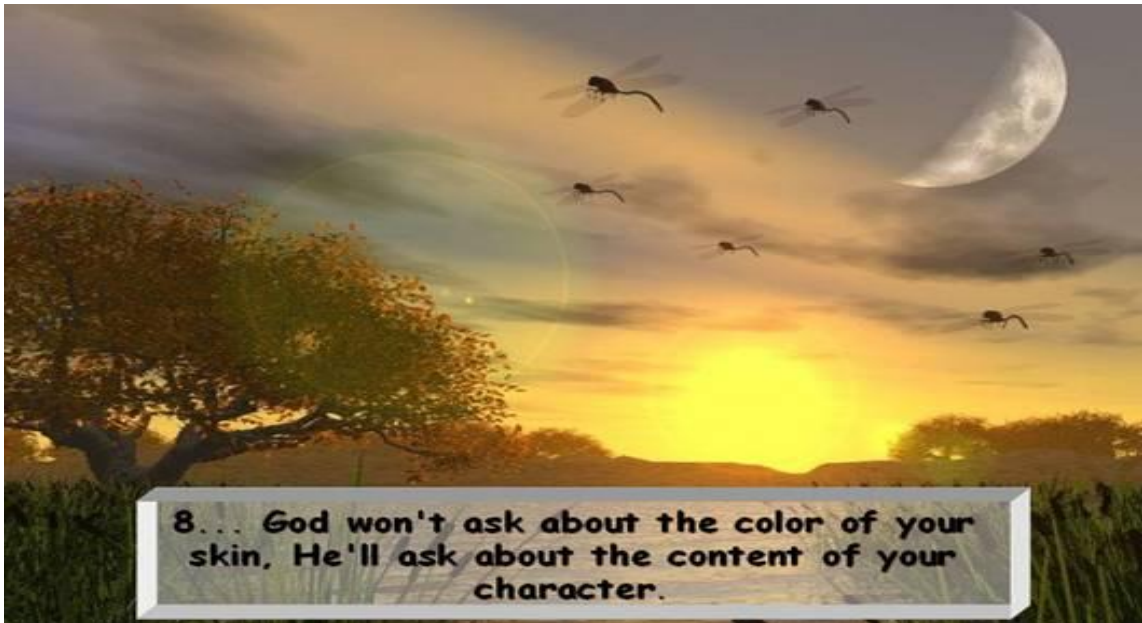


1

Prepared for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb



2
3

4 **Graham F. Watts, Sr.**

5

6 **VISION:** To hear the midnight cry, "The bridegroom comes, go out to meet
7 Him" (Matthew 25:6) and become like Him when I see Him as He is (1
8 John 3:2).

9

10 **MISSION:** Purify myself even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3) to be glad,
11 to rejoice, give honor to Christ and be ready for the marriage of the
12 Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

13

14 **VALUES:** Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4), be without
15 fault before God (Revelation 14:5), be perfect even as my Father in
16 heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48), wear the Lamb's fine, clean and
17 white linen (Revelation 19:8) do righteously (1 John 3:10) and walk
18 humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

19

20 **OVERALL AIM:** Studies presented here unveil Bible knowledge to
21 inquiring minds to prompt the following inquiries: "Are our feet on
22 the rock of ages? Are we one with Christ as He is one with the
23 Father" (John 10:30 in Evangelism, {Ev} 199.1)? Am I crucified with
24 Christ (Galatians 2:20)? Am I kept in the love of God (Jude 1:21)?

25

26 **PURPOSE/REASON FOR/WHY**

27
28 This study examines believers' readiness for eternity with Christ.

29
30
31 **OBJECTIVES/WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH/THESIS**

32
33 At the end of this study, readers can self-assess whether they are
34 wearing acceptable attire for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

35
36
37 **SIGNIFICANCE: SO WHAT**

38
39 "The Kingdom of Heaven is illustrated by the story of a king who
40 prepared a great wedding feast for His son. When the banquet was
41 ready ...his servants... [notified] those who were invited, but they
42 ...refused to come" (Matthew 22:2-3, NLT). "[So], he said to his
43 servants: 'The wedding feast is ready and the guests I [have] invited
44 aren't worthy of the honor; ...go out to the street corners and
45 invite everyone you see'. So the servants brought in everyone...,
46 good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests [as
47 the church is filled with members]. But when the king came in..., he
48 noticed a man who wasn't wearing the proper clothes.... 'Friend,' he
49 asked, 'how is it that you are here without wedding clothes' (Matthew
50 22:8-12, NLT). This is what it means to be living as sinners [while]
51 claiming to be Christians (Christian Service, {ChS}, p.41.1); having
52 a form of godliness without power (2 Timothy 3:5). Before Christ's
53 Second Advent, a preparatory work must be completed in each believer
54 (Matthew 25:1-10; Hebrews 9:26 & 8:1; Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 5:24; 1
55 John 1:9 & Revelation 22:11). And when this work is done and Christ
56 returns, they will say: "...This is our God; we have waited for him,
57 and he will save us..." (Isaiah 25:9). "[Hence], the religion of
58 Christ [must now] mean more than... forgiveness of sin. ...[Sin must
59 be] taken away and the vacuum... filled with the Spirit; ...the
60 mind... divinely illumined; ...the heart... emptied of self and
61 filled with the presence of Christ" (Our High Calling, {OHC}, 154.5)!

62 **BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

63
 64 The Bible makes clear the nature of the preparation needed prior to
 65 Christ's Second Advent. "The coming of Christ as our high priest to
 66 the most holy place for the cleansing of the sanctuary... (Daniel
 67 8:14); the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of Days... (Daniel
 68 7:13) and the coming of the Lord to His temple... (Malachi 3:1)...
 69 [describe] the same event; ...[which] is also represented by the
 70 coming of the bridegroom to the marriage... in the parable of the ten
 71 virgins..." (Matthew 25:1-10 in The Great Controversy, Chapter 24, p.
 72 426). A discussion of the application of Matthew 25:1-10 to the
 73 early 19th century American religious awakening accompanied by the
 74 Great Disappointment of 1844 follows.

75 The Great Controversy, Chapter 24, pages 426 and 427 presents
 76 this picture. In the summer and autumn of 1844 the
 77 proclamation: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," was given. The
 78 two classes represented by the wise and foolish virgins were
 79 then developed--ONE CLASS. ...looked with joy, [albeit
 80 mistakenly], to the Lord's appearing ...[by]... diligently
 81 preparing to meet Him; [and] ANOTHER CLASS that [was] influenced
 82 by fear and acting from impulse [also waited on the Lord's
 83 appearing. This subgroup] had been satisfied with a theory of
 84 the truth, but was destitute of the grace of God. In the
 85 parable, when the bridegroom came, they that were ready went in
 86 with Him to the marriage. The coming of the bridegroom... takes
 87 place before the marriage, [which] represents [Christ's]
 88 reception... of His kingdom [Daniel 7:9, 13-14]: the Holy City,
 89 the New Jerusalem, ...the capital and representative of [His]
 90 kingdom [and] ...the bride--the Lamb's wife..." (Revelation
 91 21:9-10 & Early Writings, {EW}, p. 251.1). ...The virgins that
 92 go out to meet the bridegroom [John 3:29]... [represent] the
 93 church: the people of God, [who] are ...guests at the marriage
 94 supper (Revelation 19:9). ['The vineyard {also} represents the

95 church [Isaiah 5:1-2, 4]. ...The Lord calls every member of His
96 church to work in His vineyard' (SDA Bible Commentary, Vol. 5,
97 {5BC}, p. 1097.3)], but NOT as unfaithful husbandmen and idle
98 vinedressers (Joel 1:11).

99

100 [In the mid 1800s, Christ was not scheduled to receive the Holy
101 City, the New Jerusalem; the capital and representative of {His}
102 kingdom and His bride (Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32 & Revelation
103 21:9-10). After agonizing research, led by prayer, intense
104 study and revelation the early advent believers eventually
105 understood that the event of Daniel 8:14: '...Unto two thousand
106 and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed'
107 referred not to the prevailing, contemporary belief held at that
108 time that the earth was the sanctuary (Early Writing, {EW}, p.
109 250.1), but rather to the sanctuary in heaven (Hebrews 9:24).
110 Time has elapsed, the early advent pioneers have gone to rest in
111 the hope of rising again. New believers have espoused the same
112 hope, which they held: to see Christ coming in the clouds of
113 heaven (Matthew 24:30 & 26:64). And on one of these day, if not
114 in our lifetime, then thereafter], having received [His]
115 kingdom, [Christ] will come in His glory, as King of kings and
116 Lord of Lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to sit
117 down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at His table in His kingdom
118 (Matthew 8:11, Luke 22:30), to partake in the marriage supper of
119 the Lamb.

120 This background provided the impetus for the study question that
121 follows.

122

123 **STUDY QUESTION**

124

125 What is required of guests who attend the Lamb's marriage supper?

126

127 **ANSWER SOURCE**

128

129 1. **Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb have an**
 130 **experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ.** "As we near the close of
 131 time there will be needed a deeper and clearer discernment, a more
 132 firm knowledge of the Word of God, a living experience, and the
 133 holiness of heart and life, which we must have to serve Him" (That
 134 I May Know Him, {TMK}, p. 347.5). "...[We] must be holy in
 135 everything [we] do, just as God who chose [us] is holy" (1 Peter
 136 1:15, NLT). In the matter of spirituality, sow seeds in the
 137 morning and don't withhold the hand in the evening (Ecclesiastes
 138 11:6) for "...the path [or way] of the just is [uprightness], as
 139 the shining light, [which shines] more and more unto the perfect
 140 day" (Proverbs 4:18 & 26:7). And if we gain this experience, at...
 141 [Christ's appearing], we will escape the pronouncement: "...I NEVER
 142 knew you; depart from Me, [you] that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:23 &
 143 Psalm 6:8); "...[you] cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for
 144 the devil and His angels" (Matthew 25:41).

145

146 An experiential knowledge of Christ includes hearing His voice.
 147 Adam and Eve heard it (Genesis 3:8); ancient Israel heard it
 148 (Deuteronomy 4:1, 10-12); Saul of Tarsus heard it (Acts 9:4);
 149 Ananias, a disciple at Damascus heard it (Acts 9:10-15); John the
 150 Revelator heard it (Revelation 14:13); and the list can continue.
 151 Therefore, as His sheep that hear His voice and follow Him (John
 152 10:16 & 27); we are "...the temple of God... '[and] the Holy
 153 Ghost...'" (1 Corinthians 6:19 & 3:16). Thus, the Godhead must live
 154 and walk in us (John 14:23 & 26); ...[because]... we [are His]
 155 people" (2 Corinthians 6:16); whom He "...predestinated... unto the
 156 adoption of children by Jesus Christ..." (Ephesians 1:5 & 11).
 157 And, at the last, when earth's history has folded, we will hear
 158 these blessed words: "...Come, [you] blessed of my Father, inherit

159 the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"

160 (Matthew 25:34).

161
 162 Those who wait in expectancy to hear the voice of God are secure in
 163 Him. Each distress is dissolved by the promise: "Let not your
 164 heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my
 165 Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have
 166 told you. I [am going] to prepare a place for you and if I go and
 167 prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto
 168 myself, that where I am there you may be also" (John 14:1-3). This
 169 place that Christ has gone to prepare is the Holy City, the New
 170 Jerusalem, [which represents] ...the capital... of [His]
 171 kingdom..." (Revelation 21:9-10 & Early Writings, {EW}, p. 251.1)
 172 All who are preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb recognize
 173 and submit to their leader, Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3),
 174 whose "...kingdom is not of this world..." (John 18:36). And since
 175 Christ's kingdom, which they seek, is not of this world, [His]
 176 followers "...are not of this world..." (John 15:19 and 17:14 &
 177 16). **Thus, in this life, they are looking "...for a city [that**
 178 **has] foundations, whose builder and maker is God"** (Hebrews 11:10).
 179 Their affections are set "...on things above, not on things upon
 180 the earth" (Colossians 3:2). "...They [are] strangers and pilgrims
 181 on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13); hence, they "...abstain from fleshly
 182 lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11) and are confident
 183 that "...if [their] earthly house... [should] dissolve [before
 184 Christ's Second Advent (Matthew 24:30 & 26:64), they] have a
 185 building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the
 186 heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1); "...incorruptible and undefiled,
 187 ...that fades not away, reserved in heaven..." (1 Peter 1:4).

188
 189
 190 **2. Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb obey "...the**
 191 **law [of God, which is] written in their hearts..." (Romans 2:15;**

192 **Hebrews 8:10 & 10:16; Ezekiel 11:19-20 & 36:26-27)**. Humans are
193 conceived in sin and formed in iniquity (Psalm 51:5); therefore,
194 "...The law [of God] was... prepared... for... [humanity] who are
195 lawless and rebellious [by nature], who are ungodly and sinful; who
196 consider nothing sacred and defile what is holy; who kill... father
197 or mother or commit other murders. The law is for people who are
198 sexually immoral, or who practice homosexuality or are slave
199 traders, liars, promise breakers, or who do anything else that
200 contradicts... wholesome teaching (1 Timothy 1:9-10, NLT) described
201 in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Among church attending people, there are
202 those who "...think of [themselves] more highly than [they] ought
203 to think..." (Romans 12:3), and this group might experience
204 discomfort with the Scriptures quoted. But the apostle Paul
205 unequivocally stated that "...the carnal mind is enmity against
206 God; ...it is NOT subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"
207 (Romans 8:7). And this condition mandated a mind transplant;
208 "...the renewing of [the] mind..." (Romans 12:2) that all might
209 become a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

210
211
212 Guests believe that "...the law is holy, and the commandment is
213 holy, just and good (Romans 7:12). This law served as a "...
214 schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by
215 faith. [And] after that faith is come, we are no longer under a
216 schoolmaster" (Galatians 3:24-25), but under Christ, who
217 "...washes, ...sanctifies, ...[and] justifies... [us]... by the
218 Spirit of... God" (1 Corinthians 6:11). These works are necessary
219 so "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who
220 walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).
221 Truly, "...Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to
222 everyone that believes" (Romans 10:4), meaning: God ordained Christ
223 as our "...wisdom, ...righteousness, ...sanctification and
224 redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). Thus, we are "...servants of

225 Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Ephesians 6:6) and
 226 loving "...the Lord, [our] God with all [our] heart, ...soul and...
 227 mind" (Matthew 22:37) because His law is weaved into the very
 228 fabric of our being.

229
 230 Guests who are obedient to God's law signify their reverence and
 231 acceptance of Christ's authority (Exodus 16:28; Psalm 105:42-45).
 232 It is God's plan that "...affliction shall not rise up the second
 233 time" (Nahum 1:9). God regards "...rebellion... as the sin of
 234 witchcraft, and stubbornness... as iniquity and idolatry..." (1
 235 Samuel 15:23)! Therefore, God is now preparing a people to live in
 236 His presence and they must now **"...put on righteousness..."** (*Job*
 237 *29:14; Isaiah 54:17; Psalm 15:1-2; 23:3 & 119:40; Proverbs 11:5-6 &*
 238 *19; Isaiah 41:10; 42:6; 51:1 & 54:14; Hosea 10:12; Amos 5:24;*
 239 *Matthew 5:6 & 6:33; Luke 1:74-75; Acts 10:35; Romans 3:21-22 &*
 240 *6:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:34; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 2 Corinthians*
 241 *6:14; Ephesians 4:24; Philippians 1:11 & 3:9; 1 Timothy 6:11; 2*
 242 *Timothy 2:22; 1 John 3:10 and Revelation 19:8), and be taught*
 243 **"...the difference between the holy and profane..."** (Ezekiel 44:21
 244 & 23); that they might be "...holy in all manner of conversation"
 245 (1 Peter 1:15) before being seated as guests at the marriage supper
 246 of the Lamb (Revelation 21:1-3), and thereafter, live in the
 247 presence of God, who is holy (1 Samuel 2:2 & Psalm 99:5 & 9).

248
 249 Guests in readiness for the heavenly banquet are "...led by the
 250 Spirit [and] are not under the law" (Galatians 5:18, NKJV). Sin's
 251 power, control and dominion was broken (Romans 6:14) because they
 252 live and walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:25). And as a flower
 253 turns naturally to the sun, so guests turn to Christ, the Son of
 254 God, not only for forgiveness, but also for deliverance, that is,
 255 overcoming power, that the righteousness of the law might be
 256 accomplished in them, in this lifetime, as they "...look for new
 257 heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness" (2 Peter

258 3:13) and wait for the "...crown of righteousness, which the Lord,
 259 the righteous judge, shall give [on] that day... to all them that
 260 love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:8).

261
 262 **3. Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb are undefiled**
 263 **(Revelation 14:4)**. The world is covered in moral darkness (Isaiah
 264 60:2) and "...out of the hearts [of the unregenerate] proceed evil
 265 thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false
 266 witnessing [and] blasphemies; ...[all the abominations that] defile
 267 a [person]... (Matthew 15:11, 18-20). Hence, guests who are not
 268 wearing a wedding garment (Matthew 22:11) are "...filled with all
 269 unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness,
 270 maliciousness, ...envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity--desire
 271 to do evil--, [whispering], [backbiting, God hating, spiteful],
 272 proud, [boastful], inventors of evil things, disobedient to
 273 parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural
 274 affection, implacable--impossible to pacify--[and] unmerciful"
 275 (Romans 1:29-31). But those guests who are preparing for the
 276 marriage supper of the Lamb plead with God to "Purge [them] with
 277 hyssop; ...[to] wash... [them that they can] be whiter than snow"
 278 (Psalm 51:7). They ask for a "...a clean heart... and... a right
 279 spirit..." (Psalm 51:10). In earnest, they cry out: "Help us, O
 280 God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name, and deliver us,
 281 and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake" (Psalm 79:9).
 282 Because to enter the gates of the city of God and gain access to
 283 the tree of life (Revelation 22:14) and "...inherit the kingdom of
 284 God" (Galatians 5:21), all guests MUST depart from the works of the
 285 flesh: fornication, adultery, idolatry, sorcery, drunkenness,
 286 reveling, uncleanness, lasciviousness--unusual and unseemly
 287 interest in sex--, telling lies, wrath, sedition--incitement of
 288 rebellion--, murders, witchcraft, hatred, variance--disagreement--,
 289 heresies, strife, envyings, effeminate behaviors and other acts

290 that involve abusing oneself with mankind (Galatians 5:19-21; 1
 291 Corinthians 6:9 & Revelation 22:15).
 292
 293 Guests of Christ will exceed the minimum standard of avoiding sin.
 294 They are aware of God's changeless nature (Malachi 3:6) and His
 295 call upon all who will attend the marriage supper of the Lamb to
 296 wear a wedding garment (Matthew 22:11-12). So, they keep their
 297 souls diligently (Deuteronomy 4:9) and remain pure by NOT partaking
 298 "...of other men's sins" (1 Timothy 5:22) and not permitting any
 299 corrupt communication to come out of their mouths (Ephesians 4:29).
 300 Clearly, being ready for the marriage supper is no walk in the
 301 park, "for as many... as have been baptized into Christ, [who] have
 302 put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27), must "...make [no] provision for
 303 the flesh (Romans 1:32), to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Romans
 304 13:14). This is a daily work, requiring a transformative
 305 experience because "...the unrighteous shall NOT inherit the
 306 kingdom of God..." (1 Corinthians 6:9). Hence, guests to the
 307 heavenly banquet put "...on the breastplate of faith and love..."
 308 (1 Thessalonians 5:8) by climbing all the way from the bottom to
 309 the top of Peter's ladder; and all the character traits of the Holy
 310 Spirit that connects faith and love are perfected in them (2 Peter
 311 1:5-7).

312
 313 **4. Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb are on high**
 314 **alert (Matthew 25:1-10) although they don't know the exact day of**
 315 **Christ's return (Matthew 24:36 & Revelation 6:9-11).** The guests
 316 described here make up the "...great multitude, which no man could
 317 number of all nations, ...kindreds, ...peoples and [languages]..."
 318 (Revelation 7:9). During their earthly life, the long standing
 319 promise of Christ's return remained the consummation of their hope
 320 (John 14:1-3). But unlike the scoffers of the last days, who
 321 challenged and derided the promise of Christ's return (2 Peter 3:3-
 322 4); guests invited to the heavenly banquet were attentive to the

323 signs of Christ's return (Matthew 24:3-12) and ordered their steps
 324 by the Word of God (Psalm 119:133) because they believed that
 325 "...the end of all things is at hand. ...Therefore, [they are]
 326 sober and watch unto prayer" (1 Peter 4:7 & 5:8). Since they
 327 believed that "the great day of the Lord is near...: [and being
 328 forewarned that] that day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and
 329 distress, a day of wasteness and desolation; a day of darkness and
 330 gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness; a day of the
 331 trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high
 332 towers" (Zephaniah 1:14-16); they do not "...sleep as do others;
 333 [but rather]... watch, and [are] sober" (1 Thessalonians 5:6);
 334 holding out "...hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought
 335 unto [them] at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:13).

336
 337 The alertness of guests invited to the heavenly banquet includes
 338 awareness of their ultimate enemy. They know that their
 339 "...adversary, the devil, ...[walks] about, seeking whom he may
 340 devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Hence, they "put on the whole armor of
 341 God..., ['...the armor of righteousness...'] (2 Corinthians 6:7)],
 342 [and] stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11 & 13).
 343 Their Christian walk is characterized by dependence on the Spirit
 344 of the Lord (Zechariah 4:6). In contrast, the sin loving and
 345 righteousness hating majority, both in Zion and Babylon, who
 346 "...had neglected the needful preparation..." (Early Writings,
 347 {EW}, p. 71.2) are unprepared for Christ's return; and "...the day
 348 of the Lord... comes [upon them] as a thief in the night..." (2
 349 Peter 3:10 & 1 Thessalonians 5:2). And when that great day
 350 arrives, the "...day..., [which] shall burn as an oven; [wherein]
 351 all the proud ...and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble..."
 352 (Malachi 4:1); then shall be brought to fruition the saying: "The
 353 harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved"
 354 (Jeremiah 8:20). When that moment arrives, guests who are without
 355 shelter, without the attire of Christ's righteousness, have only to

356 look forward to "...weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:30).
357 But among the guests who are ready, they hear: "...Well done, good
358 and faithful servant..., enter... into the joy of the Lord"
359 (Matthew 25:23).

360

361

362 **ANSWER SOURCE: SACRED WRITINGS:**

363

364 We are pursuing answers to the question: What is required of guests
365 who attend the Lamb's marriage supper? More answers follow!

366

367

368 **5. Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb must**
369 **experience "the refining influence of the grace of God..." (AA,**
370 **273.2).** This is not the cheap grace that is sometimes presented as
371 an exemption for a life of presumptuous transgressions by those who
372 have already "...tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made
373 partakers of the Holy Ghost" (Hebrews 6:4). Guests do well to
374 remember that "...if while they seek to be justified by Christ,
375 ...[they] are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of
376 sin? God forbid (Galatians 2:17). "[Guests] cannot be partakers
377 of the Lord's table and the table of devil's..." (1 Corinthians
378 10:21), flip-flopping between the two like an electrical on-off
379 switch. Their natural, instinctual tendencies must be changed.
380 "The propensities that control the natural heart must be subdued by
381 the grace of Christ before fallen [humanity] is fitted to enter
382 heaven.... [And] when [they] die to sin, (Romans 6:14), and is
383 quickened to new life in Christ (Ephesians 2:1 & 5; Colossians
384 2:13), divine love fills [the] heart (Romans 5:5); [the]
385 understanding is sanctified; [they] drink from an inexhaustible
386 fountain of joy and knowledge, and the light of an eternal day
387 shines upon [their] path, for with [them] continually is the Light
388 of life" (John 14:23 & 26 in AA 273.2), "...the light of the world"

389 (John 9:5). This is what the Scripture means when it says, "The
 390 path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more
 391 unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18). In this life, guests begin
 392 and are perfecting their walk with God in holiness before they
 393 enter the home of the saved. God is holy and to all whom He has
 394 called, He provided power to break the shackles of sin and has
 395 sanctified them by His Spirit (2 Thessalonians 2:13 & 1 Peter 1:2).
 396

397 **6. Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb are deepening**
 398 **their "...experience in the things of God" (The Acts of the**
 399 **Apostles, 307.2).** "[Like] the Corinthian believers..., ...[they
 400 are], at every step in the Christian pathway, [being] ...opposed by
 401 the [members of the] synagogue of Satan and ...engage in conflicts
 402 daily! [But they] guard against the stealthy approach of the
 403 enemy, [including the one within], forcing back old habits and
 404 natural inclinations, and ever watching unto prayer. [...For]...
 405 **higher Christian attainments can be reached only through much**
 406 **prayer and constant watchfulness...**" (The Acts of the Apostles, p.
 407 307.1).
 408

409 Guests are in a race for eternal life. And in a manner similar to
 410 the athletes who participated in the ancient Greco-Roman Olympics,
 411 all "harmful indulgences of appetite, or any other gratifications
 412 that would lower mental or physical vigor, [must be] strictly
 413 forbidden. For to have any hope of success in these trials of
 414 strength and speed, the muscles must be strong and supple, [i.e.,
 415 flexible], and the nerves well under control" (The Acts of the
 416 Apostles, 309.2). "[So] the runners put aside every indulgence that
 417 would tend to weaken the physical powers, and by severe and
 418 continuous discipline, train their muscles to strength and
 419 endurance, that when the day of the contest should arrive, they
 420 might put the heaviest tax upon their powers. How much more
 421 important that the Christian, whose eternal interests are at stake,

422 bring appetite and passion under subjection to reason and the will
 423 of God! **Never must [guests] allow [their] attention to be diverted**
 424 **by amusements, luxuries or ease. All habits and passions must be**
 425 **brought under the strictest discipline.** Reason, enlightened by the
 426 teachings of God's word and guided by His Spirit, must hold the
 427 reins of control" (The Acts of the Apostles, {AA}, 311.1). No
 428 unprepared and unqualified guest will be seated at the marriage
 429 supper of the Lamb.

430
 431
 432 7. **Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb reject a life**
 433 **of ease and embrace a life of discipline and sacrifice (Matthew**
 434 **16:24).** "Jesus said unto his disciples, 'If any [person] will come
 435 after me, let him [or her] deny [self], take up his [or her] cross
 436 and follow me'" (Matthew 16:24). **"Courage, fortitude, faith and**
 437 **implicit trust in God's power to save do not come in a moment.**
 438 **These heavenly graces are acquired by the experience of years. By**
 439 **a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right, the**
 440 **children of God [are] sealing their destiny"** (Testimonies for the
 441 Church, Vol. 5, p. 213). "A soul united with Christ, eating His
 442 flesh and drinking His blood, [that is: dwelling in Christ and
 443 Christ living within, (John 14:23; 6:51-57 & 63)], in accepting and
 444 living by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God will war
 445 against ALL transgression and every approach of sin. [Guests]
 446 become more like a bright and shining light every day [Proverbs
 447 4:18], and more victorious over life's besetting challenges [1 John
 448 5:4]. [They go] from strength to strength, NOT from weakness to
 449 weakness" (Testimonies of Ministers and Gospel Workers, {TM}, p.
 450 441.1). So persevere in your efforts to attain unto the holiness
 451 and perfection of Christ. Onward and upward is the march unto
 452 eternal life. Forward ever, backward never; for quitters never win
 453 and winners never quit.

454

455 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS: This study examined personal preparedness for
456 spending eternity with Jesus Christ. The question that focused this
457 study asked: What is required of guests who attend the Lamb's
458 marriage supper? In the discovery phase of the study, eight points
459 emerged: 1) Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb have
460 an experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ. 2) Guests preparing for
461 the marriage supper of the Lamb obey the law of God, which is written
462 in their hearts. 3) Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the
463 Lamb are undefiled. 4) Guests preparing for the marriage supper of
464 the Lamb are on high alert although they don't know the exact day of
465 Christ's return. 5) Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the
466 Lamb must experience the refining influence of the grace of God. 6)
467 Guests preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb are deepening
468 their experience in the things of God. And 7) Guests preparing for
469 the marriage supper of the Lamb reject a life of ease and embrace a
470 life of discipline and sacrifice. Although we have only scratched
471 the surface of this topic, given what we have discussed, ponder this
472 rhetorical question and be persuaded in your own mind (Romans 14:5).
473 Can I put forth less than the utmost, persevering effort to secure
474 eternity with Christ? Pause momentarily for contemplation. Because
475 it is of little redeeming value to engage in Bible study merely for
476 information, subsequent paragraphs follow that make a practical
477 application of the truths set forth here.

478

479

480 **DISCUSSION: WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?**

481

482 There were two great Disappointments among early Advent believers.
483 The first had identified the period between March 21, 1843 to March
484 21, 1844--the reckoning of William Miller; and the second identified
485 October 22, 1844--the reckoning of S.S. Snow. Both men had
486 erroneously interpreted the "...fulfillment of the 2300-day prophecy

487 of Daniel 8:14... as the second coming of Christ" (A Brief History of
 488 Seventh-Day Adventist, ps. 21-23). God was merciful to those
 489 protestant believers who were aroused by that religious awakening.
 490 So we do well to remember the two events for more than their
 491 historical significance. In looking back at that early period of
 492 reformation on the American frontier, we can extract important
 493 lessons for application to our personal and spiritual lives. The
 494 Great Controversy, Chapter 24, pages 424-425 shared these insights.

495 **The people, [although enthusiastic], were not yet ready to meet**
 496 **their Lord.** There was still a work of preparation to be
 497 accomplished for them. [Like that group, which waited for
 498 Christ's return, those who are reading this study should ask: Am
 499 I ready to meet Jesus Christ, face to face? When face-to-face
 500 with Christ, my Savior, what will it be? In the 1800s], light
 501 was... given, directing... minds to the temple of God in heaven
 502 [Revelation 11:19]; and as they should by faith follow their
 503 High Priest in His ministration there [Daniel 7:9-10 & 13; Acts
 504 7:56; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 8:1; 10:12 & 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22;
 505 Revelation 5:1-10], **new duties would be revealed.** Another
 506 message of warning and instruction... [would] be given to the
 507 church. Says the prophet: "Who may abide the day of His coming?
 508 and who shall stand when He [appears]? For He is like a
 509 refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ...He shall sit as a
 510 refiner and purifier of silver; ...**He shall purify the sons of**
 511 **Levi and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto**
 512 **the Lord an offering in righteousness"** (Malachi 3:2-3). **Those**
 513 **who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ**
 514 **shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of**
 515 **a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless;**
 516 **their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of**
 517 **sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent**
 518 **effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil.** While

519 the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the
520 sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary,
521 **there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away**
522 **of sin, among God's people upon earth** [1 Timothy 5:24]. ...When
523 this work... [is] accomplished, the followers of Christ will be
524 ready for His appearing. "Then shall the offering of Judah and
525 Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and
526 as in former years" (Malachi 3:4). Then the church which our
527 Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be a "glorious
528 church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing"
529 (Ephesians 5:27). Then she will look "forth as the morning,
530 fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with
531 banners" (Song of Solomon 6:10).

532

533 Endure in this battle of overcoming sin and make steady progress in
534 development of a Christlike character. Your efforts are NOT in vain!
535 "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a
536 far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Corinthians 4:17).
537 "...A crown of life" (James 1:12 & Revelation 2:10) and "...an
538 inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, [which fades] not away [and]
539 reserved in heaven, [awaits] you" (1 Peter 1:4). What are we talking
540 about here?

541 a) You will "...eat of the tree of life" (Revelation 2:7), whose
542 leaves are for the healing of the nations (Revelation 22:2).

543 b) You will "...not be hurt [by] the second death" (Revelation
544 2:11) if you are among "...the dead, which die in the Lord..."
545 (Revelation 14:13) because you will arise in the first
546 resurrection (Revelation 20:5-6; 1 Corinthians 15:52) to "...be
547 caught up together with [the heavenly entourage] in the clouds,
548 to meet the Lord in the air..." (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

- 549 c) You will "...eat of the hidden manna ['{that} taste... like
550 wafers made with honey' (Exodus 16:31)]; ...[receive] a white
551 stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no [person
552 knows]..., [but you]" (Revelation 2:17).
- 553 d) You will receive "...power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26).
554 You will become "... a pillar in the temple of... God and [will]
555 go no more out and... the name of... God and the name of the
556 city of... God, which is the new Jerusalem..." will be written
557 upon you (Revelation 3:12). The critique: s/he is not from
558 here; and the demeaning title: illegal alien will NEVER again be
559 hurled toward you for you will be in the city of God; "...a city
560 [that has] foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews
561 11:10).
- 562 e) You will "...sit with [Christ] in [His] throne..." (Revelation
563 3:21) and
- 564 f) You will "...inherit all things..." (Revelation 21:7) because
565 you are with Jesus Christ, whom God "...has put all things under
566 His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church"
567 (Ephesians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 15:27 & Hebrews 2:8).
- 568 It matters to you to "...be clothed in white raiment; [to have your]
569 name [retained in] the book of life... [and] confessed... before [the
570 Jehovah] and before His angels" (Revelation 3:5). Your life here and
571 now and the struggles that you must inevitably endure and prevail
572 over will be worth all that God has set aside for you. "...Eye [has]
573 not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,
574 the things [that] God has prepared for them that love Him" (1
575 Corinthians 2:9).
- 576
- 577

578 **CONCLUSIONS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

579

580 Close the gap between rhetoric, profession of faith and the daily
 581 experience. The capacity to talk about religion and doctrines are
 582 poor substitutes for righteous living (Titus 2:12). "Not all who
 583 profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even
 584 among those who teach the truth to others who WILL NOT receive the
 585 seal of God in their foreheads" (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5,
 586 {5T}, p. 213.2). And this very work is presented as pivotal and
 587 prerequisite for those who will assemble before the throne of God
 588 (Revelation 7:1-15). In view of this, SDA Bible Commentary, Volume
 589 5, page 1097, paragraph five says this:

590 A banquet has been prepared for us. The Lord has spread before
 591 us the treasures of His Word. But we must **NOT** come to the
 592 repast clothed in citizen's dress. We must have on the white
 593 robe of Christ's righteousness, which has been prepared for all
 594 the guests.

595 Yet, many today, who are church members, are like the invited guest
 596 that "...had not a wedding garment" (Matthew 22:11) at the King's
 597 feast. Christian Service, page 41 described their condition this
 598 way.

599 So many have brought into the church their own unsubdued spirit,
 600 unrefined; their spiritual taste is perverted by their own
 601 immoral, debasing corruptions, symbolizing the world in spirit,
 602 in heart, in purpose, confirming themselves in lustful
 603 practices, and are full of deception through and through in
 604 their professed Christian life. Living as sinners [and]
 605 claiming to be Christians.

606 This poignant indictment is not a misprint and is far from being
607 judgmental. Rather, it's a carryover from our Laodicean state, which
608 is also echoed in Christ's Object Lessons, page 270.

609 There are many today..., though church members, ...are
610 unconverted. They may take part in the church service, they may
611 chant the psalm: 'As the hart [pant] after the water brooks, so
612 [pant] my soul after Thee, O God' (Psalm 42:1); but they
613 testify to a falsehood. ...The soul that longs after the
614 excitement of worldly pleasure [and] the mind that is full of
615 love for display cannot serve God.

616 To him or her that knows to do right, but fails to do it, sins
617 against God (James 4:17). Therefore, the commitment that is required
618 for discipleship is discussed in Hebrews 12 and The Acts of the
619 Apostles, page 312.

620 Single-hearted purpose... should characterize the Christian's
621 race for eternal life. Let us lay aside every weight and the
622 sin which... so easily besets us, and let us run with patience
623 the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author
624 and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1-2). Envy, malice, evil
625 thinking, evil-speaking, covetousness—these are weights that the
626 Christian must lay aside if [as guests, they] would run
627 successfully the race for immortality. **Every habit or practice**
628 **that leads into sin and brings dishonor upon Christ must be put**
629 **away, whatever the sacrifice.** The blessing of heaven cannot
630 attend any [person] in violating the eternal principles of
631 right. One sin cherished is sufficient to work degradation of
632 character and to mislead others.

633 "Not one... [guest] will ever receive the seal of God while [the]
634 character [has] one spot or stain upon it. It is left with [guests]
635 to remedy the defects in [their] characters; to cleanse the soul
636 temple of [all] defilement" (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p.
637 214); also known as: "...work out your own salvation with fear and

638 trembling" (Philippians 2:12). But how is this accomplished?
 639 "...[Guests purify their] souls in obeying the truth through the
 640 Spirit... (1 Peter 1:22). They "...are clean through the word, which
 641 [Christ has] spoken..." (John 15:3). Hide the "...word [of God]...
 642 in [the] heart [and it will be a preservative against offending God]
 643 (Psalm 119:11). "...Delight to do... God's... [will] (Psalm 40:8)
 644 and ask Him to "order [each] step in [His] word, and let NOT any
 645 iniquity have dominion over [the flesh]" (Psalm 119:133) and God,
 646 Jesus and the Holy Spirit are "...able to keep that which [is]
 647 committed unto... [them]" (2 Timothy 1:12).

648

649

650 **CALL TO ACTION: WHAT SHALL WE DO?**

651

652 Each church member must ponder the following questions: Has [my]
 653 character been transformed? Has darkness been exchanged for light,
 654 the love of sin for the love of purity and holiness? ...[Am I]
 655 transformed by the Spirit of God, or [am I] dead in... trespasses and
 656 sins" (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, {TM}, p. 440.2)?
 657 It is necessary to truthfully answers the aforementioned questions if
 658 we would "...Run with triumph the Christian race" that is set before
 659 us (The Acts of the Apostles, 311.3). Let us so live that at the end
 660 of our days, we can say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished
 661 my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth, there is laid up for me
 662 a crown of righteousness..." (2 Timothy 4:7-8). Ponder this
 663 assurance from The Acts of the Apostles, page 312.

664 Not one who complies with the conditions [and principles laid
 665 down in God's word] will be disappointed at the end of the race
 666 [for immortality]. Not one who is earnest and persevering will
 667 fail of success [because God has promised: "Because you have
 668 kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour
 669 of trial, which shall come upon the whole world, to test those
 670 who dwell on the earth" (Revelation 3:10, NKJV); and "...Be

671 faithful until death and I will give you the crown of
672 life" (Revelation 2:10, NKJV). Clearly], the race is not to the
673 swift, nor the battle to the strong. [It is ...not by might,
674 nor by self-power, but by the Spirit of God (Zechariah 4:6)].
675 The weakest saint, as well as the strongest, may wear the crown
676 of immortal glory. All may win who, through the power of divine
677 grace, bring their lives into conformity to the will of Christ.
678 ["For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but might
679 through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down
680 imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against
681 the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought
682 to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)]. ...And the
683 reward given to those who win will be in proportion to the
684 energy and earnestness with which they have striven (Revelation
685 22:12).

686 "...Let each one examine his [or her] own work..." (Galatians 6:4,
687 NKJV) "and be found in Him, not having [our] own righteousness, which
688 is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the
689 righteousness, which is from God by faith" (Philippians 3:9; Romans
690 3:22, NJKV).