

The Glorious Church

The Body of Christ and the Bride of Christ

The Church... Glorious

- The purpose of Christ's cleansing and sanctifying work is that one day "He might **present the church to Himself glorious.**"
 - "The church... glorious" in the original language means that **the church is brought into glory.**
- **Ephesians 4** says that the church will **arrive** at the **oneness of the faith** and the **measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.**
 - **Chapter 5** says that the church will be **clothed with glory** to be presented to Christ.
- Such a glorious church will not have **spot** or **wrinkle** or **any such things**, but she will be **holy** and **without blemish.**
 - The day is coming when God's work upon the church will be brought to such a stage that she will stand before the Lord as if she has **never sinned**, where there is **nothing old**, and where she has **no defect whatsoever.**
- May we be those who **hearken to Him** and go forward so that the church may be brought to the stage of being the Bride of Christ.

The Work and Responsibility of the Church Before God

- The work and responsibility of the church is **spiritual warfare.**
 - The opponents in this warfare are **not flesh and blood.**
 - **Eph. 6:13-14** – Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand. Stand** therefore...
 - We are told that we should stand, **not** that we should attack.
 - The spiritual warfare is **defensive**, not offensive, because **the Lord Jesus has already fought the battle and won the victory.**
 - The work of the church on the earth is simply to **maintain the Lord's victory.**
- The church's work is **not to overcome the devil**, but to **resist him** who has already been overcome by the Lord.
- The **starting point** of spiritual warfare is **standing upon the victory of Christ**; it is seeing that **Christ has already overcome.**
- The kingdom of God is the **overthrowing** of the power of Satan **by the power of God.**

- When the devil is unable to stand in a certain place, the kingdom has come to that place.
- Wherever the Lord Jesus is, Satan must depart.
 - The very presence of **the Lord Jesus represents the kingdom of God**, and He is the kingdom of God.
- Not only where the Lord Jesus is, but also **where the church is, the kingdom of God is**.
 - The church also represents the kingdom of God.
 - The work of the church on earth is to **bring in** the kingdom of God.
 - We must **stand on the position of the kingdom of God** whenever we **work**, and we must **apply the kingdom of God** to deal with the power of Satan.
 - The church should **preach the gospel**, but much more, the church should **pray to bring in the kingdom of God**.
- Since the work of the church is to stand for God and not give any ground to Satan...
 - All **our sins** and **unrighteousness** must be dealt with
 - Our **consecration** to God must be thorough
 - Our **soul-life** must be put to death
 - Our **natural man** must be abandoned
- As the Body of Christ, we must learn to **work together with God**.
- The recovery of man's loss is for the recovery of God's loss.
 - God's loss must be recovered **through the kingdom**.
- Our responsibility is twofold.
 - On the one hand, we must **lead the people** of the world to be **saved**.
 - On the other hand, we must **stand fast for the kingdom**.
- While we allow God to **exercise His authority in the heavens**, we must also **allow** Him to **exercise His authority over us**.
- We must not only **seek to live** before God according to **Ephesians 5**, we must also **pursue the responsibility** revealed in **Ephesians 6**. Then we will not only be a church which is glorious, holy, and without blemish, but we will also be those who have cooperated with God to bring in His kingdom and caused Satan to suffer loss on this earth.

(The Glorious Church – Chapter 3)