**Adult Sunday School**March 18, 2012

**The Bride of Christ**

## Rev. 19: 8 “And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, **clean and white**: for the fine linen is the righteousness (acquired righteousness, righteous acts) of saints.”

1. **The Overcomer is the Bride**
2. **Bride of Christ is Called to an “High Calling”**

Phil. 3: 11–14 “If by any means **I might attain** unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but **I follow** after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I **press toward the mark** for the **prize** of the **high calling** of **God** in **Christ Jesus**.”

## I Cor. 9: 24–27 “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So **run, that ye may obtain.** And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now **they** do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but **we** an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

Paul is speaking about running a race to win a prize:

I strive - I run - I fight to win a prize.

This is a crown, an incorruptible crown.

The ‘Elders’ in Rev. 4 are crowned with golden crowns.

## Rev. 4: 4 “And round about the Throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment: and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

Crowns are earned, not presented as gifts.

1. **Bride of Christ is called to an “Holy Calling”**

## II Tim. 1: 9 “Who have saved us, and called us with an **Holy Calling**.”

“Hagios” – “Holy” – Pure – Blameless – Consecrated

Believers are called to sanctify themselves from all defilement, forsaking sin and living a holy life.

## I Pet. 1: 15 “But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;”

“Anastrophe” – “Conversation” – Behaviour, living

This clarifies the meaning of the word conversation, thus the Scripture is easily understood to be saying, “Be ye holy in all manner of living.”

1. **Bride of Christ, called to an “Heavenly Calling”**

## Heb. 3: 1 “Wherefore, **holy** **brethren**, partakers of the **heavenly** **calling**, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;”

1. **The Bride of Christ will be a “Chaste Virgin”**

## II Cor. 11: 2 “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

## II Tim. 2: 21 “…A vessel unto honour, sanctified… prepared unto every good work.”

“Hagnos” – “Chaste” – clean – pure – perfect – free from a mixture of evil – pure from every fault – pure from carnality

However, there are many in the “Body of Christ” (the Church) that are still “*babes*.” They are “*yet carnal.*”

1. **The Bride of Christ is Referred to as “Elders”**

These are not babes sitting on thrones with the Lord. These are elders that are mature, fully grown. They gained this position by overcoming as He overcame.

## Rev. 3: 21 “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His Throne.”

## Rev. 4: 4 “And round about the Throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty **elders** sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”

1. The Bride of Christ is a profitable builder.

## I Cor. 3: 12, 14 “…Gold, silver, precious stone… He shall receive a reward.”

Rewards are given for achievements. Many in the Church will be saved, “*as by fire.*” (I Cor. 3: 15)

1. The Bride will have an Abundant Entrance.

II Pet. 1: 11 “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

1. The Bride will be a “Chaste Virgin” having but one love, and that for the Lord.

## Mk. 12: 30 “And thou shall love the Lord thy God with **all** thy heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy mind, and with **all** thy strength: this is the first commandment.”

“All” means there is **nothing left for anything else**.

1. The Bride of Christ is the “Fairest Among Women”

The Bride is considered by the Lord to be the fairest among women.

## S. of S. 1: 8 “…O thou fairest among women…”

. The Bride will prepare herself for the wedding.

## Rev. 19: 7–8 “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

## I Pet. 1: 16 “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

1. **The Bride of Christ will “Prepare Herself”**

The Bridegroom does not prepare the Bride. The Bridegroom makes provision for the Bride, but she herself must by faith, take advantage of that which has been prepared for her. Believers are called to sanctify themselves consistent with their high, holy and heavenly calling, cleansing themselves from all defilement, forsaking sin and living a holy life. II Pt. 1:10 “**Your Calling**”

## II Cor. 7: 1 “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

## II Cor. 13: 5 “**Examine yourselves**, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”

The Bride will have to prepare herself. The Word challenges us to examine ourselves.

## Gal. 2: 17 “If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.”

## II Tim. 2: 19 “The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

## Titus 1: 16 “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” “Adokimos” – “reprobate” – unapproved – rejected – castaway – not standing the test