

# Calling the Bride



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## The Eternal Perspective

"And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" – John 8:32

*He that loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. - Matthew 10:37*

Years ago I met a woman who told me that her husband turned away from God because the Lord did not heal his aunt and she died. This reminds me of Jesus' statement that if we love anyone more than Him, we are not worthy of Him.

Jesus suffered and died for us, not only to remove and forgive us of our sins; but to also help us to overcome whatever happens to us in this life through Him. We can live everyday looking forward to a joyful eternal life when our souls are eventually released from the cocoon of our mortal flesh.

Jesus is the only hope of our salvation. No matter how much we love our relatives and friends, none of them can love us more than God. The magnificent sacrifice that purchased our salvation is our greatest treasure.

Any passion we harbor for anyone or anything that we place above the tremendous gift of our salvation, makes us unworthy of it and the One who gives it.

If we suffer a loss in this life that causes us to turn away from Him, then we have been tested and failed.

Some people look at all the suffering in the world and reject God, because in their limited vision they have failed to see the bad things that happen with an eternal perspective. They complain, "Why does God allow all these bad things happen to good people?" And they stomp off into the darkness of their own choosing.

They fail to recognize that there is a devil, and the devil hates good people. He hates all people. They also refuse to understand that it is through mankind's own sin and rebellion against God that has allowed all these bad things to enter the world in the first place, and enables them to continue. In other words, it's not His fault, it is our own.

Sin perpetuates sin and its consequences. Innocent people can suffer as a result. God intervenes through prayer according to His will. And if it is His will in some cases for evil to continue, faith is there to assure us that the eventual outcome is contained securely within God's hands.

Evil must come to its fullness so that God can destroy it (Genesis 15:16). Sometimes lives must be catapulted into darkness before they can become desperate enough to seek for the eternal Light of God.

God's word promises that someday there will be an end to all the suffering we see around us. The fulfillment of this

promise is something we can look forward to, cleave to and be as a life raft upon the world's stormy turmoil. We have a hope and a future no matter what happens to us in this life.

We have been given the gift of hope and eternal life through Jesus' sacrifice for us. He never promised us a pain free journey to our future inheritance. He said we would have tribulation in this life, but we also have His promise that He would be with us until the end.

When we consider the enormity of His sacrifice and the gift we have been given, If we love anything or anyone more than Him, truly, we are not worthy of Him. And if we love Him more than anything or any person, then we have everything.

Faith enables us to stand on a mountain with Jesus, overlooking all the wars, murders, turmoil and pain to see another horizon of life, beauty and eternity. Keep your eyes focused on that horizon and the One who gives it to you, children. He is waiting there for you with open arms.

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world (John 16:33). ... and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:20).

### Birth Pangs

But all these are merely the beginning of birth pangs...

Matthew 24:8 NAS

The contractions have begun. It's going to be hard, but with His strength you know you can endure it. You writhe. You cry out in excruciating pain. He said it was going to be this way; the famines, the earthquakes, the trials. But He said it was the beginning of a birth, a promise. At the end of the turmoil, He will appear, and all the anguish and sorrow will be forgotten for joy that our Savior has come into the world for the second time, this time to establish His kingdom in righteousness.

Weeping may endure for a night, all creation is groaning in travail along with our own gasping sighs. But joy is most assuredly coming. He is at the door of a brand new beginning for all those who look for Him to deliver them.

In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer:

Jesus has overcome the world! - John 16:33. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in

Christ Jesus our Lord. -Romans 8:38,39

## *Always*

*I am with you always, even to the end of the world -  
Matthew 28:20*

I read the testimony of a woman who had adopted two little girls. These children had experienced much abuse and abandonment from their birth parents. Their new mother did all she could to assure them of her love and relieve their insecurities. She told them with tears in her eyes, that she would never leave them.

After Jesus' resurrection He assured His disciples that He would never leave them. They had just endured the dreadful nightmare of seeing their Lord and friend brutally crucified. But when they had thought all hope was gone, the dark cloak of despair that had clung to their souls was joyfully cast down at the feet of their risen Savior.

Jesus knew that the trials of their faith were just beginning. Amidst the joy of proclaiming the life giving Gospel to others, there would be persecution, great losses and for most of them, even martyrdom.

As the Son of God beheld their futures in the light of His foreknowledge of their lives from beginning to end, He confidently proclaimed to them, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

In this life, Christians are often orphaned, abandoned and rejected as the result of our devotion to Jesus. But we have been adopted into a new family (Romans 8:15, Ephesians 1:5) and are now accepted into another realm far superior to the one we are living now that stabs us with the thorns of rejection and loss. Jesus has imparted to us His Holy Spirit, and the comforting presence of His Spirit within us assures his adopted ones of the truth of Jesus' promise to all those who are His disciples. We will never be abandoned by the One who loves us so; He is with us always and we are never alone.

He has declared that He would be with us until the end of the world. Is Jesus saying here that His presence with us will someday commence with the end of the planet? In the Greek the word used for 'world' is aion (ah-ee-ohn'). Some translations use the word 'age,' instead of 'world,' because the primary meaning of this word is the same. According to Strong's concordance the Greek word aion means "forever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity." Jesus is eternal and so is our union with Him. We are made eternal through His

sacrifice for us. - For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

We return to those definitions, focusing on the primary meaning of the word, 'world,' which according to the original Greek, actually means 'forever,' and we come to the conclusion that there can never be a time when He will not be with us. Jesus is saying to His disciples – "I will be with you always, even to a never ending eternity."

## *Accompaniment*

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you: ... Isaiah 43:2*

My husband and I had to take a short ferry ride across the James River in Virginia. We arrived at the dock and as we drove onto the ferry we decided to turn on the car radio. It happened to be tuned to a classical station and as the ferry slowly drifted away from the dock, a beautiful theme began to play. It was a lovely accompaniment to our short journey.

I am always a little apprehensive of boat rides in general. I cast a wary glance at the life boat next to our car. I was glad it was there just in case, at the same time I didn't want to be reminded that there is always the possibility it might be needed.

I turned my attention back to the water and the sky. The boat churned through the river and a flock of sea birds sailed by making lyrical maneuvers that seemed to match the melody flowing from our radio. We relaxed, enjoying the music and the beautiful scenery.

We eventually arrived at the other side of the river. As the boat glided into its berth, the familiar first movement of the piece we were listening to that had launched us, repeated as a finale which perfectly coincided with the end of our brief trip as the ferry came to a stop and the music faded into silence.

We broke out into laughter as we realized the music had been perfectly timed to match the beginning and the end of our ferry ride. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is the music that God has provided that accompanies us along our journey through this life, even in those times when a life boat is necessary. As we glide through our appointed days, we are never alone, and the beginning is as perfectly orchestrated as its end. But when we reach the end of our travels in this world, the music won't dissolve as we arrive. It swells and grows grander as it accompanies us into our Father's waiting, loving arms.