

Preparing As A Christian For Our Part In The Wonderful World Tomorrow

Do you as a Christian, when we ponder on the state of the world today, wish that you could somehow speed up the return of Jesus Christ to this earth, this time as “*King of kings and Lord of lords*”?

Only after this unique event will the wonderful world tomorrow, that is prophesied in God’s Word the Christian Bible, begin.

Micah 4:1-4 [New King James] *“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.”*

This is just one of many prophecies that tell us how wonderful the world tomorrow, ruled by Jesus Christ, will be.

We know that it **cannot** be today or tomorrow because certain prophecies must first be fulfilled, and God’s Word, the Christian Bible, in which we find these prophecies, cannot be broken, [**John 10:35**].

Jesus Christ knew that all the prophecies about Him had to be fulfilled in His first coming, [**Luke 18:31; Luke 24:44**].

In the same way, all the details and prophecies about Jesus Christ’s Second Coming must also be fulfilled.

Jesus Christ has the power to make sure that these events will take place, [**Matthew 28:18**].

What are the main prophecies that must be fulfilled before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?

In many prophecies, Christians are spectators, not participants –

Matthew 24:1-3 [New King James] *“Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.’ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’”*

Jesus Christ’s disciples were also eager for the world tomorrow, the world rule of the Kingdom of God, to become a reality.

Matthew 24:4-7 [New King James] *“And Jesus answered and said to them: ‘Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.’”*

Jesus Christ said that many things would have to happen before the day of His return.

We as Christians are **not** to be a part of causing these things to happen, only spectators and perhaps fellow sufferers with other human beings.

Matthew 24:9-12 [New King James] *“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”*

This is the Great Tribulation that is enlarged on in the message that Jesus Christ gave to the apostle John and he recorded in the Book of Revelation.

Christians are **not** involved in causing this to happen, but we should pray that we are accounted worthy to escape it, we do **not** want to be around when the time comes.

The Word of God tells us that there will be a “*beast-like*” powerful ruler and a powerful false prophet and religious ruler involved in these final events before the Second Coming of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, [**Revelation chapters 13, 17 and 18**].

But true Christians may be persecuted by these powerful rulers but we are **not** a part of their way of life, which is the result of the deception of Satan and his hatred of all humanity, [**1 John 5:19; Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4**].

We cannot speed up or slow down these events.

What is God doing during this end time?

This is where our main focus must be as true Christians.

Daniel 2:20-22 [New King James] *“Daniel answered and said: ‘Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him.’”*

God is always in charge, these human rulers do only what God allows, and when He allows it to happen.

Daniel 4:17 [New King James] *“... the Most High rules in the kingdom of men ...”*

If it were up to Satan and his society, the end of all humanity would have come long ago, but God slowed it down at the Tower of Babel, [**Genesis 11:6-7**].

God limits what Satan can do, [**Job 1:6-12**].

Prophecy is **not** waiting on Satan, nor on human rulers and humans as a whole.

God controls the speed of these events, they do **not** control Him.

So what are all these prophecies waiting on?

To answer this we need to look at the Work of God in His Church.

All true Christians who are participating in the work of the Christian Church are fulfilling prophecy!

Prophecy that must be fulfilled before the Second Coming of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Matthew 24:14 [New King James] *“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”*

The message that Jesus Christ brought about why human beings exist and how the Creator God desires to have spiritual created children in His Kingdom, who have the same character as He has, His “likeness” [Genesis 1:26-27], likeness is referring to character.

1 Peter 1:13-19 [New King James] *“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’ And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*

God is a holy God and we are to also be holy in character. [Please download and study the article on this website, ‘What Is True Holiness?’ listed under ‘Holiness’].

If we want to find out who is responsible for fulfilling this prophecy we need to read the recorded final words of Jesus Christ before His return to His throne on the right hand side of God the Father.

Matthew 28:19-20 [New King James] *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”*

This is the message for all disciples of Jesus Christ, that is all true Christians within whom there is an active presence of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, [Romans 8:14].

Romans 8:9 [New King James] *“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”*

This is the proof of a true Christian, as we see the “fruits” of the Holy Spirit being developed in them [Galatians 5:22-23], the result of an intimate day-by-day being led by the Holy Spirit into all truth, [John 16:13].

This website is a small part of this preaching of the gospel message to the whole world.

Every Christian also has a personal responsibility for preaching the same message, **not** always in words.

Matthew 5:14-16 [New King James] *“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

The very lifestyle of every Christian is a light in the dark world, deceived by Satan, words are **not** always needed but every Christian must be so familiar with God’s Word, the Christian Bible, that they can tell all who ask why they are Christians.

1 Peter 3:8-17 [New King James] *“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tender-hearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for*

reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For 'He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.' And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. 'And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.' But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil."

Even in the face of persecution every true Christian must be such a witness as this for our Saviour Jesus Christ.

This message will be preached in a world where there is a famine of God's Word, [Amos 8:11-13] right up to the death of the two witnesses.

Revelation 11:3-13 [New King James] *“And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.’ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.”*

A very dramatic final witness by two servants of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem before they join all the Christians true to Jesus Christ in the clouds before returning with Him to take over rule on this earth, [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4].

These scriptures could indicate that the wrath of God on rebellious human beings will be poured out as true Christians watch, with tears pouring from their eyes as they see the pain, suffering and terror of those humans who did **not** respond to their message, but whom they love so dearly.

God could have sent His faithful angels to give this message to the whole world, but right now God is using true Christians.

Why?

Because part of God's work is with us and in us.

Matthew 24:21-22 [New King James] *“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.”*

This great tribulation will be shortened before all humanity is destroyed “for the elect's sake,” that is true Christians.

God is now preparing a group of people to work with Jesus Christ at His Second Coming

Luke 1:16-17 [New King James] *“And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”*

Referring to the work of John the Baptist in preparing a people ready for the first coming of Jesus Christ to be our Saviour, through shedding His life blood on the cross.

John the Baptist’s work was a prototype of the work that would be done before Jesus Christ’s Second Coming.

Matthew 3:1-3, 5-6 [New King James] *“In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!’ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.”’ Now John himself was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.”*

John’s message was one of repentance and the confession of sins, then being baptised, by total immersion, symbolic of the death of an old life and the beginning of a new life of service to our Saviour Jesus Christ, [**Romans 6:1-18**].

Malachi 3:1 [New King James] *“Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.”*

The prophet Malachi, who was the final prophet of the Old Covenant and a link to the New Covenant that Jesus Christ was to bring, predicts the coming of Jesus Christ to His temple.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 [New King James] *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”*

This and other New Testament scriptures show that the Christian Church and the individual Christian are the New Covenant temple of God, [**Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20**].

Revelation 19:6-9 [New King James] *“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage 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.’”*

The Christian Church as a whole and individual Christians as part of that fellowship, [*‘Saints’* – **Romans 1:7**], are to become the wife of Jesus Christ at His Second Coming.

“His wife has made herself ready,” Christians must make themselves ready for their marriage to the Lamb, Jesus Christ, [**John 1:29, 36**].

This major prophecy must be fulfilled, and it will be fulfilled, there is no question about that.

The question is whether we will be part of this marriage and whether we will be speeding up or slowing down the time of its fulfilment?

We can hasten the day of Jesus Christ's Second Coming by putting more effort into getting ready for that great day.

2 Peter 3:10-14 [New King James] *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;”*

Are we seeking to be this ready for that day?

How can we make ourselves ready for the marriage of the Lamb, Jesus Christ?

Luke 20:34-36 [NIV] *“Jesus replied, ‘The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection.’”*

I mention this scripture to help men in their preparation to be the wife of Jesus Christ, we have to think female!

Jesus Christ's statement does **not** mean that people will **not** recognise their former partners in the Kingdom of God. It simply means that we must **not** consider relationships in the Kingdom of God as an extension of the life we know now.

Physical marriage is the best relationship to prepare for our marriage to Jesus Christ, as we apply the principles we find in God's Word, the Christian Bible, that relate to the physical marriage union.

This is why Satan and the humans he is using, are constantly trying to demote the marriage of a man and woman, and replace it with other partnerships that are condemned in God's Word, the Christian Bible.

Even if we are **not** married we can look back at all the preparations that happen leading up to a marriage that will last.

The engagement period

2 Corinthians 11:2 [New King James] *“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”*

We have to become acquainted with our future husband [Jesus Christ] and grow to love Him but remain a virgin in heart, rejecting all impure thoughts.

Romans 6:1-8 [New King James] *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in*

the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,”

Baptism, by total immersion, is symbolic of the death of an old independent life and a new life united with Jesus Christ.

Invitations – All true Christians are invited to the wedding as individuals to the marriage of the Christian Church to Jesus Christ.

Matthew 22:1-13 [New King James] *“And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, ‘See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.’” But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. ‘But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, “Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?” And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, “Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.””*

The interesting part of this parable is the conclusion.

A man who was without a wedding garment was thrown out.

This man had **not** prepared for the wedding and what we are wearing is important.

What are we to wear?

Revelation 19:5-8 [New King James] *“Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’ And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage 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.”*

This is the main preparation for all who are to be part of the bride of Jesus Christ.

The wedding garment was representing the loving and righteous acts of the saints [true Christians].

How do the saints acquire this wedding garment?

Galatians 5:22-23 [New King James] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”*

The “fruits” of the Holy Spirit express the righteousness of God, and a Christian acquires these by an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit as we are led by Him day by day.

John 7:37-39 [New King James] *“On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit,*

whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

The Holy Spirit **cannot** remain static in us, He must flow out from us to other human beings in acts of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

That is all the “*fruits*” of the Holy Spirit.

This is how we weave our wedding garment.

Anyone who is **not** wearing this kind of garment will be thrown out of the wedding.

Matthew 22:14 [New King James] *“For many are called, but few are chosen.”*

Many may hear the call to become a Christian and respond but do **not** develop a relationship with the Holy Spirit to weave this wedding garment, so are **not** chosen to remain in the wedding feast.

What are the duties of a wife?

Ephesians 5:22-24 [New King James] *“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”*

We must now in our life as a Christian be submissive to our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:1 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

The extent of this submission is shown in this scripture.

The Greek word translated “*bodies*” is “*soma*” meaning the whole life, physical body, mind and human spirit [**Job 32:8**] that gives us our intellect.

This is how we worship our future husband, Jesus Christ, [**John 4:23**].

We must show this submission now in our lives towards our Saviour and Lord.

Romans 12:2 [NIV] *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

This approach to our Christian life will need a renewing of our minds.

Romans 1:1 [NIV] *“Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God,”*

Paul introduced himself as a servant of Jesus Christ, the Greek word translated “*servant*” is “*dōulōs*” meaning a bond slave with **no** personal “*rights*” only responsibilities to the One who owns him, [**Acts 20:28**].

All who are used by God must have this attitude of mind, [**James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1; 1 Corinthians 7:22-23**].

1 Peter 3:1-6 [NIV] *“Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward*

adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear."

It is the beauty in our attitudes, both men and women, that Jesus Christ desires, now within a physical marriage and in the future marriage to Jesus Christ. This will win the respect of those who do **not** know Jesus Christ for who He is and what He is.

The wife of Jesus Christ will support the work He is doing

Revelation 20:6 [New King James] *"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."*

Priests are teachers, so Jesus Christ's wife will teach those who have lived through the great tribulation a new way of life based on love and faith in our Creator God.

Applying God's laws to our marriage relationship now helps prepare us to work with other human beings in the world tomorrow.

Growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ now prepares our minds to be perfectly in harmony with His as He administers His government.

A wife prepares for a family –

In today's world, wise family planning often means a small family.

But Jesus Christ is planning for a very large family, [**Romans 8:29; Isaiah 9:6-7**].

We should be preparing now to help teach whole nations God's way of life.

What do we do during this time of betrothal to Jesus Christ?

Young men and women spend as much time as they can with each other and talk about their future together as a married couple.

We are to do similar things in our spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ.

We need to ask ourselves how much are we looking forward to becoming the bride of Jesus Christ?

Are we full of eager anticipation for this future wedding?

Does it thoroughly change our life?

1 John 1:3-4 [New King James] *"that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full."*

We spend time with our fiancé, in prayer and study of His Word, the Christian Bible, filling our minds with their thoughts.

John 15:12-17 [New King James] *"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not*

know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”

Through submissive obedience to our future husband Jesus Christ, we become friends, and that friendship is a relationship that will help us develop the characteristics of our friend Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:1-4 [New King James] *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”*

Our main interests and thoughts are on our future with Jesus Christ, [**Matthew 6:33**].

Ephesians 5:25-27 [New King James] *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”*

Jesus Christ gave His life for us to become part of His Church, and be sanctified and cleansed ready to become His perfect bride.

How serious are we about character development?

How seriously do we treasure our invitation to the wedding?

Or do we make excuses, like those in **Matthew 22:5** or **Luke 14:18-20**?

Conclusion

2 Peter 3:9-14 [New King James] *“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;”*

God is waiting, but He won't wait forever.

The day of Jesus Christ's Second Coming is near.

So what manner of persons should we be?

Peter gives us clear guidelines as to what should be first and foremost in our minds and lives.

Matthew 25:1 [New King James] *“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.”*

Note all of these were virgins, that is people whose past sins had been cleansed by the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ, that is Christians.

Matthew 25:2-13 [New King James] *“Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their*

lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 'And at midnight a cry was heard: "Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!" Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the wise answered, saying, "No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves." And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" But he answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you." Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.'"

All were expecting to attend the marriage of Jesus Christ, but five of them were **not** prepared.

This parable is a continuation of need to be a faithful and alert servant, [**Matthew 24:45-51**].

Jesus Christ then continues to give us guidelines of how we should be conducting our lives as we wait for His Second Coming, [**Matthew 25:14-45**].

If we study and apply these guidelines to our lives, with the help of an active indwelling of the Holy Spirit we will be a well-prepared bride of Jesus Christ.