

The New Testament Church
Last Things #6 – A Victorious Church
 Pastor Paul Jehle – October 31, 2021 – Reformation Sunday

I The Doctrine of Last Things – Eschatology

- A. The Last Days began with Jesus' ascension – Acts 1 – Return timed with a mature Church
- B. Our Church position – focus on occupying until He comes, not taking a position on how or when
 - 1. He will return in bodily form; be prepared if He comes today or occupy until He returns
 - 2. The Return of Christ is not a rescue mission but a culmination of the maturity of the Church
 - 3. The “two stage return” is first the Jew (70 AD); and then the Gentile (Last Day Judgment)
 - 4. We're marked as Kings and Priests, but the mark of the beast is tyranny in State and Church
 - 5. The Parousia (return) is a face to face encounter that coincides with us being in His image

II The Victorious Church – a Bride and a City - Revelation 19:1-9

- A. “the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready.” – Revelation 19:7
 - 1. The Church is a **bride** who has made herself ready (the year-long betrothal)
 - 2. Revelation 22:2 – “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”
- B. “to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen... the righteous acts of the saints.” – Rev. 19:8
 - 1. The Church is a **holy city** whose works are righteous (behavior and example)
 - 2. Revelation 22:2 – “I John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven”
- C. God's goal is of a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle – Ephesians 5:26
 - 1. Glorious – victorious, overcoming the **world** (worldliness)
 - 2. Without spot – to be holy, separate unto God; overcoming sin and the **flesh**
 - 3. Without wrinkle or blemish – overcoming the “works of darkness” or the **devil**

III How the Bride makes herself ready to be a Holy City

- A. To have a year to prepare herself to inherit the **groom's dowry** – Psalm 2:8; 110:1-3
 - 1. We have a time to prepare (be purified) to inherit Christ's dowry – the nations
 - 2. We have time to obey God regardless of how it looks – a measure of maturity
- B. To practice **manifesting the Kingdom of God on earth** as it is in heaven – Matthew 6:10
 - 1. The Love of God on display through unconditional service
 - 2. Learning to rule in life is not domination, but through service – Romans 5; Matthew 20
- C. Understanding the goal – to be **transformed into His image (character)** – 1st John 3:3
 - 1. The image of Christ is to put on His character – experience your position
 - 2. We often think miracles are what we put on – but His character is weightier than miracles
- D. Walk in **submission to Christ** – empowered with a submissive attitude – “under his feet”
 - 1. True submission in a marriage is not headship or being dominated, but serving one another
 - 2. We “stand under” authority, but not a slave, but empowered as a Church (His feet)

IV Examples from Martin Luther for Reformation Day

- A. His focus was on the Kingdom of God - “The just shall live by faith”
- B. In his day, as in ours, people did not understand the methods of the Kingdom (quote Luther)
 - 1. Once he was rescued (kidnapped by friends), and taken to the Castle
 - 2. People rioted in the streets to “bring in the kingdom” – he was horrified...
- C. His hymn, A Mighty Fortress, is the embodiment of the goal of maturity in Christ
 - 1. Quote Luther on his view of music and the worship of God!
 - 2. Quote Psalm 46 as a prelude to the text of A Mighty Fortress is our God
 - 3. This hymn declares the Bride and City of God's victory over the world, flesh and devil!
 - 4. It also illustrates Sola Gratia, Solus Christus, Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura and Soli Deo Gloria