

To Prepare the Bride as the Counterpart of the Bridegroom (1) – The Readiness of the Bride

In Rev. 19 we see that the bride has made herself ready; this shows us that there's a **long process** at the end of which the bride is ready for the wedding feast. Usually at a wedding it takes a long time for the bride to be ready; in the divine and mystical realm, it has been 2000 years and the bride of Christ is still being **prepared**. We all need to cooperate with the Lord for the preparation of the bride so that we may be not only the wife of Christ as the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth, but also the bride of Christ in the wedding feast of the Lamb in the millennium.

The Readiness of the Bride depends on the Maturity in Life of the Overcomers

All those who have been called by God and have His life will become overcomers, sooner or later, to be the wife of Christ. However, what the Lord wants is the overcomers, those who are **perfected** and **prepared** to be the bride of Christ – the New Jerusalem in its initial and fresh stage, in the coming millennium kingdom. The Lord's recovery is for the preparation of the bride, who is composed of all His overcomers. *(Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word, The Direction of the Lord's Move)*

“...that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;” – Colossians 1:28

To be full grown in Christ is to be filled and saturated with Christ. We remain ourselves, but we are permeated, saturated, and filled with Christ. We should not simply say, “Christ lives in me.” We must be absolute with the Lord to allow Him to live in us day by day.

The proper Christian life is not a matter of ethics, morality, or improved character or behavior. The Christian life is **Christ living in us**. We should live according to Christ, not according to our natural mildness, humility, or frankness. We need to live Christ. Christ must saturate us, permeate us, and fill us. Then in our living He will be expressed from within us. *(Excerpt from the Life-study of Colossians, chapter 49)*

Eventually, the New Jerusalem will be consummated and completed in full, as the tabernacle of God and the wife of Christ in the new heaven and new earth for eternity. In the kingdom of one thousand years, the New Jerusalem will be composed only of the overcomers. Besides the overcomers there will be a great number of **immature saints**, but after the thousand-year kingdom, **all the believers** will be matured. The Lord has a way to cause all the believers to be matured. If we do not get matured in this age, we will be matured in the next age. *(Excerpt from The Overcomers, pp. 104-105)*

The Overcomers is a Corporate Bride

We need to receive Christ, experience Christ, and be filled with Christ. Then the ultimate issue, the outcome, of this experience is that we will be **built up together as a corporate bride** to match Christ. The more we enjoy, experience, and realize Christ, the more we will be built up together as a corporate bride to Christ....After regeneration we have to be transformed from the natural form into the glorious form, the form of the divine life. We need to be transformed into the image of Christ from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18). When we are transformed into the nature of gold, the nature of pearl, and the nature of the onyx stone, we will be precious material for the building up of the church as the Body, as **the bride to Christ**. First, we have to receive Christ; second, we have to be transformed by Christ, through Christ, and with Christ; and third, we have to be built up together as the Body, as a corporate bride to match Christ. This is the central thought of God. This is the center of God's mind.

To Prepare the Bride as the Counterpart of the Bridegroom (2) – Praising Christ as the King in Himself, in the Church as His Queen, and in All His Sons, the Overcomers as the Princes

The Bible is a **book of love** – the entire Bible is a divine romance, for it is a record of how God is courting His chosen people whom He eventually marries. We as believers in Christ are for our Husband, Christ; we are being made a beautiful bride for our beloved and beautiful Husband, Christ. All of Christ's service for us and all His care to us have the aim of making us His overcomers. His perfect will is to produce many of His believers as His overcomers to be His bride, so we can respond to Him by saying, *Lord, make me a part of Your overcoming bride! Make me an overcomer for the constituting of Your bride! Amen!*

The second part to **prepare the bride as the counterpart of the Bridegroom**, is portrayed in Psalm 45. We can be prepared as the bride by praising Christ as the King in Himself, in the church as His queen, and in all His sons (the overcomers) as the princes, as seen in Psa. 45. How is praising the king help us prepare to be His bride? First, we exult in Him, then we extol Him, and then we exalt Him; this is to praise the Lord as the King.

To exult in Christ is to have Christ as our boast and exultation; this indicates that He is our enjoyment and rejoicing. When we enjoy the Lord, we praise Him as the king, and we rejoice. As Paul encouraged us in Phil. 3:1, we rejoice in the Lord, even rejoice in Him always (Phil. 4:4). We need to give ourselves every day to enjoy the Lord. To **extol the Lord** is to praise Him highly with acknowledgement according to what He **has done**, what **He is doing**, what **He will do**, and what he will do for us according to the desire of His heart and the interest of His economy. Furthermore, praising involves **exalting Christ**; to exalt Christ is to give Him the first place, the preeminence, in every part of our life and service. He has the most prominent position, He is our first love, and we make Him everything in our life; we need to give the Lord the highest and most prominent position in our entire being.

God's intention toward man is not to control, punish, or destroy man; He wants to court man, woo him, and bring man into a love relationship with Him. As believers in the Lord we need to have a personal, affectionate, private, intimate, spiritual relationship with the Lord. We need to spend enough personal time with the Lord for Him to speak to us and for us to touch Him. **If we don't have a personal touch with the Lord every day, we will have problems.** When our time with the Lord decreases, we become unhappy and unpleasant persons to be around with. May the Lord increase our personal time with Him to the maximum, and may the quality of our time with the Lord be improved so that we may live in the divine romance day by day. The more we love the Lord, the more we are **like a lily**: we live a pure life, a simple and single life trusting in God, having a love full of affection for the Lord Jesus. On the one hand we are single in heart and purpose for the Lord, living a simple life trusting in God, and on the other hand our heart is full of an affectionate feeling toward the Lord.

Psalm 45

This psalm really is an overflow of the love and appreciation that the psalmist has for the Lord – his heart overflows with the good matter, and he sings what he has composed concerning the king, with a tongue like the pen of a ready writer (**Psa. 45:1**). The praise the psalmist offers for the king is actually his praise of Christ, who is the real King in the kingdom of God; Christ is the One who is fairer than the sons of men, and grace is poured upon His lips, therefore God has blessed Him forever (**v. 2**).