

JESUS, WE MISS YOU—

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I. INTRODUCTION

It's such an honor to speak at this year's Jesus Hour Ministry's Conference. When I was about 15 years old, I attended this conference. I was very hungry for God! God met me at the conference when someone prophesied over me declaring how God was going to use me in His Kingdom in the days to come. God didn't wait long! As a 16 year old, I saw the beginning of the fulfillment of the word as I ventured six hours by canoe out into the jungles of Panama. I shared the truth of the Gospel with a tribe that had never heard about Jesus and saw with my own eyes God heal a man's hand.

I want to get a gauge of who I am talking to—how many of you are pastors at a congregation? How many are traveling ministers? Evangelists? Involved in Para-church ministry? Worship leaders? Lay people involved in ministry?

II. THE BRIDE SAYS COME

A. Well, I'm going to speak on the subject of "Jesus, it will be really great to see you."

B. Do you love Jesus? Why do you love Jesus? (Accept answers)

1. Jesus truly is worthy of our love and affection. He loved us first showing the fullest extent of His love by giving His life for us. This is why we love Him!
2. As I have grown to love Jesus over the years, I have grown to miss Him.
3. I often think about what it will be like to see His face. I can just imagine the pure love and joy that I will see when I look into His eyes that are set on fire with love for us (Revelation 1:14).

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. (Rev 22:17)

C. We live in a time when the Holy Spirit is igniting a cry in the heart of His people in two ways:

1. First, the Holy Spirit is giving His church all over the earth an identity as has His cherished Bride.
 - a. Revelation 1:14 tells us that Jesus' eyes are like a flame of fire. One thing I believe this tells us about Him is that His holy heart is burning with passionate love for His people. Jesus is in love with His bride, the church.
...as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So your God will rejoice over you. (Isaiah 62:5)
 - b. Isaiah tells us that God rejoices over His people like a bride. Think about this. Consider a bridegroom who is about to marry his wife. As the bride walks down the aisle consider the emotions that fill his heart. That is the way Isaiah tells us God feels about His church.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her... This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:25,32)

- c. Ephesians 5 is a difficult passage for married men! They are commanded to love their bride the way Jesus does. This is impossible without the Holy Spirit's help and extremely difficult without understanding Jesus' love and affection for them.
- d. The whole point of marriage itself is to demonstrate to us Jesus' love for His people as His bride. I believe this truth is going to fill the heart of Jesus' church across the earth in this generation.
- e. Natural history will end with the Jesus marrying His church forever.

Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." (Revelation 19:6,7)

- 2. There is second thing we see in the great cry of the Spirit and the bride in Revelation 22:17. It is that as we begin to understand Jesus' love for us as a Bridegroom, we will respond back to Him with love and a deep longing that He would come back.

...what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God (2 Pet 3:11,12)

- a. I don't totally understand it, but there seems to be a way we can bring Jesus back to the earth sooner. 2 Peter tells us we can look for and hasten the day of the Lord. Jesus will come back to a people that are *longing* for His return.
- b. Jesus prayed a very powerful prayer in John 17. I assure you, His Father will answer His prayer!

...and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:26)

- c. We have a promise here that we will love Jesus with the same love that the Father has for Him.

III. THE HOPE WE HAVE LAID UP IN HEAVEN FOR US (COL 1:5)

1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:1-3)

- A. Jesus knew that His leaving would trouble His disciples' hearts. However, He gave them great hope before He left, "***I will come and again and receive you to Myself, that where I am there you may be also.***"
- B. Jesus is going to return for us! Even right now, Jesus is longing for that day. We are His bride and he wants us "***to be with [Him] where [He is]***"! (John 17:24) Right now, He is preparing a place for us.

As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake. Ps 17:15

- C. We have a glorious future ahead for us. We will see the face of our Lord! Isaiah prophesied that of that coming day, "***Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy...***" (Isaiah 26:19). We will shout for joy when we see His face! Death will no longer hold us in the grave. We will arise, see His face and be satisfied with His beauty and glory for all of eternity.
- D. Sorrow is a difficult companion in many of our lives. Many of you have faced your fair share of it. Some of you have lived a long life and faced disappointments that have taken your resolve away for ministry and, even worse, pursuing Him. Maybe you thought life would turn out a certain way and it hasn't. Perhaps you're a young and have already faced sorrow that most would only face in the course of their lifetime. I have hope for you today. You will see His face.

[Jesus' bride] will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. Rev 22:4

He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken. Is 25:8

for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes." Rev 7:17

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." Rev 21:3,4