

Session 3 The Bridegroom God and the End-Time Prayer Movement

Please refer to the teaching notes for this message.

INTRODUCTION

Tonight I want to talk about the very significant and dynamic relationship between the end-time prayer movement and the revelation of Jesus as the Bridegroom God.

This is not a casual relationship. It's a very dynamic one. It's growing so fast in the earth, just as the Scriptures said that it would. We're in that hour of history where what the Scriptures said about the end-time prayer movement and worship movement is coming to pass; we're at the beginning of it and it's growing so fast—but here is the point I want to make with this teaching: those in the end-time worship movement who want to go deeply must take time to meditate and encounter Jesus as the Bridegroom God: not just Jesus, the King with power, but the Jesus, the God with desire, the God of emotions, whose desire is deeply invested in His relationship with us.

It has to be more than just a doctrine. We all buy into Jesus, the Bridegroom God, but the problem is that sometimes it remains just an idea instead of becoming a continual experience. Worship leaders will only go so far without encountering Jesus, the God of desire—the Bridegroom God—and Jesus, the King—the God with power. Singers will only go so far; preachers will only go so far; intercessors will only go so far. The only way to fullness is by going deep in this reality. Again, it's not just the rhetoric, but the actual, living experience.

THE FIRST AREA OF THE KINGDOM TO COME TO FULLNESS IS THE WORSHIP MOVEMENT

Paragraph A. Before the Lord returns, the Holy Spirit is raising up the greatest worship movement in human history. Of course the prayer that Jesus taught us is, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Mt. 6:10). That's been a prayer for 2,000 years: the prayer that the kingdom would break forth on the earth like it is in heaven.

The first area of the kingdom which will come to fullness will be the worship movement. The worship movement will come to a place of fullness right at the time of the coming of the Lord. It will be the most mature area of the kingdom, which will break into higher heights of the heavenly dimension than any other dimension of the kingdom. That will be the realm which intersects with heaven first, at the highest level, in the generation of the Lord's return. When I say “first area,” I mean that worship will go to the highest level of heaven and earth coming together.

This isn't a small thing; it's a really major point on God's agenda. It's also on the devil's agenda: to create a counterfeit worship movement in order to undermine this dynamic worship movement which is happening in the earth right now. We're at the beginning of the beginning of it. There are many components. In order to go deep in worship it's absolutely critical to understand the many dimensions of Jesus as the Bridegroom God.

A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS

Paragraph B. Isaiah 56:7. This is the Lord speaking. If you read the whole context, you'll see that *them* means the outcasts, the Gentile outcasts, the unbelievers who get converted. “Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and even them”—the unbelieving Gentiles; this is talking about us, who have been converted—“I will make joyful in My house of prayer” (Isa 56:7, paraphrased).

Then this is followed by the dynamic statement God makes in Isaiah 56:7: “For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Isa. 56:7b, NKJV). Here ‘s the point: God calls the people of God, the redeemed throughout history and even in the age to come, “the house of prayer.” That’s one of our primary identities forever. The house of prayer isn’t just something we do until the Lord returns. We will be functioning in the house of prayer for billions of years. If you’re a “house of prayer” guy, you have job security beyond anything you can imagine. If you’re doing harp and bowl, you have job security. However, when we do the heavenly version, it will be a lot better than what we do here. We’re in the early days.

Now what does it mean to be the house of prayer? Here is the simplest definition of what it means to be the house of prayer. I’m talking about the identity of the believers to be called the house of prayer by God. When God calls you something, that describes how you function in the Holy Spirit. When He says, “You’re the house of prayer,” He’s saying, “People of God, forever—in time and eternity—you’ll function in the Holy Spirit by being a house of prayer.”

GOD SPEAKS AND MOVES OUR HEART; WE SPEAK AND MOVE HIS HEART

Here’s what it means to be a house of prayer: God speaks and moves our heart. Then we speak and move His heart. Then He opens His hand and releases His resource to the earth. That is what it means to be the house of prayer.

God speaks and says, “I love you! I love you!”

We say, “Ah.”

He says, “I want to move in power.”

We say, “Yes.”

Then we take the “I love you and I want to move in power,” and speak it back to God, saying, “God, we love You. Release Your power!”

We speak and it moves His heart. Then He opens His hand and releases His resource into the earthly realm, in this age and the age to come. That is what it means to be the house of prayer.

Paragraph C. This is important to clarify. We’re a ministry called “the house of prayer.” That’s a little unfortunate because it can create confusion. The house of prayer is the entire body of Christ in any city or region. The house of prayer of Kansas City is not IHOP–KC. The house of prayer in Kansas City consists of 1,000 congregations. It consists of every born-again believer together. We’re the house of prayer. Twenty-four-hour prayer ministries are like little gas stations, which take a little cup of gasoline and throw it on the prayer furnaces of our city. God will raise up ministries focused on prayer, but they aren’t the house of prayer in their area. They’re catalytic ministries to encourage prayer in their geographic area. The whole body of Christ in your city is the house of prayer, not the house-of-prayer ministry you’re involved in. That’s just a catalytic ministry which is to be a blessing to that city and region.

Paragraph D. It’s important that we understand God’s order of worship in heaven. God has thought this thing through thoroughly. How many of you know God thought it through thoroughly? He started, if you will, with a

white canvas. There was nothing on it. He created a worship order which was after His own heart. It's as if He said, "Now this is a worship order I like."

Before the angels and before the redeemed were ever created, God had a clear desire of how He wanted to be worshiped. In heaven, there's a worship order which is after His own heart, and the prayer is that it would be released on earth as it is in heaven.

MUSIC IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE WORSHIP ORDER IN HEAVEN FOREVER

Number one: the worship order around the throne is continual. Number two: it's musical. I could put ten things here, but I just wanted to mention that it's continual and that it's musical, because a lot of people who embrace the prayer mandate struggle with the music dimension of the prayer mandate.

As a matter of fact, I remember when I first began having daily prayer meetings. Music was so much fun and so enjoyable, I thought it was cheating. I caught people smiling in the prayer room. I thought the only thing that mattered was that Rambo thing, "Devil come out or I'm coming in after you!" and everybody screaming at the devil and wearing themselves out. If we were tired and exhausted, that meant it had been a good prayer meeting. Then we introduced music and it was so much fun and so enjoyable. This was years ago.

I tell you, music is part of God's order. That may be normal to your mindset, but to people living around the earth, this isn't automatic; it's not a given.

I remember when we first started the house of prayer here, twelve years ago. Different people would visit and the music and intimacy dimension troubled them. They were radical intercessors.

They said, "This music and this 'I love You,' come on, let's get real."

I said, "No, that really is the worship order in heaven. This is after God's own heart."

I could put a lot of other things here like the fact that the worship order of heaven is God-centered. It's about God. It's about what God is like and what He does. Worship around the throne is like that, but it's also musical. The worship around the throne declares the indescribable beauty and worth of God. God is raising up a worship movement on the earth which is doing the same thing.

WORSHIP CAN TRANSFORM THE VERY ATMOSPHERE OF A CITY OR REGION

There are a number of things that happen in worship and intercession. One thing is that the spiritual atmosphere of a city and a region changes; the spiritual atmosphere of the city or region for which you pray changes. What I mean by that is that demons are pushed back and angels move forward and the Spirit of God moves in greater abundance. That's a spiritual reality. When we pray and worship, demons are driven back, angels are released, and there's a greater release of the grace of God on our labors. That's what I mean by the spiritual atmosphere being changed. If we pray more, the spiritual atmosphere is changed. Therefore the preaching of the gospel and the works of the kingdom are more effective and more powerful. The same cup of cold water that moved one person now will move ten people, because there's a greater anointing being released in that geographic area.

There's another dimension of worship which isn't just cause and effect. It's not just that it changes the spiritual atmosphere. That's powerful, but worship is also a witness on the earth. When people worship continually—I

don't mean they have to do it 24/7—whenever worship is offered hours at a time, it's a witness on the earth of the indescribable worth of Jesus.

I tell you, the truth about His greatness demands expression. Jesus said that if people don't say it, the rocks will cry out. He said in effect, "The truth of My greatness must be proclaimed." Not because it satisfies His ego, but because the truth of such greatness must be stated because it's the truth. That is why it must be stated. Jesus didn't have an ego problem, saying, "If you guys won't worship Me, I will raise up the rocks to do it." No, the glory of who He is, the truth of it, demands expression. When we worship, even apart from changing the spiritual atmosphere, it's a witness to the worth of the Lamb on the earth.

It pleases the Father in heaven to see people testifying to the worth of Jesus and to His renown and His greatness. It's as if the Father says, "Yes, this is what touches My heart," and it moves the heart of the Holy Spirit.

ISAIAH WROTE MORE ABOUT THE END-TIME WORSHIP MOVEMENT THAN ANYONE

Paragraph F. This is an important one. Isaiah wrote more on the end-time prayer and worship movement than any other person in the Bible. If someone says to you, "Where in the Bible does it talk about the end-time worship movement?" the book of Isaiah has more material than any other place; I just want you to know that. As you study Isaiah, you're going to get more information about what is ahead, related to worship and intercession, than any other book in the Bible—even more than the book of Revelation in terms of the earthly dimension of the prayer and worship movement.

When I talk about the prayer and worship movement, I use those terms interchangeably. It's worship and prayer, prayer and worship, and to be technical, prayer and worship are really just agreement with God. That's really what they are. In intercession, we agree with what God promised to do. God said, "I will release power."

We agree with it and say, "Release Your power." Worship is agreement with who God is: "You're holy. You're good. You're loving." In intercession we agree with what God said He would do. In prayer we agree with who God says He is. Whether we're agreeing with His hand—with what He's going to do—or with His heart—with who He is—worship and prayer are really just agreement with God.

WHETHER YOU INTERCEDE OR WORSHIP, YOU'RE AGREEING WITH HIS HEART

The reason I say this is because through the years some folks have said that they want more worship and less intercession. Other people want less intercession and more worship. I've heard the different appeals through the twelve years of IHOP–KC. I say, "I don't care. I don't care if we intercede more or worship more, because either way they're both just agreement with God." One is agreement with His hand—with what He said He would do; and the other is agreement with His heart—with who He is. Agree! Agree! Agree! I don't care what the percentage is; just agree with heaven and that's what releases the power. God is so nice and so kind that if you say it all wrong, He gets it. The throne of grace isn't the throne of literary accuracy. We come to the throne of grace.

The guy says, "Well, they're worshipping too much and there isn't enough prayer."

I say, "Oh, just be quiet. You know how it really works? You go to a prayer meeting, you're down, and you say, 'Ugh, in the name of Jesus.' He hears the prayer of the prisoner; really!"

You groan and say, “Ugh!”

The guy says, “What was that?”

I say, “I don’t know.”

The Holy Spirit says, “I get it! I get it! In Jesus name, do it Lord!” He really does understand our spirit.

The reason I’m saying this—I’m actually being sincere—is because it’s the groan of the prisoner. It’s the reaching of our spirit to agree with Him; that’s what He cares about, not that we do it perfectly.

HE DOESN’T JUST HAVE POWER TO RULE; HE HAS DESIRE TO RELATE

Paragraph F: Isaiah. This is the handbook, of course. It describes the earthly dimension of the prayer movement, much as the book of Revelation describes the heavenly dimension. Of course you have to throw in the Psalms. I guess I’m not counting the Psalms. I’m thinking of Isaiah as one of the prophets, but the Psalms have more about the prayer movement than any other book of the Bible. Among the prophets, Isaiah has more references to the worship and prayer movement than anyone else.

Here’s what Isaiah says. He prophesied of a worship movement that would stand before a Bridegroom God. This is 700 years before the birth of Jesus, 2,700 years ago. He was talking about the Messiah as a Bridegroom 2,700 years ago. This threw off some of the people in Israel. It’s as if they said, “The Messiah as a Bridegroom? No! He is a King. He has power.”

Isaiah said, “Yes, but He’s a bridegroom and He has desire. He doesn’t just have power to rule, He has desire to relate.”

WHAT DAVID DID IN JERUSALEM WILL HAPPEN IN THE CITIES OF THE EARTH

A lot of people know a little about the King who has power to rule, but they have little insight about the Bridegroom who has desire to relate deeply to His people.

Isaiah came along and said that this end-time worship movement would grow before a bridegroom God. People would be talking to a bridegroom king. He said it would be musical; He said it would be continuous. He said the end-time worship movement would be global, not just in Jerusalem. David had a continuous musical worship movement in Jerusalem, but 300 years after David, Isaiah said, “It’s going to go far beyond David.”

David was locked into only one place. The end-time movement will be international. It will be global. What David did in Jerusalem will happen in the cities of the earth. This was radical. I mean, they would have said, “Isaiah, you can’t worship continuously with prophetic music in these ways except in Jerusalem.”

Isaiah said, “No, this will be in the islands of the earth, in the far and out-of-the-way places, and on the mountaintops.”

Isaiah said it would inspire missionary outreach. He said that the worship movement would be dynamically related to the release of power so that the Gospel would go forth. He said that it would be relational and that we would be more than workers for a king, but we would be in deep relationship with a bridegroom.

LOVERS WILL OUTWORK WORKERS EVERY TIME

How many of you know God wants more than workers? He wants more than a work force. He wants us to work with Him, but He called us to love before He called us to work. They don't contradict each other in our paradigm. A lot of people want to get anointed to work. That's good; that's biblical, but we're anointed first to love. The first commandment is first. The first commandment is not, "You shall work yourself to total exhaustion." That's not what the first commandment is. It's not, "You shall work with all your strength until you drop." The first commandment is, "You shall love with all your strength."

We do work diligently. I'm not minimizing work, but the only paradigm some people have of God is that He's a God who is raising up a workforce and not a God who's raising up a bride. That's a really different concept of God.

Isaiah and Hosea were contemporaries; they lived in the same generation. They were the first ones to declare this. They said, "He's more than a King with power who desires to rule. He's a bridegroom with desire who desires to relate." Wow!

Paragraph F. Isaiah said that we would sing before the Bridegroom God. That's amazing. He's the Bridegroom King, but I want to focus on the Bridegroom because we understand the King a little; not very much, but a little—and when we truly see the King, we will understand that we didn't really understand the King.

SINGING BEFORE THE BRIDEGROOM OPENS AND EMPOWERS OUR HEARTS

Singing before the Bridegroom is singing which reveals love and imparts love. When you sing before the God whom you believe, loves you, your spirit opens up in a different way. If you sing before the God who is going to employ you in a work force, you sing differently than before the God who reveals love and imparts love. Your spirit opens up differently. It's critical that we teach the Bridegroom God related to the prayer movement.

Again, I have a bunch of friends through the years who are somewhat tripped up by the Bridegroom teaching. I say, "It wasn't my idea; it's in the Bible."

It's God's idea, because that's the nature of who He is; not just since the cross and resurrection, but that's who He is forever. He didn't *become* a bridegroom; He has the heart of a bridegroom from eternity past. He is all-consuming love.

MUSIC UNITES GOD'S PEOPLE

Well, Isaiah said that the musical dimension wasn't just going to be in Jerusalem with David's group. Isaiah lived 300 years after David, when the musical worship was all in one building. This musical thing is going to go global.

Why musical? Well, one reason is that the human spirit is musical. The Holy Spirit is musical. Did you know that Jesus is the greatest singer and musician, the greatest Man who ever sang and played an instrument? I'm trying to say that He has more musical abilities than anyone who ever walked the earth. He's an awesome singer, a great song writer, and a really good musician. David was just a prophetic picture and a token of the greater David. Do you think that David was a good musician? The One who inspired him is far better than David.

MUSIC IS GOD’S WAY OF BRINGING HIS FAMILY TOGETHER

There’s something about music in the human design that touches our spirit like nothing else does. You can say, “I love You, I love You,” but when you sing, “I love you,” with anointed music, it touches the depths of your heart beyond anything else. Not only does it touch us in a deeper way, but music unifies us. What I mean by that is that you can have a stadium of 100,000 people, and the guy can say, “God loves you,” and out of 100,000 people, a certain percentage will pay attention and feel it for a moment. Then it will pass and many of them won’t even catch it. However, if you take that stadium of 100,000 people and you sing, “God loves you,” you can go on for hours and the whole 100,000 will feel the same thing at the same time for hours.

Music unifies the people of God. It’s a very dynamic way in which God brings His family together to feel the same thing while talking together to the same Person. Preaching can’t produce that, but music can—100,000 people feeling the same thing, while singing the same thing to the same Man at the right hand of the Father—that’s what music does. The Father wants music, prophetic music.

WORKING TOGETHER IN GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS FOR CONTINUAL INTERCESSION

Paragraph G. This is just a brief summary. I want to equip you to go and say this wherever you go, meaning, you don’t have to say it word for word, but I want to get these words into your mouth. So when you go forth to teach Bible studies or disciple a young high school kid, do an outreach or start a house of prayer or church or go back to the marketplace when you go back home, I would like these words and ideas to be in your mouth. That’s why we’re doing this class. I just summarized it a little.

We have leaders visiting us all the time; they say, “What about this prayer thing?”

I say, “Let me just give it to you really quickly. God wants us to work together in geographic areas for continual intercession. The intercession doesn’t have to be all in one building.”

They say, “OK.”

Did you know that twenty-four-seven prayer has been happening in Kansas City long before we started it? We have it in one building, but it has been going on in this city for decades. At 2:00pm someone is crying out. At 2:30pm someone is groaning before God. At 4:00pm some guy is worried and in anxiety saying, “Oh God, help me.” It’s not organized in one building, but twenty-four-hour prayer has been happening in our city for a long time. The thing that gets us excited is that we do it in one building.

REGIONAL INTERCESSION

God is so smart, He sees everything. He sees it all over geographic areas. People come and visit. They say, “We want to do twenty-four/seven prayer.”

I say, “I have good news: it’s already happening in your city.”

They say, “Where? What building?”

I say, “It isn’t in one building. Your city has eight million people. I guarantee you that someone is praying every minute of every day.”

They say, “That isn’t what we mean. We want it all in one building.”

I say, “I appreciate that, but don’t think twenty-four-hour prayer starts because it starts in your building.”

REVIVING THE CHURCH, WINNING THE LOST, AND IMPACTING SOCIETY

When I encourage people to work together for continuous intercession, I don’t mean in one place, I mean in a region, so that it comes forth from a region in greater measure and with greater focus. It needs to come forth with prophetic music and worship with intimacy and it needs to fulfill the Great Commission. What I mean by that is that continuous intercession is to revive the Church, win the lost—the harvest—and impact every area of society. That’s transformation. The Great Commission involves all three of those spheres. We want to revive the Church, win the lost, and impact society. Those are the three spheres in which we want to see the power of God go forth in corporate ways.

This is a very important sentence here in the middle of paragraph G, if you want to say it really simply. A leader comes to me and says, “OK, how do you do this? I want to know about prayer.”

I could tell them ten things they need to know about prayer, but I break it down to three simple things. I say, “You need to have prayer for missions with music from intimacy.”

They say, “What?”

I say, “If you do those three things, everything else will take care of itself.”

You need to have prayer for missions. I mean, many people have prayer meetings just for personal circumstances to get better. They take turns praying for each other, for this guy to get money, that guy to get healed, and this guy to get a new job. That’s OK, but I say, “You have to bring it up a notch from just praying for personal needs to praying for missions, for the breakthrough of the Gospel in your geographic area.”

For some people that’s a standard procedure, and they say, “Yes, I get that.” Other people say, “I never even thought about that: a breakthrough for a spirit of revival.” It has to be for missions. I don’t mean every prayer, but in the mix.

START WITH ONE OR TWO SINGERS, AND THE SPIRIT WILL FLOW

It has to be with music. I say, “You get one broken-string guitar and an off key singer. You just start with one, and a little while later you’ll have two and someone will fix the string. A little while later you’ll get three. Start with one. Don’t wait until you get the band. Get music in that prayer room with three people and eventually you’ll have two instruments and then three and four.” Again, someone will fix that broken string before long.

It has to be with music. Leaders, I say it doesn’t have to be, but this is where God is bringing the Church. If you want to win young people, you need to get music in it. Once they start, even though the music may be all out of tune and off-key, eventually it will get sorted out and anointed. It will be prophetic. Just give it time.

I remember I made this statement back in the 1980s. I’m not a singer or a musician. They won’t let me sing, play or dance, at least not on the stage. They’ll let me do it at home, but not in public. I’ve failed every single audition. I went to the room and they said no.

I said, “I haven’t even tried.”

They said, “Just go.” That’s actually true. That sounds cute, but it’s actually true.

“IN ALL OF THY GETTING, GET PROPHETIC SINGERS!”

Here’s my point. I’m not a singer, I’m not a musician, and I’m not a whole bunch of things, but God gave me a burden for this even back as early as 1985. I used to say this saying all the time. I had no idea all this would happen, though some prophetic guy said it would. I couldn’t quite picture it. I used to say this phrase all the time and I want you to say it.

I would say, “Pastors, whatever you get, get prophetic singers.”

They would say, “What?”

I would say, “Whatever you do in your little church or megachurch, whatever else you do—buildings, technology, leadership, outreach, home groups, children’s ministry—in all of thy getting, get prophetic singers.”

They used to say, “What do you mean?”

I would say, “I don’t have very many, but I know from the Bible that if you get prophetic singers, everything else will follow in its wake. In all of thy getting, get prophetic singers. Get two of them who can’t even flow and just get them going. They will start flowing in the next months or years. They will start flowing in time. In all of thy getting, get prophetic singers. Before you get buildings and this, that, and the other, pay for singers to sing; find just a few of them and the fire will spread.”

PROPHETIC SINGING IS A DYNAMIC ELEMENT OF WHAT GOD WANTS FOR HIS CHURCH

That’s just something the Lord burned in my heart back in the mid-1980s. We used to put energy into getting prophetic singers. The reason I’m saying this is that I want to impact you with the importance of this reality. It’s not a small thing. It doesn’t just make the prayer meetings a little more fun; it’s a dynamic element of what God wants: worship after His own heart.

The end-time worship movement is absolutely at the top of God’s agenda. I mean, the harvest and the worship movement, put them both together: there’s nothing more important than the end-time worship movement. It’s so important that the devil will be counterfeiting it in the great conflict in the generation of the Lord’s return. The great conflict will be between two houses of prayer. That’s the conflict which will come to a head when Jesus appears in the sky. It will be the conflict between two houses of prayer. That’s the battleground in the Spirit.

“AND THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, ‘COME!’”

Top of page two. Now John prophesied of the Spirit’s work in such a precise way in Revelation 22. We all know the verse: Revelation 22:17. There are so many implications to this verse. Revelation 22 is one of the most informative and significant prophecies describing the end-time church. John tells us what will happen in the generation of the Lord’s return. It starts off in verse 12 where Jesus says, “I’m coming” (Rev. 22:12, paraphrased). Then in verse 16, Jesus describes Himself in four ways. He says, “I am the Root and the Offspring of David. I am the Bright and Morning Star” (v. 16, paraphrased).

The revelation of Jesus in verse 16 leads to verse 17: “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 the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).

Then Jesus speaks again, “Surely, I am coming quickly,” and John cries out, “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

THAT WHICH THE SPIRIT IS SAYING AND DOING, THE CHURCH WILL DO AND SAY

Paragraph B. There are so many implications to this verse. We’re only going to touch two. This verse describes the end-time church in deep unity with the Spirit. In the generation of the Lord’s return, the Church will be saying and doing what the Spirit is saying and doing. They’re both saying and doing the same thing in this verse. This is miraculous. In the most ultimate way, that which the Spirit is saying, the Church will be saying.

Beloved, it has been a long time since the Church has, in a complete and comprehensive way, been in sync with what the Spirit is saying and doing. Probably the last time that was totally true was on the day of Pentecost and a few weeks afterwards. That was about it. Since then parts of the Church have been out of sync. Before the Lord returns, the entire Church worldwide will be saying what the Spirit is saying, and doing what the Spirit is doing.

The question is: what is the Spirit saying? He’s revealing the Church as the Bride of Christ. That’s one of the things John highlights. By this verse, we understand that the Spirit is going to be wooing the Church to this revelation of Jesus the Bridegroom and herself as the Bride of Christ. That’s what He’s saying to the Church. That isn’t the only thing He’s saying, but it’s a key thing which is implied by this prophecy.

Number one. What is the Holy Spirit doing? He’s interceding. He’s crying, “Come!” It’s not just the Church saying, “Come!” The Spirit is saying, “Come!” The Spirit is interceding, too. I want to be doing what the Spirit is doing. I assure you that in the generation in which the Lord returns, the Spirit will be interceding for Jesus to come.

I tell leaders who visit, “Whatever you do, in all thy getting, get prophetic singers, for real! No matter what other thing you do in your church, get your people to see themselves as a bride before a bridegroom; get them saying, ‘Come, Lord Jesus,’ and build prayer meetings.”

This is what the Spirit is doing in the final description of His activity right before the Lord returns. He’s revealing the Bride and He’s interceding for Jesus to break in with power. I say that He’s doing more than that, but beloved, you want to do what He is doing.

To sum it up here in paragraph one, the Holy Spirit reveals how the Church will function. The Church will be anointed. She will be saying and doing what the Spirit says and does. She will be in unity with the Spirit. Beloved, Jesus isn’t coming for a Church out of sync with Him. The Church will be anointed and in unity with His heart. She’s anointed a little now, but she’s going to be anointed a lot more before He returns. The Church is going to be engaged in intercession. She will be saying, “Come, Lord Jesus!” I don’t mean little pockets; I mean the Church worldwide. There are pockets right now, but those pockets are getting really big all over the earth.

THE TWOFOLD CRY OF THE SPIRIT AND CHURCH BEFORE THE LORD RETURNS

The Church is going to be established in a bridal identity. Right now only a small percentage of the Church is even reaching for this, but that number is growing dynamically. In the next ten, twenty, thirty years, if the Lord tarries—and I think He will—the whole Church will begin to be awakened to who she is as a bride before a bridegroom God.

The Church will be effective in the harvest. What I mean by this is that if you read the passage we just looked at carefully—paragraph two—the Church is actually crying, “Come!” in two different directions. Firstly, the Church is crying, “Come, Lord Jesus!” We’re asking Him to come. Secondly, the Church is calling the people to come to Jesus. You have to read it carefully to catch that. The cry is first, “Jesus, come to Your people”; and second, “People, come to Jesus.”

There’s a twofold “come” proclaimed here. The Spirit isn’t only saying “come” to Jesus; He’s also saying ‘come’ to the peoples of the earth. “Come to Him if you’re thirsty” (v. 17b, paraphrased).

Paragraph C. When we cry, “Come, Lord Jesus,” there are three applications. Right now we say “Come near us.” That’s intimacy—individual breakthrough of the heart. “Come, Lord Jesus, and touch me.” Some of you were doing that tonight. You said, “Come near me.” At other times we say, “Come to us.” We want revival in our city or nation, and we say, “Come to us in revival.”

Ultimately the prayer is this: “Come for us.” That will be a historic breakthrough when He comes in the clouds.

We don’t wait until the moment before the second coming. We cry, “Come, Lord Jesus,” now individually. We cry, “Come, Lord Jesus,” in the prayer room in order for revival and for the Great Commission to go forth.

One day we will say, “Come in an historic breakthrough.” We don’t say, “Hurry up with Your second coming.” That isn’t a prayer we pray right now, but before the Lord returns, that prayer will be anointed by the Holy Spirit.

THE UNIVERSAL EMPHASIS OF THE CHURCH’S IDENTITY IN THE LAST GENERATION

Paragraph D. This passage is describing the Holy Spirit’s universal emphasis on the Church’s identity as the Bride of Christ. This will be the first time in human history that the Holy Spirit will emphasize the bridal revelation universally. The Holy Spirit spoke to a few prophets and said, “He’s a bridegroom God.” He spoke to a few apostles saying, “He’s a Bridegroom God.” A few groups throughout history have seen this, but it has always been a very small percentage.

There have always been a few people somewhere who saw this throughout church history. In the generation of the Lord’s return, for the first time, universally—meaning worldwide—the whole Church will say, “Come,” as a Bride. She will say, “Come, Lord Jesus,” with a bride’s heart.

Notice, it’s not the Spirit and the family saying, “Come, Lord Jesus!” It doesn’t say, “The Spirit and the family cry out in intercession, saying, ‘Come, Lord Jesus!’” It’s not the Spirit and the family. It’s not the Spirit and the army—though we are the army of God. It’s not the Spirit and the kingdom, or the Spirit and the priesthood. It’s not the Spirit and the body; it’s the Spirit and the bride which the Spirit will emphasize.

Our eternal identity is that we're the family of God forever. We're the Body of Christ forever, etc. There's one part of our identity that the Spirit has never emphasized in all of history until the final generation of the Lord's return. He's going to pull out the revelation of the Bridegroom God and reveal it to one or two billion believers across the earth. It's going to take the Body of Christ by storm in the most positive sense.

We know a little that we're the family, we know a little that we're the Body of Christ, and we know a little that we're the kingdom. We have a lot more to learn, of course. Knowing who we are as the cherished Bride isn't understood by the Body of Christ. It's as if the Spirit says, "Believe Me, I will see to it that the whole Church understands it before He returns."

Revelation 19. Jesus is coming for a wedding. He's coming to bring us to a wedding. What a tragedy if He comes for the Bride and we say, "Who is the Bride?"

The angels say, "Well, you are!"

"Oh, oh, I didn't know that. Wow, cool!"

He isn't coming for a Bride who doesn't know she's a bride. There will be certain tensions and dynamics in the earth—I'm talking about sin, the occult, oppression—in which only the intimacy dimension will guard our hearts and fascinate our spirits. That's a very strategic revelation which will actually protect us and keep us holy and fascinated with God. It's the revelation of His desire for us, and not just His power.

AS SONS, WE HAVE ACCESS TO HIS THRONE; AS THE BRIDE, ACCESS TO HIS HEART

Paragraph E. As sons of God, we're in a position to experience His throne. We're heirs of power. As the Bride of Christ, we're in a position to experience His heart. Both men and women are sons of God and the Bride of Christ. As sons, we have access to His throne. As the Bride, we have access to His heart.

Paragraph F. This is another important paragraph to learn. I'm giving the briefest summary of what the Bride of Christ message is. It's such a simple, brief summary. Here it is. The Bridegroom message is this. Number one: Jesus' emotions for us. Number two: His beauty—which is different than His emotions. His emotions exhilarate us in love; His beauty fascinates our spirit.

The Bridegroom message is more than that. It's the commitments He has made to us to share His heart, His home, His throne, His secrets, and His beauty. He has made commitments to us as a bridegroom God.

THE BRIDAL MESSAGE BEGINS WITH EXPERIENCING THE DEEP THINGS OF HIS HEART

It doesn't end with the revelation of Jesus' emotions and the revelation of His beauty and commitments. Notice, it's also our response of wholeheartedness back to Him; that's the Bridegroom message. That's the Bride of Christ message in a very simple way. Someone might ask you, "I want to get the bridal dimension into my prayer, but what is it? What does it mean?" Take paragraph F and you can add to it. It's not complete, but it's a good beginning point. It begins with experiencing the deep things of His heart, His emotions, His desire, and His affection. It's the revelation of how He feels about us. It's more than the power He shows towards us; it's how He feels about us.

As I say every time—and I know you don't need to hear it anymore; you've already heard it five or six times, but we must say it over and over and over; I want this to get on your lips: we must refuse all sensual overtones of Jesus as the Bridegroom God. I tell some of the young ladies that Jesus isn't your boyfriend and He isn't your lover. He reveals His heart to you. It's not about a boyfriend, a lover, or a husband. There are no sensual overtones in this relationship.

King David saw the heart of God. That's what the Bridegroom message is. Guys, you don't have to put on a dress and make pink your favorite color to be a "Bride of Christ" guy. I taught the Song of Solomon some years ago. Years ago—I'm talking about twenty years ago—the bookstore brought out the series with a little, pink dress with flowers on the cover. I said, "Get rid of all that! I want the warrior King David on the cover of that series!" I mean, pink is cool and flowers are cool, but we're not being called to that.

Paragraph G. I want you to study paragraph G a little on your own. Look at the second sentence. Ponder this. He delights in us. Just hear this: He enjoys us. He values our work as a bridegroom values the work of the bride. He's a bridegroom who understands and flows in truth, and who values the work of His bride; not just that she's pretty, but He values her heart. He wants to work with her and hear from her. He wants to talk with her and He wants her to contribute. He's committed to her greatness. It makes your life dynamic to touch this.

Again, it's more than rhetoric. It's more than just you learning to say, "Bride of Christ, Bride of Christ, I'm fascinated with God; now I've got the message." No, we need to experience this at the heart level; not just once at a worship service. We need to touch these realities, not necessarily all day and every day, but regularly throughout the weeks and months. It will change the way we carry our spirit. It will change the way we look at pressure, it will change the way we look at ministry. It will change the way we look at sin when our spirit shifts by being impacted by these truths.

"I AM THE ROOT AND THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID, THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR"

Top of page three. I'm only going to go here very briefly. I'm going to give this to you. Paragraph A. These are the four things Jesus says in Revelation 22:16, before that great verse we just looked at in Revelation 22:17: "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!'" It's the verse before, verse 16, which is critical in order to understand the cry, "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'"

In this verse Jesus reveals Himself in four different ways. In the first two titles—"I am the Root and the Offspring of David"—He reveals Himself as being fully God and fully Man. In the second two titles He reveals His ministry to us as the Bright Star and the Morning Star. Those two actually have a different nuance to them; understanding His nature as fully God and fully Man, and His ministry to us as God and Man. You want to understand verse 16.

SINGING BEFORE THE BRIDEGROOM GOD

Roman numeral IV. Singing before the Bridegroom God. Isaiah begins to reveal this revelation—Isaiah and his friend, Hosea. They were in the same generation; they were the first two to bring this revelation to the people of God. It's a shocking revelation. In Isaiah 54:5, Isaiah says, "Your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is His name" (Isa. 54:5). Again, they know that their Maker, their Creator, is the transcendent God. The Jews have such a high esteem of God that they won't say His name. "Your Maker is transcendent, He's out of reach": that's what they expected Isaiah to say, because Isaiah would say that.

He says, “Well, the transcendent Creator is actually your Husband. He created you for love.”

“What? The transcendent, out-of-reach God to whom we can’t draw near created us for love? He is a Husband? What does all this mean?”

It was a brand new idea. It really was. It was a shocking idea that He had desire for them: not just power over them, but desire for them.

BREAK FORTH INTO SINGING BEFORE THE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE PROMISES

Paragraph B. Here’s his point: Isaiah said in effect, “Before this Bridegroom God, this Husband God, you have to sing. Break forth into singing before the breakthrough of the promises.”

Everyone sings after the promises come true. What the people of God are called to do is to pray and sing before the revival happens. That’s called worship and intercession. Isaiah is describing the end-time worship movement in this context. Isaiah 54 is about the end-time worship movement. That isn’t the only thing it’s about. There’s going to be a singing movement before a bridegroom God which brings the promises of God to earth. There’s a worship movement which must sing before it sees the birthing of the promises.

Beloved, in all of thy getting, get prophetic singers. If you have a bit of money and you have a chance to get a building, pay some singers and get them singing. That’s what I would do with that money. If you only have a little money, get singers singing. I’m telling you, this is real.

Paragraph C. Isaiah 42. We just looked at Isaiah 54 and now we’re going to go back to Isaiah 42. This is going to hurt me, because I have to do this in thirty seconds. Isaiah 42 is my favorite passage on the second coming. It’s so dynamic. We’ll take a whole session on Isaiah 42, but this is just a little advertisement.

Isaiah 42:10. “Sing to the Lord a new song” (Isa. 42:10). Where? In Jerusalem only? No! In all the ends of the earth! Look at the five different areas Isaiah describes. The five areas where they will sing are really hard areas in which to get sound systems, worship sanctuaries, and people. All of these are hard areas.

THE WORSHIP MOVEMENT WILL INFILTRATE THE MOST INACCESSIBLE REACHES

Paragraph D. In verses 10-11, he lists these five challenging areas. He says, “Sing, you who go down to the sea and the islands” (Isa. 42:10, paraphrased). They’re fun to go to, but most of the islands of the earth are third world countries and they don’t have good sound systems; but they are going to have them before it’s over.

“Sing, you coastlands” (Isa. 42:10b, paraphrased). Well, they have the resources, but they have so many distractions and typically so much sin that they often don’t use the resources in righteous ways. There are other challenges in the big coastal areas. Most of the cities of the earth are on coastlands.

“Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voice” (Isa. 42:11). Go way out in the desert. Go far out in west Texas or Arizona or somewhere. There are going to be sound systems. There are going to be worship sanctuaries and people are going to be mobilized. Those are hard to get out there.

Look at this: Isaiah mentions the villages of Kedar and Sela. Those are Islamic villages. In Jordan and Saudi Arabia, in the little villages, there will be worship movements for Jesus. Not only are they Islamic villages, but they're little, out-of-the-way places.

You may say, "Back where I came from is a little out of the way. There are about 2,000 people."

This is an Islamic village with 2,000 people. There will be a house of prayer with people worshipping Jesus. I assure you it will happen. I cannot wait until I meet some guy from Kedar and Sela. I'm going to look at them and say, "Do you have any idea you made it into the Book? You're going to have a worship movement that made Holy Writ."

The next one is the hardest of all: the mountaintops. You go to a mountaintop. I don't mean halfway up the mountain where there's a ski resort; I mean all the way to the top where there's nothing. There are no houses, restrooms, sound systems, there's nothing. There will be worship gatherings at the very top of mountains worldwide in places that are hard to reach. It's as if the Holy Spirit is saying, "I'm so zealous for this."

Here's what happens when you read it in context. Look at verse 13: when the Lord hears this, He will go forth like a mighty man of war, and stir up His zeal like a man of war and cry out. This is describing the second coming. Jesus isn't coming in a vacuum; He's coming in response to a global, musical worship movement that fills the earth.

WE WILL LIFT UP OUR VOICES AND SING FOR THE MAJESTY OF THE LORD

Top of page four. This is the most intense passage. Isaiah has more than any other prophet, more than any one man, on the end-time worship movement. The Psalms have the most, but there are many writers. David talked on worship, but on the end-time worship movement only a few times. Isaiah talks on it more than any single man in the Bible.

In Isaiah 24-27, there's a whole lot. This is one unit all jam-packed. Put your seat belt on before you read Isaiah 24-27, because it's intense stuff. It's about the end-time glory of God, the troubles, the judgment of God, the rage of Satan, the power of God, and the worship movement—Isaiah 24-27, put your seat belt on!

Here's what it says in Isaiah 24:14: "They will lift their voice, they will sing, for the majesty, the beauty of the Lamb of God" (Isa. 24:14, paraphrased). They will sing of His beauty from the ends of the earth. The songs will go forth. Isaiah couldn't get off this subject. It's in the context of the end times. Again, we will take a whole session on this as well. This is just an overview tonight.

WE WILL DECLARE HIS WORDS AND THE ENEMY WILL BE ROUTED

Paragraph F. Isaiah 59, I'm not even going to start. It's awesome. I'm out of time, but it's awesome. Read it on your own. It's about the prayer movement releasing the glory of God in the earth. The prayer movement is mentioned in verse 21. You might not catch it when you read it. "This is My covenant," the Lord says: "My Spirit will be in you, I will put My words in your mouth" (v. 21, paraphrased). Beloved, that's worship and intercession. You'll declare His words and the enemy will be routed.

Paragraph G. We're coming to the end. Isaiah 62. We're going to take a session on this. Isaiah puts it all together in chapter 62. In verse 4, the Lord says to the people of God, "You shall be called Hephzibah" (Isa.

62:4). *Hephzibah* means, “The Lord delights in you.” Your name is going to be, “The Lord likes you.” That’s going to be your name. That’s how you’ll function best in the Spirit if you line up with that name. Your name isn’t, “You’re on probation.” It’s not, “You’re under condemnation and on probation.” Your name is, “God really enjoys you.” This will shift your spirit in a dramatic way.

He brings it up a notch in verse 5: “In the way a bridegroom rejoices over a bride, this is how God enjoys you. He rejoices like a bridegroom does” (Isa. 62:5, paraphrased). Isaiah is adding that bridegroom dimension again. He mentions it several times in the book of Isaiah.

“I HAVE SET WATCHMEN ON YOUR WALLS, O JERUSALEM”

Look at the next verse, verse 6. “I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem” (Isa. 62:6). You could use the word *intercessors*. “I have set intercessors who will never be silent until the Lord returns” (v. 6, paraphrased). That’s what it means.

Again, for the sake of the class, we’re going to look at this in far more detail. In the overview sense, the Bridegroom who delights in you is the God who is going to put intercessors in their place, and they will go twenty-four/seven until Jesus returns.

The passage says, “They will never be silent until Jerusalem is a praise in the earth.” (v. 6-7, paraphrased). Well, Jerusalem right now is a source of contention in the earth. Jerusalem is not a praise in the earth right now. Jerusalem is the strife of the earth. Jerusalem will only be the praise of the earth when the Lord returns. Here’s the point: God is going to set intercessors in place and they will never be quiet night and day, day and night, night and day, until Jesus returns and restores Jerusalem to her destiny. In other words, these prayer movements won’t stop until the second coming comes.

How do we motivate people in the intercession of verses 6-7? How will they do night-and-day prayer? By understanding that they’re the Bride of Christ and the Lord delights in them—verses 4-5.

I remember when I first started intercession. In my early years, in the 1980s and 1990s, I preached on Isaiah 62:6—night-and-day prayer. I preached on that verse so many times. I never read verses 4-5, never. I preached on Sunday mornings. I would open my Bible, and say, “Turn to Isaiah 62:6.” The poor congregation went, “Oh no, here we go again. He’s going to tell us to go to these boring prayer meetings.” They were really boring. If I had only gone back two verses and seen the Bride of Christ, the light of God, and thrown a little music in, I would have saved a lot of heartache, but I didn’t see it for years.

“HEPHZIBAH, HEPHZIBAH, THE LORD DELIGHTS IN YOU!”

Paragraph H. I’ve told the story many times. I had a prophetic dream in 1995—November 1995. In this dream, I’m on this large platform. I’m in the Kansas City Convention Center— where we have the onething Conference—with thousands of young people. This is in 1995, four years before IHOP–KC started. There are all these young people. I’m saying, “Hephzibah, Hephzibah, the Lord delights in you!” Because that word *Hephzibah* is the message. I wake up and the power of God is resting on me.

I’ve only had a few dreams like that over the years. I wish I had more. The presence of God is resting on me and I say, “Whoa! Hephzibah!” It’s Sunday morning, early. I say, “I’m going to preach it Sunday morning.”

THE KEY TO THE END-TIME PRAYER MOVEMENT IS ENCOUNTERING GOD

I wake up from this dream and the Spirit of God is resting on me. I say, “*Hephzibah*, I’ve seen that word somewhere.” I think, “Where’s it?” I know it’s in the Prophets. I start in Isaiah. There are sixteen prophets. I start in Isaiah. I went through chapters 1-10, chapters 30-40, until I reached the 60s: 61, 62... Where is it? Because I’ve preached on Isaiah so many times, and I’m in a hurry, I skip Isaiah 62. I turned the page over, thinking, “It can’t be there! I know that chapter!”

I go through Jeremiah 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Ezekiel 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Hosea 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Micah, Zephaniah, all the way to Malachi. It takes me an hour. I’m saying, “Man, where did it go?” I’m really frustrated. I say, “I’ve just lost an hour!”

But I have to preach that Sunday. It’s Sunday morning and I don’t have a message. I take a breath and say, “Rise up and do it again.” Isaiah 1, 2, 3—I’m going faster. I get to Isaiah 60 really fast. Isaiah 61, 62—I just turn the page right over. Why? Because I know Isaiah 62! Jeremiah, Ezekiel; I get to Malachi. I’m now so totally in the flesh, I couldn’t preach if I had to. I say, “This can’t be true!” I’m a man. I’m not looking at the math.

I broke down and got a concordance out—I did! I just broke down and looked up *Hephzibah*. It said, “Isaiah 62,” and I said, “Not a chance; that’s wrong! I take authority over that; that’s wrong!” I didn’t really say the authority thing, but I said, “This is wrong; not a chance.”

I lost so much time, and because the Sunday morning service was coming up in a few hours, I broke down and turned to Isaiah 62. I could not believe it. I said, “When did they put that there? When did they put that in verse 4?!”

The Lord made it clear. He said, “The reason people are burning out with night-and-day prayer—verse 6—is because they aren’t encountering the Bridegroom God of verse 4-5.” This is the key to the end-time prayer movement: encountering God. Right now I’m focused on singers and musicians, because in a moment I’m going to have all of us respond, but particularly singers and musicians, as they lead the way. If they get this, the whole Body of Christ will get it. The singers and musicians will get it and so will the whole Body of Christ.