

HERE COMES THE BRIDE

Last week we shared with you our focus for 2026. We're calling it...

POSITIONED FOR GOD'S PURPOSE

As I pointed out, this year's focus can best be understood from the context of the dream that I received earlier this month. The dream was set within the context of a wedding. If you know anything about prophecy, then you know that the coming of Christ is described in terms of a wedding (or bridegroom coming for his bride).

Now, there are many things we need to unpack from this dream. However, I want to start with the idea of Christ returning for a bride. If we do not properly understand the bride and her identity, nothing in the dream will make sense. With that said, I'm entitling today's sermon: "*Here Comes The Bride*".

In the dream, the identity of the bride was not immediately known. It wasn't until later that we discovered the bride was really "Niki". Now, I don't believe that the dream is actually about Niki. (In fact, when it comes to dreams we know they're rarely literal. Instead, they're symbolic. Therefore, when you find someone you know in a dream, it's likely that their name is *symbolic* of a larger idea. In this case, the name "Niki" comes from the Greek word *níkē*, which means **victory** or **to overcome**.)

The question we should be asking ourselves is, "Why is 'Niki' (overcomer) being associated with the bride in our dream?"

Revelation 3:12

12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Again, the word "overcome" is translated from the Greek word *níkē*. Also, notice the promise that's being pronounced on the overcomers—God will write upon them the name of the new Jerusalem which comes down from heaven.

Revelation 21:2

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Notice, the EXACT SAME WORDS that were used to describe the promise given to overcomers is here being used to describe the Bride of Christ (i.e. the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven). Therefore, we can conclude that the bride will be made up of overcomers. (This is why in the dream “Niki” was seen as the bride.) To be a member of the bride, you must overcome!

Some of you may be wondering, “Pastor, what do you mean when you say, ‘IF I want to be a member of the bride?’ Aren’t we already a part of the bride?” Not necessarily. You are not *automatically* part of the bride because you’re saved.

Now, I realize that saying, “Every believer isn’t automatically part of the bride,” is a bold claim. However, I’m prepared to prove it.

Let me start by pointing out that the word “bride” (in regard to the Church) is used only a few times Scripture, and most (if not all) of those references appear in the book of Revelation. (This might have something to do with the fact that the bride and her identity, is something God has reserved for the *end*.) Having said that, other references in the New Testament concerning the Church as the bride only “infer” that the Church is the bride. They never use that exact word!

2 Corinthians 11:2

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Notice, Paul describes the Church as being “espoused” to Christ. That is, Paul doesn’t say the Church is “married” to Christ. While being espoused (engaged) was a serious thing in that day, it wasn’t the same as being completely married.

If engagement didn’t not mean “married,” what did it mean? It meant the couple had “pledged themselves” to one another (to be faithful) until the marriage is final. So, when Paul says that we are “betrothed” to Christ he’s saying that we have pledged ourselves to be faithful to Christ until our marriage is final. Moreover, Christ is waiting to see who will be faithful to Him (be an overcomer) until the end BEFORE He chooses His bride!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN OVERCOMER?

1 John 5:4

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

The words “victory” and “overcome” are translated from the Greek word níkē. According to this verse, being an overcomer means gaining the victory over the world. Therefore, if you want to be someone who overcomes, then you must continually be victorious over tests, trials, sin, temptation, spiritual opposition and the like. (Consequently, this is what it takes to be part of the bride!)

Now, HOW do we accomplish this? According to John, learning to overcome begins by understanding your identity.

1 John 5:4

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world...

Notice, John doesn't start with ABILITY. (For example, he doesn't say, “Whosoever prays relentlessly or is a serious bible student, overcomes the world.”) John starts with IDENTITY. He says, “Whosoever is BORN OF GOD, overcomes the world!”

Why is our “identity” (being born of God) essential to our ability to overcome?

1 John 4:4

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Notice, John doesn't say, “You SHALL overcome because greater is he that is in you.” He said, “You HAVE overcome because greater is He that is in you.” In other words, overcoming the world begins by knowing who's IN you! And, if you're born of God, then Christ is IN you. The reason this matters is because Christ has ALREADY overcome the world!

John 16:33

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

When you're faced with a test (temptation, sin, spiritual opposition) the one thing you must remember is that Christ is IN you and He has ALREADY overcome what you're going up against. Moreover, by focusing on (believing on) Christ, it will give you the confidence and strength you need to overcome anything! (“I can do all things through Christ...”)

In the computer world, performing ANY task starts with logging in with the right identity. You can be the most gifted computer operator. However, without the right login (identity) you won't be able to do anything. Conversely, if you have the right login (identity), even the most inexperienced person can do great things!

God has designed a user-friendly system. However, in order for it to work for you, you must use the right identity. Before you try tackling the world, make sure you're logged in as Jesus!