B. Expound the real beauty.

First, Christ must come into us and then be assimilated by us. Then He will be able to shine out of us. This shining is the glory of the bride, the manifestation of divinity through humanity. Real beauty is the expression of the divine attributes through humanity. Nothing in the universe is as beautiful as this expression.

Day 6 —

A. Explain the words in Song of Songs 8:13, and how to experience it.

The lover of her Beloved asks Him who dwells in the believers as His gardens to let her hear His voice as her companions listen for His voice. This indicates that in the work, which we as the lovers of Christ who express Him as our living outwardly do for Him as our Beloved who indwells us as our life inwardly, we should fellowship with Him in His speaking.

B. Expound the significance of the word “listen” in Song of Songs 8:13.

“My companions listen for your voice”. The word “listen” means that everyone is listening. All those who are seeking the Lord together with her adopt the same attitude. Their work depends on the Lord’s commands. Without the Lord’s words, they will not have any revelation, light, or knowledge. The life of the believers hinges totally upon the Lord’s speaking.

III. Conclusion:

The food we eat produces a kind of wash in our bodies, removing waste from the blood. The more we eat, the better we eat, the more we experience the metabolic washing. The same principle also could be applied to the spiritual realm. If we exercise our spirit and pray with words through this to the word of Lord, we will receive life. This life brings us a metabolic wash that removes all the negative things within us. As a result, our wrinkles and spots are washed away. As a church, we become beautiful. Eventually God might present the church, as His bride, to Himself glorious. If we want to be a overcomer, we must pray, “Lord, make me hear your voice today.” His voice is the words of what Ephesians 5:26 says, “He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word.”