We have suffered from the preaching of cheap grace. Grace is free, but it is not cheap. People will take anything that is free, but they are not interested in discipleship. They will take Christ as Savior but not as Lord.
Vance Havner

First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia USA
Prayer Study 555
THE LAST DAYS
LESSON 13
IS THAT WEDDING MUSIC I HEAR?

The Bride Has Made Herself Ready

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor 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 the saints.
Revelation 19:7-8KJV

*Let us rejoice and shout for joy [*exulting and triumphant*]! Let us celebrate and ascribe to Him glory and honor, for the marriage of the Lamb [*at last*] has come, and His bride has prepared herself.*
Revelation 19:7-8 AMP

Let us rejoice and be happy and give God glory, because the wedding of the Lamb has come, and the Lamb's bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given to her to

wear. The fine linen means the good things done by God's holy people.
Revelation 19:7-8 New Century

Let us be glad and rejoice and honor Him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and His bride has prepared herself. She is permitted to wear the finest white linen. (Fine linen represents the good deeds done by the people of God.)
Revelation 19:7-8 NLV

I suppose there is no more intimate relationship on earth than a godly marriage relationship. Paul tells us that *for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh* (Ephesians 5:31). Paul says that, in the same way, the Lord will be joined to His Bride, the Church: *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.* (Ephesians 5:32) God is a God, not of religion, but of personal relationship, and He wants not only personal relationship with each one of us but relationship that can best be compared to the relationship of a husband and wife in intimacy and love. The fact that Jesus passionately wants to have intimate relationship with you so that He can bless the object of His love, YOU, and the fact that He is the only true God who rose again with His grave empty, are what separate Christianity from all other religions.

Those in relationship with Him will fall in love with Him, and those who love Him will obey Him, and those who obey Him can be showered with blessings. His greatest desire is to bless you, and since He is just, He can only bless you when you walk in obedience to Him.

The Wedding Ceremony in Biblical Times

The wedding ceremony thus types the relationship we are to have with the Lord. In a wonderful booklet, *The True Significance of the Wedding Covenant*, which Bill Gothard has had published through his *Institute in Basic Life Principles*, we are given the symbolic significance of Biblical wedding ceremonies:

1. The prospective bridegroom took the initiative and traveled from his father's house to the home of the prospective bride. *Christ left His Father's house and came to earth to gain a bride for Himself*. (Ephesians 5:25-28)
2. The father of the woman then negotiated with the prospective bridegroom the price that must be paid to secure his bride. *Christ paid the price with His own blood*. (1st Corinthians 6:19-20)
3. When the bridegroom paid the purchase price, the marriage convenant was thereby established. At that point, the man and woman were regarded as husband and wife, even though no physical union had taken place. *The believer has been declared to be sanctified or set apart exclusively for Christ*. (Ephesians 5:25-27)
4. The moment the covenant was established, the bride was declared to be set apart exclusively for the bridegroom. The groom and the bride then drank from a cup over which

the betrothal benediction had been pronounced. This action symbolized that the covenant relationship had been established. *Christ symbolized this marriage covenant through communion at the Last Supper*. (1st Corinthians 11:25)

5. After the marriage covenant was in effect, the groom left the home of the bride and returned to his father's house. He remained there for a period of twelve months, separated from his bride. *Christ returned to His Father's house following the payment of His purchase price*. (John 6:62)
6. During this period of separation, the bride gathered her wardrobe and prepared for married life. The groom prepared living accommodations in his father's house for his bride. *Christ is preparing a place for His bride and is also sending pastors and teachers to perfect the bride for the coming wedding*. (John 14:2 & Ephesians 4:11-13)
7. After the period of separation, the groom, best man, and other male escorts left the house of the groom's father, usually at night, and conducted a torchlight procession to the house of the bride. *Christ will soon come from His Father's house in heaven accompanied by the angelic host*. (John 14:3)
8. The bride was expecting her groom to come for her; however, she did not know the exact time he would arrive. Thus, the groom's arrival was preceded by a shout. *Christ's return will be preceded by a shout. We expect His return but we do not know the day or the hour of His Coming*. (1st Thessalonians 4:16)

9. The groom received the bride, along with her female attendants, and returned to his father's house. *The bride will be caught up with the Lord to be with Him.* (1st Thessalonians 4:14-17)
10. The bride and groom then entered the bridal chamber, and, in the privacy of that place, entered into physical union for the first time, thereby consummating the marriage. *Christ's union with the Church will take place in heaven for all eternity.* (1st Thessalonians 4:17)

Jesus is Coming Back for His Bride, a Glorious Church Who Has Made Herself Ready

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; 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. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his flesh, but nourished and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church, for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:25-32

How Has the Bride Made Herself Ready

1. **She has come out of Babylon.** (ARE YOU NO LONGER CHARMED BY WORDLY PURSUITS AND THE WORLD'S

DELIGHTS? DO YOU NO LONGER STRIVE FOR MEN'S APPROVAL, BUT DELIGHT IN THE LORD?) *The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and all who were slain on the earth.* Revelation 18:23-24

2. **She has changed her garments.** (HAVE YOU COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND SEPARATED YOURSELF UNTO THE LORD? DO YOU WALK IN HOLINESS AND DO RIGHTEOUS ACTS IN HIS NAME?) *Then Jacob said unto his household and to all that were with him, Put away the foreign gods that are among you and be clean and change your garments.* Genesis 35:2/ *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorned herself with her jewels.* Isaiah 61:10/ *And the Lord said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan, even the LORD who hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel. And he answered and spoke unto those who stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a clean turban upon his head. So they set a clean*

turban upon his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. Zechariah 3:25

3. **She has overcome.** (HAVE YOU OVERCOME BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB-ACCEPTING CHRIST- AND THE WORD OF YOUR TESTIMONY-SPEAKING THE WORD OF GOD?) *Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell in them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write for these words are true and faithful." And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."* Revelation 21:2-8
4. **She walks in joy, even giving the sacrifice of praise.** (ARE YOU WALKING IN AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE AND PRAISE NO MATTER WHAT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES?) *The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness; the voice of the bridegroom*

and the voice of the bride; the voice of them who shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts; for the Lord is good; for His mercy endureth forever; and of those who shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the Lord. Jeremiah 33:11

5. **She longs for the Coming One who says "*YOU HAVE RAVISHED MY HEART*."** (ARE YOU LONGING FOR THE COMING OF JESUS?) *And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take of the water of life freely.* Revelation 22:17

The Bridal Company will make herself ready for the coming of the King. Do you want to be part of that company? Are you going to stand in this evil day when others fall? (A good example of this falling away is Demas who forsook Paul for wordly things. -2nd Timothy 4:10) James calls such people adulterers and adulteresses and says that friendship with the world is enmity with God and further states that to be a friend of the world is to be the enemy of God. (James 4:4)

Are His enemies your enemies? Frequently scripture refers to the believers as playing the harlot. It also makes much of agreement. Unfortunately, the church often loses its savor by walking in agreement with the world, much as a harlot. Instead of hating His enemies, we try to be politically correct and say anything goes.

What is in your heart? It does not matter how gifted you think you are, coarse conversations indicate that you are double-

minded (James 1:9), and Madison Square Techniques indicate that you have to use a gimmick and thus have a form of godliness but deny the power (2nd Timothy 3:5). Again James says, *"Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren these things ought not so to be."* (James 3:10) Jesus Himself said, *"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*

Are you looking for manifestations and the blessing of His hand, or are you seeking Him and His face, whether He gets you out of a hard place or not? Do you realize that, if He did nothing else for you ever, He has already done enough? Are you going to love Him with all your heart in the hard times as well as in times of prosperity?

What if real persecution comes, and you are not raptured away? That's what happened to the Chinese Christians under Mao and the Communist. Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote to Timothy that *"…all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."* Will you be the one who stands? It is worth going through persecution to you to follow Christ? Are you willing to die?

Are you hungry for the things of God?

Do you really want to be part of that company, the Bridal Company, that is even now in the process of making herself ready?

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

AS YOU ARE HEADING UP INTO THE CLOUDS TO JOIN JESUS AND ALL THE RESURRECTED SAVED, you might be wondering "What next?" Well, my friends, it is time to party, and you are going to be one of the guests of honor. You are cordially invited to your wedding party. Welcome to the great "Marriage Supper of the Lamb," where you, one of Jesus' brides and part of His Church, the elect, the *ekklesia*, the called-out ones, finally get to celebrate your marriage with Jesus. You became part of His Bride the minute you accepted Him into your heart, and now you finally get to have the wedding supper, and it is going to be the party to end all parties—well, at least up until this point.

Scott MacGregor

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage supper of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Revelation 19:7-9

There is a great deal of confusion, various opinions, denominational stances, etc., about the events of the Last Days. We will be looking, in much greater detail at the Rapture and the Second Coming in Lesson 17 and will touch somewhat on the Marriage supper of the Lamb then. For now, I will just say that some think the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is only for the

Jewish believers, while others see it as being for any believer and most specifically for the Church. I think there about 70 scriptures dealing with the Marriage Supper, so there will be a lot to cover, but let's wait until we get to the Rapture to discuss the Marriage Supper. In the meantime, I will give you someone's opinion on the major events of the Last Days:

1. The Rapture: 1st Corinthians 15:52. Judgment Seat of Christ: (Romans 14:10-12; 1st Corinthians 3:10-4:5; 2nd Corinthians 5:1-10). The Marriage Supper of the Lamb: Revelation 19:7-9
2. The Rise of Antichrist: 2nd Thessalonians 2:7-8; Revelation 13:1: Daniel 9:27; Revelation 19:20
3. The 7 Year Tribulation: Revelation Chapters 6-16; 2nd Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 19:6-10
4. The Battle of Gog and Magog: Ezekiel chapters 38-39 (Many believe this is Russia and possibly China.)
5. The Abomination of Desolation: Daniel 12:11; Mark 13:14, Revelation 12:17 (The Abomination of Desolation, whatever it is, will be set up in the temple. Is it referring to a heathen altar set up by Antiochus in 168 B.C., the Roman army which destroyed the temple in 70 A.D., or some future event, such as the Antichrist exalting himself above God-see 2nd Thessalonians 2:3-4?)
6. The Battle of Armageddon: Mark 14:62; Revelation 19:11-21; Revelation 19:20
7. The Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats: Matthew 25:31-46
8. The Binding of satan for 1000 years: Revelation 20:1-3

9. The Millenial Kingdom: Revelation 20; Isaiah Chapters 60-62; Ezekiel Chapters 40-48
10. The Last Battle after the 1000 Year Reign of Christ: Revelation 20:7-10
11. The Great White Throne Judgment (of unbelievers): Revelation 20:7-15
12. The New Jerusalem: Revelation Chapters 21-22