

What She Said, Week 7

Thursday

**God's Beauty and Godly Beauty, a Beautiful Partnership**

**Godly Beauty: Adorned with Works**

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**Today's Treasure**

*Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)*

*Revelation 19:6-8*

My grandmother sewed my mother's wedding gown, a labor of love that boggles my mind. Perhaps you have sewed someone's wedding gown, and you know the patience, discipline, solitude, and persistence that are required. But, on her wedding day, as beautiful as her gown was, my mother didn't simply put on her wedding dress and walk down the aisle! She spent time fixing her hair and doing her makeup to make herself ready. My mother and grandmother give us a picture of God's beauty and godly beauty working together in a beautiful partnership. Theologians call this Providence and Concurrence, in which God's part of the labor, the lion's share, so to speak, is called Providence, while the part that we children of God are called to do is called Concurrence. Concurrence takes place within Providence and under the power of the Holy Spirit. And, we see both at work in this illustration in that, as the bride, my mother was given her dress (providence) and she made herself ready (concurrence).

Let's connect a few dots and look back at those last, potentially confusing lines in Proverbs, chapter 31, verses 30 & 31. "Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain (think fleeting), but a woman who fears the Lord (remember Sarah) is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate." What brings the righteous woman praise? Her works. And, what is the bride's wedding gown made up of? The righteous works of the saints! Just in case we might miss the symbolism of the fine linen, John spells it out for us by explaining that this "fine linen stands for the righteous works of the saints." So, we see that the virtuous, excellent, or noble, or valiant woman receives praise because of her works. The Bride will no longer cover her nakedness with fig leaves. Instead, she will be clothed in the righteous acts that have been given to her to do, and made possible for her to do, by the last Adam.

## **LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT**

Randy Alcorn says, “A pure bride doesn’t want to appear scantily clothed or dressed in rags at the altar before her beloved Bridegroom and a crowd of guests.” Friends, even if you are not handy with a needle and thread, you are sewing your wedding gown every day! Let us be faithful to do the kingdom work given to us today, whether it’s speaking a kind word to a work colleague, taking a meal to a neighbor, teaching our children to pray for others, spending time with an elderly parent, hugging a hurting friend, listening to our husband after he’s had a difficult day at work, inviting a roommate to church, or arranging flowers for our dinner table.

## **PRAYER**

Father, strengthen us today by Your Holy Spirit that we might complete the work to which You have called us before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 2:10). We ask, with Moses, that Your beauty would rest upon us and that You would make our works eternal. (Psalm 90:17) Amen.