

# God preparing the Church for eternity (Quality: Average)

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- [ 0 : 00 ] For the Lord's help we will speak from the 22nd of Revelation and verse 17.
- 22nd of the book of the Revelation and verse 17. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that hear it say, Come. And let him that is a third, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the walk of life freely.
- And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. The glorious finality of this chapter is verified by the Lord himself.
- These sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the Holy Prophet sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.
- [ 1 : 17 ] Behold, I come quickly. So that there is a parallel, a unison between the prophets of the Old Testament and this book of the Revelation, the last prophetic utterance of God.
- Although it is very difficult to understand. And at the same time, very wise of us not to pry too closely into it.
- Because of those mysteries that are therein. It was the same with the ancient prophets. They understood not.
- They understood not. Things which they spoke. They knew that they spoke of the future. Peter tells us that they wrote.
- Not for their own benefit. But for the benefit of a future generation. Then unborn. This has proved to be so.
- [ 2 : 29 ] And the Lord has accomplished. Those things which he himself determined should be done. And are now done.
- So that we have no hesitation in confirming that what was spoken in the days of old have come to part.
- Equally so, no hesitation whatsoever in affirming that what is spoken here will eventually come to part.
- And though it will be hidden in mystery. That is, in dark sayings, as God said he would. And though there have been so many versions of this final appearance of crime.
- It still remains an unpanomable mystery. And on this we must be silent. But there are certain things which are no longer mysterious.
- [ 3 : 42 ] Are as clear as midday. But even no interpreter. This is one of them. The spirit and the bride. These two sacred people or personages or companies brought together.
- The spirit and the bride. What gracious teaching there is in the word of God with regard to these two.
- We are not at a loss. We have not to ask profound questions. We know who this happy bride is.

We know that this is the bride of Christ. We look at the second verse in the 21st chapter. You will see that.

I, John, saw the holy city. New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. Prepared as a bride. Adorned for a husband.

[ 4 : 58 ] This is the very point of a bride. This is her main feature. That on her wedding day. She adorns herself. A universal custom. God has chosen this. To show us the blessedness. The purity. The purity. Virtue. Holiness. Of his own church. The bride of Christ. Paul uses the same figure. In several of his epistles. In Ephesians he uses it.

Christ will also love the church. Gave himself for it. Husbands, love your wife. And so on. We know those things of only two truths.

[ 5 : 59 ] For our spiritual intelligence and profit. We are brought to something of a very simple nature. Now we do not need to hazard a guess.

Or to make a suggestion. The bride of Christ. Is the church of God. And in the 19th chapter. You may hear her singing.

With a united voice. Hallelujah. Salvation. And glory. And honor. And power. Unto the Lord our God.

And we are told that this volume of singing. Was like the noise of many waters.

The only difficulty is this. And our only difficulty is this. And that is no difficulty to faith. To comprehend that the church of God is a saved body.

[ 7 : 03 ] And the least of them. And the least of them to the greatest. Another term in the book of the Revelation. And no exception.

The least to the greatest. The least to the greatest. And who are these people then? And whence come they? We are also told that they came out of great tribulation.

In the seventh chapter. They washed their robes. And made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And it is this.

That is so vital therefore to the great question. Who is this bride? But how came she into being?

Did she come of her own initiative? Is this a vast concourse of people? Who may have gathered together as men and women do. Whether over a worldwide agreement in society.

[ 8 : 12 ] By some common interest. Is this some natural effort? By some natural means? Whereby these people all believe the same thing?

And are all brought to the same place? Far from it. Far from it. Why?

When we know the differences of opinion. And the variety of ways that matters are viewed. How could there be such a uniformity and oneness.

Among any number of people. Ten if you like. Or five if you like. When everyone was of the same mind. After the natural order.

Why this diversity of opinion and operation is one of the main things in life. The great secret is the agreement to differ.

[ 9 : 15 ] But this is not so with the church of God. He is taught of one blessed spirit. And this is where the spirit and the bride come together.

It must be expected that the pupil is going to say. Receive and believe what the teacher says.

It must be expected that there will be a uniformity of mind and heart. So that whether they be black or white.

North, south, east, or west. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord. And great shall be their peace. And that peace is not in themselves.

But in Christ. So that this blessed company. Now finally revealed to us as coming together.

[ 10 : 18 ] And look at it throughout the history of the church. Follow it through in the Bible. See how the Holy Spirit from the very first page.

Verse. Almost from the spirit of God moved upon the face of the water. Now the spirit of God has made a moving power.

Tries it all through. You cannot but see that there are those who were different from others. There was something about them different.

Who may get thee to differ from another? And what was thou that thou didst not receive? This was Paul's great question.

Still is. There is a deal. You can see it in Jacob and Esau. Can't you? You never hear that Esau cried.

[ 11 : 25 ] He saw some place to change his mind. Of repentance that is. But he found it not. Now he sought it carefully with you.

But there is a difference between the twin. There is a big difference in, say, the members of David's family.

If this difference enters in two families, it isn't a natural bore. We don't generate grace.

All we pass on to our children is our fallen nature. They are born in sin, like we were.

There is a difference. There is a difference brought by the good spirit. But when Jesus came, one of his great lessons was to speak of the work of the Holy Spirit.

[ 12 : 30 ] We find his work in the Old Testament. We have mention of him here and there, but not nearly for many times as we have in the New.

But he was operative in the Old. It was he that dwelt in Joshua and Canaan. That great day when they were going into the land of Canaan, of which we spoke last Sabbath and the Sabbath before.

These two men were made to differ. Korah, Nothan, and Abiram were not. Why did they seek false fire?

This great pact remains unaltered throughout all ages. Come to the New Testament and you will see the same thing.

Lives changed, completely altered through the work of the Holy Spirit. Now this is therefore the consummation of it in this text.

[ 13 : 50 ] Of course, when the time comes, it's right for the Lord Jesus to return again, of course the Spirit will say come.

Why will he say come? Because all is now ready. As Jesus said, Of all that thou hast given me, I have lost now.

Every elect vessel of mercy will have been gathered home when this text comes to pass. man, woman, and child. Out of every nation, kindred, and tongue.

That holy book of which we read here, to represent to us the full knowledge of God, of every one of his people, will have been finally gathered out and gathered in.

And not until that time will the Spirit say come. It is like the parable of the Lord Jesus when he sent the messengers out to say, bidding to the wedding guests, come for all is now ready.

[ 15 : 12 ] With one consent, they all began to make excuses. This is the parable of the Jews and their rejection of Christ.

But oh, what solemn excuses are still made by man. Not ready. Wait a little longer.

And so it is that human nature has no love, whatever, for the things of God. But the Spirit teaches and he teaches the same lessons.

He shall convince the world of sin. That's one of the great things that Jesus foretold in the 14th of John.

and his sacred convincing of sin. This work that is far beyond human power.

[ 16 : 21 ] there is no earthly instrument here below that can convince you of your sin. All be of mine. It is this that really matters. this convincing of sin.

And it is the work of the Holy Spirit so to do. how blessed therefore is his work.

How fully it has been carried out. But what a time it takes in his gracious counsels to do it.

it isn't the work of five minutes or five days. Have you been convinced that it suddenly stopped?

[ 17 : 29 ] Did you find a time when there was no convincing? did you ever come to a place where you have no inward power telling you that you were what you actually are a lost sinner?

Or is it still going on and is it something likely to go on? It must. Is his work you would remain where you are.

I can't say that you would go back into ungodliness because grace could never be lost. But you could go back into a solemn backsliding state and accumulate to yourself iniquity upon iniquity until it were driven home to you.

There are such characters as prodigals aren't there? and these prodigals have got to come back in due time. It is the spirit's work and how wonderful it is to see it in the world and how efficient effective it is where you find someone that can speak to you of their conviction and knowledge of their own sinfulness unworthiness their lost condition you will find a friend just as much as you will find an enemy if you speak to someone about it that does not know it.

they will disdain you. One of the most objectionable things you've ever mentioned to a person that does not know their sinfulness they will not listen to it they will say it's dollyful and give it all the names I can think of.

[ 19 : 44 ] but let those be gathered together who know even a little of the play of their own heart and are convinced of it this is the point it's got to be nailed whole so to speak nailed whole like Nathan coming today got to be nailed whole and only the Holy Spirit could do it to anyone and what a blessed work it is and this is what he has done and there's ample proof of it look at those you have loved perhaps lost now we look at them don't we in our memories especially as we enter a new year those that have been taken even in the past year from one after the other but the memory of the just is blessed it would be an excellent thing won't it for your loved ones to relish love the memory of you and your parents perhaps today you don't need anyone to stir up your affections to them do you and your loved ones in the same truth you don't need anyone to point out to you that you love them in the bonds of the gospel do you no that's an abiding affection who did it who created it so that they are still with us in spirit as if they were here present in their body and although it is often said it is our loss and their gain we go on to prove this it is our loss it is our loss and it will be a great mercy to be a miss in your family in your church a great mercy to have held such a place in the affections of the

Lord's people is to be missed so that you do not silently depart and leave no precious memories behind you whose work is this then the work of the Holy Spirit it is his great office to bind together hearts in the doctrines of the gospel and in the practices equally important the practices of the gospel yes not to let them go by default and expect things to work out just the same not to go along the same beaten track hoping for the best but the individual practice and this work is very gracious in the marriage conducted the

Holy Spirit can do it in one blow as he did sort of Tarsus or he can do it as he did it to Nicodemus or Lydia or the Gino you can go on like that and see the diversity of operations but it is the Spirit calling them out and not only convincing them of sin but of righteousness this high perfect standard not of the old moral law and that to which they must attain by their own efforts that the righteousness of Christ he shall convince them in the same way and with the same authority of the righteousness of

Christ as he does in their own lost condition who could raise the righteousness of Christ then so constantly before the bride of Christ and the Holy Spirit and look how he does it through the foolishness of preaching through his own influence in the heart quietly home wherever it might be how he teaches leads to a righteousness outside of oneself not within teaches you to look outside not inside but he shall convince absolutely convince that this same conviction is as with the knowledge of sin how beautiful to be a convinced believer in the righteousness of

Christ that will stand you in good stead when you come to die now before this time comes in this text because this is the last great call to be ready and to die in faith in the righteousness of Christ will be to be right at last that this is his work has he done it is he doing it how can he therefore look back over the past year have you grown worse in yourself weaker more unworthy less in your own esteem do you feel positively less as you enter another year in your own feelings than you've ever done before I did yesterday positively less positively weaker yeah under the Lord's dealings with me my soul now what is this is this something to be wild and something to say yes well this is a sad end to another year or sad beginning to another year or is it something for which we ought to be supremely thankful what is the indication of it is it something hopeless it isn't it's something of a major and a blessed nature why why because the righteousness of Christ becomes more precious more vital more review the convincing is much deeper he shall convince righteousness this is his work he shall convince also of judgment just bringing things to the bar of justice you can't argue with a judge only through your counsel you cannot argue with a great judge of all the earth at least if you should try it will be unavailing there is a positive truth in judgment and that is bringing as the prophet Isaiah said righteousness to the lie and judgment to the blood these are painful experiences painful indeed but they are necessary and who does this do you do you set about bringing about these things in your daily power why rather not you put them on one side if I read your heart or I if it's anything like mine you're not going to start self-examination considering where you stand how right all wrong your religion profession is whether you are in the right way after all or whether you're not unless someone teach you and bring you to it like the good

[ 29 : 59 ] Ethiopian eunuch said when Philip asked him if he understood what he read he said how can I except some man guide me and this gracious work of the Holy Spirit summed up by Jesus he shall convince of righteousness and of judgment to come now when you're summoned therefore as you are we all know here is a summon for us to appear before the judgment seat of Christ yes a summon we must all appear this is a summon have you realized this if the Holy Spirit has convinced you these two earlier things he will not fail to convince you very solemnly of the third but this is very very far advanced in the teaching of the good spirit but it is part of his gracious work so that when we look at his work just scan it in this way as we have done without going into particular details merely taking just one sentence of the Lord

Jesus with regard to the work of the Holy Spirit we find that it is his work entirely when Nicodemus came to Jesus by night he learned something that he didn't know though he was a master in Israel he was quite unaware of the fact that he must be born again and when Jesus told him this he was nonplussed couldn't understand it now and Jesus said to him except a man be born and water unto the Spirit cannot see the kingdom of God so that midnight lesson you see remained in the church of God and now enshrined in the hearts of the Lord's people and in his church another thing that Jesus said with regard to the

Holy Spirit was that he should take of mine and shall show it unto you revelation the sacred holy custodian of the work of Christ the merits of Christ the purpose of his coming his life death his resurrection his ascension well this is just what he does do where the truth is these things are preached and not put in a corner man is not exalted this is my responsibility it has been for these many years and I'm solemnly aware of it and more so as I get older and I also have to give an account that you will never be able to say thank God that I hid from you the truth and that I wrapped it up and made it sweet for your natural taste or that I feared your crown or caught in your smile you'll never be able to say that and I thank

God for it but it is this that matters that through the ministry of the gospel he shall take of mind and shall show it unto you as I have often said men say you should preach Christ preach Christ preach Christ we fully agree how how where shall we get the ability from the knowledge from what shall we say about Christ how shall we set him full well enough to say preach Christ you might as well tell me to preach Oliver Cromwell you might just as well tell me to preach Paul so I could from historical knowledge it comes to preaching

Christ you want Christ in your heart you want the Holy Spirit in your heart you want the power of that in your own heart oh you can preach Christ to me as I have often told you it is a privilege to preach Christ a privilege and to preach Christ is to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit he shall take of mine the treasures that are mine now look at the rich treasure house therefore the gospel is still preached today and no two sermons are ever alive it's a remarkable thing I know it can be applied naturally in some cases that if you have six different teachers teaching the same lesson they are teaching it in six different ways yes so they will tribute to the versatile mind of man but when you come to the preaching of one subject under the influence of the

[ 36 : 39 ] Holy Spirit you will have one sermon in spirit different words of course and so it is with this the apostle great determination to know nothing among men say Jesus Christ and him crucified in this therefore the spirit takes of the fingers of Jesus and reveals them unto us or you as Jesus said to his disciples now this co-equal and co-eternal person the Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and with the Lord Jesus entirely separate and yet one there is perfect harmony perfect unity there is no discord there is no failure no breakdown his word is perfect through all generations he has done that which was predetermined should be done

Paul stands at the gates of Corinth and the apostle hears the Lord saying to him be not afraid Paul they shall not hurt me for I had much people in this city there they were hidden in that vast city of Corinth the city of the world at the time for all knowledge beauty wisdom idolatry and yet God looked down from him on Corinth and he said I got much people there now how were they found how were they found did Paul inquire at houses did he ask one and another whether they were believers how could he they were obviously idolatry dead in sin and yet

God saw those people in their idolatry and wickedness this is the view that the gospel gives us of you and me every city town village the way you like the Lord knows those that are his knows those for whom he had his eye and heart and so it is the Holy Spirit's work to bring the Lord Jesus to the knowledge of him to them you notice no doubt what we read in the first verse he showed me a pure river of the water of life pure as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God of the land what is this river if it isn't the river of the gospel what does the 46th sound say there is a river this is the river ancient which is that is the river that is now declared to be clear as crystal pure river the water of life clear as crystal it's an uncommon sight isn't it water as clear as crystal this is the preaching of the gospel it has praised God through the foolishness of preaching you say well that doesn't sound very clear doesn't it that doesn't sound very like crystal doesn't it what is it then if it isn't absolutely pure clear if it doesn't issue from the throne of

God what is the gospel have you got an ear for it can you detect you stand on a river bank and say that's muddy water don't like the look of that that's not what I call or regard as the gospel could you say that you know what the gospel is you're here attaining to it if so who have you to thank if you can tell the difference it's pure river flows from beneath symbolically the throne of God and the streams says the psalm make glad the city of God for this is precisely what they do do they make gladly thousand little cities as they run in untold numbers streams and the spirit and the bride say come this great day then will be the end when Christ shall arise from his throne that he has sent as he tells us in this chapter his holy prophets and apostles to tell us of these things beforehand we are not unarmed or we are not without foreword it is this gracious call of the holy spirit to the lord Jesus when he shall have consummated his holy office but then there is this vast company ready with him this number which no man can number equally ready equally taught equally prepared equally covered in the righteousness of Christ and washed in his sin atoning blood here they are there is nothing to be done now no last minute arrangements no just some final touching like an earthly bride perhaps at the last minute finds some material wrong ready time has come all the day the magnificent day that it will be what do you say of it your hopes rise as high as this shall I among them stand is this it the glory of it the perfection of it the united chorus you can hear one of them in the book of the prophet

Zechariah where we are told that the top stone shall be brought full with shoutings of what can you pray to pronounce the word grace grace unto it can you pronounce that word grace all you say yes now can you can you in your heart the whole can you say grace what to the land yes grace grace unto it all the other side glory is united to grace he will give grace and glory there's no grace it doesn't say he will give grace he'll give grace and glory as we spoke last new year sabbath from that solemn word which I've lived in through the year but he giveth more grace yes the supply hasn't dried up we've been through some deep waters some of us deep waters unexpected in it but the supply hasn't dried up has it it hasn't endured lot has it so many cases the Lord has given you grace hasn't it so that this grace that is given to work by and walk on and walk with something that you would have to attribute to what it is and that is grace and this is the preparation and I just leave it where it is for the moment

[ 46 : 19 ] I the Lord add his blessing to it Amen