

## The Bride of Christ

**Rev. 21:9** Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

What a glorious moment when the Lord Jesus will call His Church home to the Heavenly palace! Paul describes how it will be, **I Cor. 15:52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ... Physically changed, - inside and out, - prepared for eternity and glory. God's Word says this old present *corruptible* human form will be replaced by the new and *incorruptible*, **Rev. 21:4** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away ... for **I Jn. 3:2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is ... we shall **29** be conformed to the image of his Son.

We shall have a new vocabulary we don't have here on earth for John could not adequately describe everything he saw - ... and there's some words we have on earth that we shall not need any longer. We'll not need any words for "sin" or "Hell" or "grief" or "suffering" or "pain" nor the "devil" ... God will have erased them from our minds. In Heaven we'll bring eternal praise for what Christ did for us on the cross ... for our salvation, and for His keeping power. ... We'll be changed to be like our Saviour. ... And yet we shall not lose our identity among the vast multitude gathered there ... and you will recognise them from every tribe, language, people and nation and they will be there because Jesus paid the price for every one of them to be there!

You will be able to understand more than you can now. Though, at the same time, nothing will hold us back from learning more, **Rom. 11:34** For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? ... **Col. 2:3** In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ... He is **Is. 57:15** the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy. God is bigger than forever and it will take eternity **Eph. 3:18** to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; **19** And to know the love of Christ. We will never stop learning, - eternal students ... *that* is what we shall be!

Indeed, that takes us further ... here on earth we are not able to fully serve God as we would wish ... but in Heaven it will be complete commitment for there will be nothing to hold us back. There will be no old age, sickness, or time factors to restrict us. Everything we do in Glory will be untainted by sin and unfettered by any of our present restraints. ... In Ephesians, Paul describes the Church as **the Bride of Christ**, **Eph. 5:25** Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; **26** That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, **27** That he might present it to himself a

glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

**THE BRIDE IS PRECIOUS** The Bride of Christ is more precious than any believer can appreciate. Why did Jesus die on the cross for me ... for you? Yes, I know He died to take away our sins ... *but why?! Why did He do it?! Why did Jesus die the cruel death He chose to die? ... Why did He not die an ordinary death? ... He could have been a great Teacher, with a long life ... but why did He die on Calvary?*

I can find no answer other than **the Bride is precious** to Him. He does not explain why she is precious, but *she just is!* ... In the same way as He doesn't explain how long is 'everlasting'? When did 'everlasting' begin? ... That is how long God has loved you! He did not begin to love you when He saw you beginning to love Him ... He said through Jeremiah, **Jer. 31:3** I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. What makes you precious enough for God to draw you to Himself, ... to save you? Again, there is only one answer, **Eph. 2:4** God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.

He surely had to love me before I was born, because if His love for me depended upon how I would meet His expectations after being born, I never would have won His heart. I never would have attracted Him to me. No, God looked upon each of His children and He declared in the solitude of Heaven, **Songs 1:15** Behold, thou art fair, my love ... **16** Behold, thou art fair, my beloved.

At this very moment the Bridegroom is preparing to meet His Bride. Isaiah describes the picture in a lovely way, **Is. 62:5** as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. ... When the Son of Man approaches this earth in the clouds of heaven, He will come in all the power and great glory of God (Mt. 24:30) ... **Mt. 24:31** he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. ... He is coming for His Bride! ... "I know not the hour of His coming ... But I know I shall wake in the likeness Of Him I am longing to see; I know that mine eyes shall behold Him, Who died for a sinner like me".

As He looked down the 'corridors of time' He saw you, He set His love upon you, and by His wonderful grace He drew you to Himself ... We understand it now ... *We love Him because He first loved us.* And today you are precious to Him, - more precious than the brightest star in any galaxy or universe, more than the most beautiful landscape. He loves you with such a love none can take away. The mark of His commitment to you is more precious than the most expensive jewellery this world can produce ... because the price He paid for you to belong to Him was paid with the blood of His own dear Son.

You are **precious** to Him on earth, and you will be *privileged* to be with Him in Heaven when He gathers you in His arms. He will bring you into all He has been preparing for you. He will show you round His home, and where you will live with Him. He will show you the garden, with the pure river of water of life running through it ... and you will see your face in it because its waters are clear as crystal (Rev. 22). He will parade you onto the palace balcony, and the cheers of the angels will be heard throughout the vast expanse! When you look into the clear waters of Heaven and you see the image it mirrors, you will not see any spots, or wrinkles, or any such thing, - there will be none there (Eph. 5:27)! ... And you will not have to wait for Him to see you, - He will see you straightaway. You belong to His Bride, and Solomon described how She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her (Prov. 3:15). ... **The Bride is precious.**

**THE BRIDE IS PERFECT**      What makes you perfect in God's sight? ... It's nothing of you; it is all of Christ. Jesus looked upon you and He looked beyond your sin, and His vision is so beautiful and so clear, He saw what you would become in Him. God looked under 'the covers', and He saw Jesus in you. He had plans for you from before He even created the world. He took you to Himself, and did something you could never have done, - nor neither could anyone else, except Him, By His precious blood shed on the cross of Calvary, He washed you clean.

He took you in His hands, - as the potter took the clay, - ... and He shaped and formed you and moulded you to become a glory to His Name, Jeremiah wrote, **Lam. 4:9** The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter! ... A brand-new person, - the old things passed away. And you can look back and you can see how He has changed your life.

If someone told you before you were saved, you would love reading the Bible and hearing about God you would not have believed it. There has been a change in your life, and it is an ongoing change for *as part of the Bride of Christ you are being perfected!* The roughness is being smoothed, and the jagged ends are being polished. God is working in you to become how He wants you to be so you are fulfilling the function for which He has saved you.

The process won't be complete until you enter Glory, but He is seeing to it that it is in steady progress, and you are being prepared for meeting Him. You find yourself thinking, "What would Jesus have me do?" That is the kind of thinking which belongs to the people in Heaven, - "What would Jesus have me do?" ... That is your goal, - to be like Him.

And when you are re-united with your loved ones who died in Christ you will all be thinking and talking about Him. He will occupy your every thought. Imagine, you will never again *do* anything wrong! ... You hate sin, and you hate disappointing the Saviour, but in Heaven you will never *say* anything wrong, you will never *think* anything wrong, you will never *be* anything wrong. In Christ, in Heaven, you will be absolutely perfect, as Paul said to the Colossians, **Col. 1:27** Christ in you, the hope of glory ... <sup>28</sup> perfect in Christ Jesus. ... **The Bride is Precious, the Bride is Perfect, and ...**

**THE BRIDE IS PRESENTED** Let's move in further, let's come before the Throne upon which the Father is seated. The Son, - the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ, - is ready to present His Bride. ... The Holy Spirit is there. The host of angels in Heaven is there. ... How the Godhead has waited an eternity for this moment!

Down through the ages the Son has had to watch from a distance, **Songs 2:9** he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice. But soon His waiting will be at an end. He will hear His Father's command to go and receive His Bride. On that day when He comes, there will be a glorious shout from Heaven. There will be a great sound, - the likes of which has never been heard before. Every eye will see Jesus, - even those who despised Him/mocked Him/would not believe in Him.

But there will be a great intake of breath as God's children realise their Saviour has arrived, - just as He promised. Then those of His people who have died will be raised first, and along with them, those who are His and are alive at the time of His coming will rise to meet Him in the air. ... He will bring you to His Heavenly home, and present you, - His Bride, - before His Father. ... The smile upon *her* face will only be matched by the smile upon *His* face. This is what both He and she have been waiting for. He has watched her, and He has longed to be with her, - as she has longed to be with Him, - ... And the moment has arrived, "When His chosen ones shall gather to their home beyond the skies, And the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there."

He will bring us to and sit us down at the great table in the dining hall of His palace. He will sit you down in the seat that has your name on it already. He will give you to eat from all that is spread out before you at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, - like everything else in Glory, prepared by His own hand. And then He will take you into His home and He will show you what He has been preparing for you there, - where you are going to stay, - and you will be with Him forever and ever. That is what Heaven is going to be like; in fact, ... *it's going to be far better*, for **II Cor. 2:9** Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

**CONCLUSION.** Here we are ... looking at something from God's Word that is going to take place, - as sure as God is on the throne of glory! I know many of you are looking forward to what I have been trying to describe, - you are looking forward to Jesus coming for His Church. I know though that not every believer is taken with this subject. There are some too fond of the things of this world ... There are others who have lost the enthusiasm, - the excitement, the eagerness, - to see Jesus. If you truly love the Lord but your love for Him has recently been on the wane, come back to Him again and He will receive you. Come, like the prodigal son, and run into His welcoming and open arms. Like him, come away from this world's 'feeding-troughs' that are fast emptying and run back into the Father's house. ... He is waiting for you.

Maybe you are not saved. You might be trying your best to understand what we have been studying but no matter how hard you try, you can't see it ... If you want to be excited about Jesus, you must come to know Him. ... And how do you come to know Him? *Firstly*, I want to let you know, He already knows you. He knows your life from beginning to end. He knows you more than you know yourself. He has been bringing you along to the meetings, and He has kept your attention throughout our studies ... Yes, He knows you. *Secondly*, He reaches out His hand of invitation to you, and in His hand there is a precious and priceless gift. The gift He offers you is *particularly* for you. He is not looking at anyone else, - He offers *you* His gift of salvation. He reaches out with it ... for you to receive or reject ... It is as simple as *that!*

For you to reach out and appreciate this gift you need to know how much it cost. It cost Jesus Christ His life as He died on a cross. It cost His precious blood being shed. It cost the greatest and deepest of agonies, and it cost Him the forsakenness of His Father. His Father turned His face away from His Son so you would be saved! ... It cost Him ... what will it cost you? It will cost you the price leaving behind those things you hold dear, and don't want to let go off. It will cost you to accept Christ for He requires you give *all* of yourself ... Will you accept Him today?!

What a privilege to be saved! What a joy to belong to the Lord and to be part of His Bride, - the **Bride** who is **Precious** ... the **Bride** who is being **Perfected** ... the **Bride** who will be **Presented** before the Throne in Heaven ... the hymn writer wrote,

When clothed in His brightness, transported I rise  
To meet Him in clouds of the sky,  
His perfect salvation, His wonderful love  
I'll shout with the millions on high.