

It Will Be Worth It All

Text: Revelation 19.1–10

Theme: God's people will rejoice to see the day of His judgment upon the world

Introduction — November has been designated by some as Persecuted Church Awareness

- live in worst period of persecution against Christians in history
- more Christians died for faith in 20th century than previous 19 combined
- Open Doors International: 312 million face or are enduring extreme or very high levels
- 1 in 5 Christians in Africa; 2 in 5 in Asia
- last year: 5,500, 2,000 churches attacked, 4,500 imprisoned or detained
- worst place of all currently: Nigeria
- sub-Saharan Africa is by far the worst region: 90% persecuted Christians from there

When Christ calls His church to patient endurance, He truly speaks to these who suffer

- many of our problems right here in Wright County MN don't begin to compare
- but doesn't mean we still don't have different kinds of suffering
- cancer, divorce, sicknesses and diseases, and more trouble us days of our lives

Reminded of old gospel song my mother sang in Ladies' Trio in Madrid EFC:

Life's day will soon be o're,
 all storms forever past;
 We'll cross the great divide
 to Glory, safe at last!
 We'll share the joys of heaven:
 a harp, a home, a crown;
 The tempter will be banished,
 We'll lay our burdens down.

It will be worth it all
 when we see Jesus!
 Life's trials will seem so small
 when we see Christ.
 One glimpse of his dear face,
 all sorrow will erase.
 So, bravely run the race
 till we see Christ

For most of us, it doesn't take much convincing that it will be worth it all to see Jesus

- but not so for everyone
- earth dwellers, partakers of all of Lady Babylon's joys, pleasures, delights: stripped, gone
- kings, governments, corporations, merchants, take advantage of the stuff of world: gone
- remember their cry, end of ch. 17
- Alas! Alas! For the great city has been laid waste!

But for the bride of Christ, for all who are in Christ Jesus, we'll not cry "Alas! Alas!"

- instead, we'll cry "Hallelujah!"
- this is what we've been waiting for
- all those temptations resisted for so long
- all those years waiting for the bridegroom to return

- all the patient endurance and perseverance...has paid off
- the church, all God's redeemed from OT and NT and church age, here it is at last
- the church has been preparing for this day, waiting for this day
- and now, it's finally time for the wedding
- the bride is ready

Let's see how the bride has been...

I. GETTING READY FOR THE WEDDING DAY

- this is not the final scene, where we are ultimately joined with Christ & other saints in heaven
- this is God, coming through His Son Jesus, to judge the unbelieving world
- and while the ungodly world mourns, God's people rejoice

1. Praising God's justice come at last, vv. 1–5

- Babylon is guilty of idolatry and gross immorality
- these are not just idle sins or an everyday variety
- her idolatry has led her to murder the saints who refuse to participate in her debaucheries
- her immorality has enabled her to entice the unbelieving world
- there has been nothing more corrupt, more damning than this great prostitute we call the world
- and now, that God's justice is rolling down like thunder, all heaven rejoices
- Babylon has profaned the holy and is about to pay the piper

2. What a relief this is to heaven and all the holy saints

- vv. 1–2
- Hallelujah—4x throughout passage
- only place this word, which occurs frequently in the Old, occurs in entire NT
- all heaven rejoices to acknowledge God's great righteousness and justice
- His vengeance is now come upon those who tortured His saints
- those who endured so long under oppression are rewarded and vindicated at last

3. Do not worship alone

- v. 5 carries the call from the voice upon the throne—God Himself
- this is a call to worship
- no more lamentation
- no more asking, "How long, O Lord?"
- now is the time for God's people to lift up voices everywhere to praise Him
- the wedding day is just around the corner, figuratively speaking
- prepare yourselves by giving thanks, praising His holy name
- we hear this line also: "you who fear Him"
- will there be reason to fear God on this, our wedding day?
- yes, and always, for we will always bow before Him
- we will always acknowledge that He is the Creator and we still but creatures
- we will be in awe of Him constantly, in purity and holiness
- and it is this fear which kept us from following and falling with Babylon

4. Behold, the Bridegroom cometh

- vv 6–8 contain very little differences from vv. 1–5
- vv 1-5 open on praise to God for the salvation he achieved by judging Babylon
- vv. 6–8 focus upon the praise God receives for His reign and the marriage of the Lamb

- we hear the fourth Hallelujah in these three verses
- God is praised because He reigns
- we've known this from the very beginning of this book of Revelation
- but now, as God comes to judge all who have stood against Him, we truly see it
- now, God will put all things right, the world will be remade as it is meant to be
- in v. 7, we see this gloriously depicted in the marriage of the Lamb to His Bride, the church
- there have been glimpses and shadows of this throughout the Bible
- at Sinai, God married Israel to Himself
- when she proved endlessly unfaithful, the prophets declared her adultery
- God promised to make a new covenant with His people
- Hosea 2.14–23 speaks of that new covenant as a new wedding
- Jesus spoke of Himself as the Bridegroom (Matthew 9.14, 15)
- He talked of the great wedding feast (Matthew 22.1–4)
- we were warned to be ready for that day of the Bridegroom's coming (Matthew 25.1–13)

5. Great will be the rejoicing on that day!

- the language used here in Rev. 19 is so joyous, filled with exclamations of praise
- eternal happiness is arriving with Jesus our Bridegroom
- so much praise, so much glory shines from this point on to the end of the book
- the world in all its sinful opposition to God & His people has taken its best shot
- all of it has failed to overthrow God
- now we see it bringing in the marvelous ending

6. Have you said “yes” to the dress?

- v. 8 says, “it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”
- Jesus has the garment ready; we can't get ourselves ready for this day
- to be dressed appropriately for this wedding is going to require we be provided with something
- we need the perfect righteousness of another, the righteousness of Christ
- this grace given to us will also go to work IN us so we can put this dress on
- **Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.**

(Colossians 3:12–14 ESV)

- we are given the dress, but we must then put it on, wear it humbly, yet confidently in Christ
- those robes, wedding robes, have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb
- now, rest assured that we have been given absolutely everything we need to do just this
- **Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**

(Philippians 2:12–13 ESV)

- **His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.**

(2 Peter 1:3–4 ESV)

- Jesus is working to save us, to sanctify us, to present us holy to the Father

- Jesus never fails...never
- this is why v. 9 is so precious
- **And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.”**

(Revelation 19:9 ESV)

- this is the joy of our lives
- this is what holds us in the dark times, when life just seems to wash over us
- this is the future that awaits us, the hope that anchors us when the world seems so awful
- are you getting your dress prepared for the wedding feast?

Now, let's why we should be...

II. TALKING ABOUT THE BRIDEGROOM ALL THE TIME

- in v. 10, we see John so overwhelmed with the glory & beauty of this vision, he worships
- but he worship wrongly
- I suppose it's easy to understand
- John has been so caught up in all that he has seen
- the worship, the singing, the praising in heaven have moved him powerfully
- he, too, realizes he must worship God for His great glory and justice
- he falls at the feet of the angel who has made all this known to him
- this angel, however, is just the messenger
- he bears good news, just like John does as he writes these things down & delivers them to the churches
- the angel holds to the testimony of Jesus just like John does
- and this is what the faithful do: they hold to the testimony of Jesus and worship God
- this means you simply cannot stop talking about Jesus to anyone who will listen
- now, what is depicted here in ch. 19 is not the actual wedding day
- we have to peek ahead to see that
- **And I 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 the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.**

(Revelation 21:2–3 ESV)

- when that day comes, when at last we stand before our Bridegroom, Jesus the Lamb
- oh, what a day of rejoicing that will be
- it will be worth it all—every moment, every joy, every heartache, every no to temptation

Conclusion – Keeping pure until the wedding

- the vividness of the pictures in ch. 17–19 reveal what this world is like
- they have shown that all who love this world should expect nothing but wrath
- if even one of you should refuse to leave this world & her loves
- all her idolatries and adulteries—you will undergo the very wrath of God

We live in Babylon

- we shop in her supermarkets
- we wear her clothes
- we benefit from her privileges

But we must ask ourselves some hard questions at this point:

Have I allowed myself to be seduced by this world?
What does she offer me that threatens to entice me away from Christ?
Are there areas in which I've compromised because I love them more than God?
Have I been afraid of man, losing my job, losing customers, or friends because of the world?
Are there things in my life—house, car, boat, job, status—that I would feel like I can't go on living without if there were taken from me?
What ideas, images, dreams of this world have become so much a part of my thinking, feeling, dreaming that I do not even recognize them as dangerously worldly?

Are you living like you believe this world is passing away?

We must, day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, love Christ more
Way back in ch 1, we were commanded to hear and keep these words
How are you doing at that?
Are you finding a growing love for Jesus is crowding out love for this world?
Or do you find it happening the other way around?

One day, after all the preparing, all the persevering, all the waiting

Our Bridegroom will come for us
The wedding day will be here
Will you be found in the proper dress clothes for this event?
All who have this hope will purify themselves, even as He is pure

So, let's love Him with all our souls, all our hearts, all our strength, all our minds.