

Series: Becoming the Church at Philadelphia

The Eternal Destiny of the Bride_Part 2

I. Intro

1. In this message, we continue to explore the eternal destiny of the bride made ready by looking at 6 eternal rewards given exclusively to the prepared bride.
 - a. Set apart uniquely as God's eternal possession
 - b. Granted Eternal Union with Christ
 - c. Positioned for Eternal Intimacy with Christ
 - d. Adorned in Glory
 - e. Granted Eternal Partnership with Christ in His mission
 - f. Empowered with Eternal authority for the mission
2. My goal: To get you excited about the destiny of the bride made ready so as to motivate you to wholeheartedly pursue readiness.
3. In the past, we have characterized eternal rewards into three categories: eternal intimacy, eternal glory, and eternal authority. That is a good categorization, but I want to expand it to six rewards.
4. These are not merely symbolic trophies or detached blessings—they are relational invitations into deeper, everlasting union, fellowship, and shared identity with the Lord Jesus.
5. We discussed the first one last week, and we will look at the last five this week.
6. Here is a summary of God's eternal possession that I spoke about last week
 - a. **Possessed by God**: The bride made ready bears the name of the Father, the eternal city, and the Son throughout the kingdom age and forever throughout the eternal ages. Carrying the name of the Father, Son and the City speaks of possession by God in a unique way, that is, a unique identity, security, an eternal bridal relationship, and empowered representation as a mature son.
7. Let's now discuss the remaining eternal rewards beginning with eternal union.

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II. Granted Eternal Union with Christ

1. To help us discuss both union with Christ and intimacy with Him, it will be helpful to discuss briefly the earthly and heavenly tabernacle.

The heavenly tabernacle

1. The earthly tabernacle serves as a type and shadow of the pattern of heaven.

*Heb 8:5: who serve **a copy and shadow of the heavenly things**, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."*

*Heb 9:23-24: Therefore it was necessary **for the copies of the things in the heavens** to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 **For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself**, now to appear in the presence of God for us;*

2. Therefore, heaven has three compartments: the outer court, the holy place, and the holy of holies
 - a. In the OT practices, only the high priest could enter the holy of holies and he only on the day of atonement.
3. We must understand that not every believer will be able to dwell in the heavenly holy of holies.
 - a. Some will be in the outer court
 - b. Matt. 22 outer darkness
 - c. Matt 25 (Parable of Talents) Outer darkness
4. The differing areas of heaven speak of differing levels of nearness to God's throne, differing levels of nearness to the fullness of His glory, and different

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levels of nearness to His presence in eternity. Likewise, the differing areas impact differing levels of intimacy in the bride's eternal relationship with Christ.

5. The new Jerusalem is the holy of holies of the heavenly tabernacle.
6. We have a level of union with Christ merely by being born again; however, it grows as we overcome so that we are more one with Christ than at salvation.
 - a. I think of my marriage and how our oneness and union has grown over the 55 years we have been together.
7. With Christ as our high priest, and He alone positioned to enter the most holy place, believers must be in full union with Christ to dwell as a pillar in the inner court of the heavenly temple

The Promise to the Bride Made Ready

1. One of the promises to the overcomers at Philadelphia is that they will be a pillar in the heavenly temple

Rev 3:12: 'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God

2. A pillar is a fixed, stable secure object that upholds something.
 - a. Donna and I had to go to the superior court building in Paulding Co. last week to get her excused from jury duty. The building had huge pillars in front of the door. Very sturdy and strong. Very stable.
 - b. When Donna and I went to Rome and toured the ruins of the ancient city, what stood out to me and remained was the pillars of the ancient buildings
3. Remember from prior teachings that the word for temple here is the innermost part of the temple—not the entire temple complex.
4. The bride made ready will be a permanent fixture in the new Jerusalem.
5. Jesus is our high priest. To dwell in the innermost place of heaven, we must be fully in Christ—that is, one with Him or in full union with Him
6. To become a pillar in the innermost part of the new Jerusalem, we must be in full union with Christ.

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7. Full union is the requirement for entry but it is also the magnificent reward for the bride made ready—that she will be granted a permanent place of full union with Christ—close to Him, His glory, and His presence.

More on the promise of union

1. Noel used to say: “I want to dwell in the deepest part of the Father’s heart”.
2. I believe it was based on these passages:

John 1:18: *No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father,*

John 17:20-24, ESV: *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all **be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us,** so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that **they may be one even as we are one,** 23 **I in them and you in me,** that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. 24 **Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.***

3. Let’s explain how these passages fit into the blessing of eternal union promised the bride made ready:
 - a. Before the foundation of the world in and throughout eternity past, the Father and the eternal Son dwelt in perfect communion and union, filled with magnificent glory, joy, and fulfillment.
 - b. The Son’s union with the Father serves as the pattern and promise of the kind of union into which Christ draws his bride.
 - c. As part of the eternal plan of the Godhead determined before the foundation of the world, they determined to invite mankind into this relationship of perfect union.
 - d. In Jesus’ high priestly prayer, Christ petitions the Father for the believer’s full inclusion into this same union.

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4. John reclining on Jesus' breast illustrates this type of union of nearness to Christ.

John 13:23: There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

5. The promise is for the bride to enter fully into Christ's own union with the Father, a union marked by a shared life, shared love, glory, and partnership
6. Not every believer will inherit this level of union with the Godhead. Some will be destined to the outer court of heaven and others to different levels of nearness to Christ. This is the eternal destiny of the bride made ready—a destiny of nearness to Christ for all eternity, nearness to His great love, glory and presence.
7. Union connects the bride to nearness to Christ. Intimacy speaks of relationship and fellowship with Christ.

III. Eternal Intimacy with Christ

1. The promise of eternal union with Christ and eternal intimacy with Him are closely connected.
2. Union positions the bride to be near to Christ and intimacy positions the bride for intimate fellowship.
3. The nearness of union paves the way for the greatest level of intimacy.
4. The rewards promised to the overcomers in Revelation 2–3 powerfully support the idea of eternal intimacy with Christ.
5. Remember that the bride made ready receives all of the promises from all seven churches.
6. In terms of eternal intimacy, I highlight five aspects of an intimate relationship promised to those who overcome.

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1. Christ offers Himself in the greatest measure possible

Rev 21:22: I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

1. The bride is a pillar in the innermost part of the heavenly temple—and ultimately the Father and the eternal Son are the temple.
2. Thus, this and other promises speak of the bride having the Man Christ Jesus in fullness.

2. Partaker of Christ's life in fullness

Rev 2:7: "To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."

1. The Greek word for life used here and refers to life in its absolute fullness—the divine, eternal life that belongs to God alone and is imparted to the believer.
2. Eating from the tree of life refers to the bride having access to God's unending, sustaining, and nourishing *zoē* life.
3. It symbolizes deep communion, eternal satisfaction, and sustained vitality in God's presence.
4. Full enjoyment of divine life in the age to come—not just eternal existence, but abundant *zoē* shared in intimate fellowship with God.

3. Unending Spiritual Nourishment

Rev 2:17: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."

1. In the OT, a pot of manna was hidden in the Most Holy Place, before God, unseen by the people. The **hidden manna** speaks of among other things, spiritual nourishment that is only revealed to those who overcome.
2. In their intimate relationship with Christ, the overcomers will receive throughout eternity revelation, spiritual nourishment.

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4. Dine with Christ forever

Rev. 2:17b: "and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."

Rev 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me."

1. The white stone probably represents entrance to a special event. In this case, most likely entrance to the marriage supper of the Lamb.
2. The overcomer will dine with Christ and other overcomers at the marriage supper of the Lamb
3. And will dine with Him in this life, at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and forever in the most holy place of heaven.

5. Primary ministry will be to minister to Christ Himself

Rev 22:3-4: There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4 they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

1. Like what Ezekiel wrote: Zadok was a faithful high priest during the time of David and Solomon (1 Kings 1:32-35).
2. His descendants remained loyal to God's covenant when others (such as Eli's descendants or much of the Levitical priesthood) were unfaithful.
3. In Ezekiel's vision of the future temple, the sons of Zadok are singled out as the **priestly line allowed to draw near to God Himself.**
4. The overcoming bride will have as it first priority and privilege to minister closely and directly to Christ Himeself for all eternity.

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IV. Adorned in Glory

1 Cor 15:41: There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body;

1. It speaks directly to differing levels of glory clothing believers in the resurrection, but even more it speaks to the massive distinctions of the quality of life throughout eternity granted to overcomers above those who believe but don't pursue an overcoming lifestyle.

Clothed in Glorious Garments

Rev 3:5 'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments;

Rev 19:7-8: "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses

1. The bride made ready will be clothed in fine linen
 - a. In the OT, the priests had to be clothed in fine linen to enter into the holy place to minister to the Lord

"When they enter the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments... linen turbans shall be on their heads and linen undergarments shall be on their loins; they shall not gird themselves with anything which makes them sweat."— Ezekiel 44:17–18

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- b. The bride will be clothed in fine linen so as to freely enter into the presence of Christ and to minister to Him in the most intimate relationship.
- 2. The fine linen garments with which the bride will be clothed will be bright
 - a. The Greek word used for “bright” is *lampron*.
 - b. The word is used of white objects that shine in great brilliance.
 - c. Other definitions of *lampron* are radiant, splendid, and magnificent.
 - d. Robert Thomas writes this about this Greek word, “The adjective *lampron* is the color or lack of it that represents radiant whiteness as indicative of divine glory.
 - e. The prepared bride’s garments will exhibit the glory of God which come from her being prepared.
- 3. The prepared bride’s garments are also characterized as “clean”.
 - a. Thomas writes this about the meaning of the word “clean”. “‘Clean’ is the mark of purity of the bride’s garments which symbolizes the inward purity of God’s people collectively.”
 - b. The bride made ready will not only be brilliant in glory, but will also be pure without spot or wrinkle.
 - c. She is the bride who is pure; who shines in great glory; and who has been prepared to minister unto the Lord in fullness.
- 4. The readied bride will return with Christ dressed in these glorious garments
- 5. The bride will be eternally adorned in glorious attire

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

- a. Adorning here refers to both spiritual and divine beautification—a preparation of the city and the bride with glory, purity, and perfection, fit for eternal union with Christ.

*Rev 21:9-11: Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, **I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.**" 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 **having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.***

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6. The glorious adornment has purpose
 - a. Allow the bride to minister directly to the Lord in the heavenly holy of holies
 - b. Give credibility to the bride to minister as an eternal representative of Christ.

V. Eternal Partnership with Christ in His Never Ending Mission

1. The bride will share the throne speaking of partnership with Christ.

Rev 3:21: 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne'

2. They will partner with Him in His eternal rule
3. Jesus promised the 12 apostles that they would judge the 12 tribes of Israel

Matt 19:28: And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luke 22:29-30: and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

4. Paul expanded the promise to include the saints to judge and not only Israel but the entire world.

1 Cor 6:2: Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?

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5. The readying of the bridal company as overcomers will cast the dragon and his angels to the earth at the midpoint of the tribulation (Rev. 12)
6. The bride made ready will partner with Christ at His second coming.

Rev 17:14: "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."

7. Also Revelation 19:11 and following
8. The bride made ready will partner with Christ to rule and reign during the millennial kingdom

*Rev 20:4-6: Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and **will reign with Him for a thousand years.***

- a. The parable of 10 minas
 - b. The parable of the talents
9. The bride made ready will partner with Christ to rule and reign with Him throughout the eternal ages.

*Rev 22:3-5: and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4 they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5 And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; **and they will reign forever and ever.***

- c. Thomas' commentary states (paraphrased) about this passage: The climaxing privilege of Christ's bondservants is that of joining in the eternal reign of God. This is an extension of the promise of a thousand-year reign given earlier
 - d. Isaiah 9:7—No end to the increase of His government

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10. The bride will partner with Christ to rule and reign with Him throughout the 1,000 year millennial age and throughout the eternal ages which follow.

VI. Empowered with Eternal Authority for the mission

1. The bride will partner with Christ in His eternal reign with great authority. She will not just be one who is just along for the ride. There will be great authority released upon the bride in this partnership.

Rev 2:26-27: He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; 27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father;

2. We see this also in the man child of Rev 12

Rev 12:5: And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne

3. The overcomers exercise authority next in their partnership with Christ at His return as He pours out His wrath over the nations that opposed Him (Rev. 19:11ff), then during the 1,000 year reign of Christ, and finally throughout the eternal ages.

VII. The Eternal Destiny of the Bride

The bridal church, the company of believers who have overcome and made themselves ready will be forever carry the name and identity of Christ in a unique way. As such, they will be Christ's own possession. They will dwell in eternal union with the Christ and the entire Godhead and have a uniquely intimate relationship with Christ. They will have a permanent place in the innermost part of the new Jerusalem where they will minister to the eternal Son. They will feast upon His life, dining with Him and enjoying the ever-increasing revelation of this beautiful Man as He forever reveals unending dimensions of His love, character, and works.

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The bridal church will be forever adorned for her Bridegroom as a bride adorns herself for her husband. She will be clothed in fine linen garments which are brilliant in radiance and pure without spot or wrinkle.

The bride will also rule and reign in partnership with Christ exercising great authority casting the dragon to the earth, at His second coming, throughout the millennial kingdom age, and throughout the never ending eternal ages.

Let us pursue the Man Christ Jesus.