

Spotless

God made man in His image. And when He did, he blessed them. And after He blessed them He gave them dominion (rule) over everything that lives on the earth. Then He looked at everything He made and said it was VERY good.

Human life is the pinnacle of all of creation. Human life is more important to God than this earth or anything that grows from the ground or any animal that moves on the earth.

It's YOU that Jesus died for. It's YOU that He loves and wants.

He knows a baby before it is knit together in the mother's womb. Every life matters to Jesus!

He knows you and where you are at today. He knows any struggles, weaknesses, insecurities you have. He knows your mental state and He cares about it.

So why do we see this continual struggle where the people of God try to pretend they are all good...don't need prayer...mentally strong...physically strong...no sin issues...at least none of this that they want to admit.

We don't want to seem weak. We are supposed to be perfect, like Jesus...right?

You know, I am all about pursuing holy living. We should strive to be like Jesus. We should hate evil and cling to what is good. We should be holy as Jesus is holy. But do some of these expectations cause us to wear a mask?

Could it be that we are so focused on what we should and shouldn't do that we completely forget who we are?

I think we sometimes believe that we've got to be perfect, that this is God's expectation for us. And this is why we think something like counseling isn't ok. Jesus isn't coming back for spotless people...He's coming back for a spotless bride.

Ephesians 5:27 (NKJV)

that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Jesus wants His bride...the church...to be spotless and without wrinkle or any such thing.

Is Paul saying that Jesus is looking for a perfect church? Well...look no further! Jk

Jesus is going to present the church to Himself...He's going to place her beside Him for all eternity.

He's looking for Christians who are prepared for Him. When a bride gets ready for her wedding, she and everyone in her circle do everything in their power to make sure she is ready and presented at her absolute best.

What do we say "you look perfect". Does she? Probably not, there's probably something that could be improved. But we cover up spots and we iron out wrinkles. We pin back wild hairs. We give pep talks and support and encourage when there is doubt or fear.

And this is how we present Jesus with a "perfect bride".

- Not having spot because it's covered by His blood (in Him we are made righteous).
- Not having wrinkle because we are spending our days ironing out things that are not right.
- Not having any such thing because we as a body are helping each other with the things we can't reach or do on our own...

John asked me last week what I hope to see here in 5 years. My answer was "A church where people come and truly connect with Jesus, really come to know Him, and people really work together as the body, ministering to each other, praying for one another, meeting and encouraging one another, then showing that love to those outside these walls"

Guys we need one another. And we also need to be real with one another. Find someone you can help and find someone that can help you!

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NKJV)

Two are better than one,
Because they have a good reward for their labor.
10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.
But woe to him who is alone when he falls,
For he has no one to help him up.
11 Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm;
But how can one be warm alone?
12 Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him.
And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

This is used in weddings all the time. But I believe it applies just as much to the church. You + me + Jesus is the threefold cord that is not quickly broken.

We spend so much time trying to be perfect people...what we ought to be is the perfect bride.

Do you know you can be the perfect bride without being a perfect person?

See my wife is not a perfect person. She has her struggles and issues. But she is the perfect bride...for ME. God knew that she is the one that I need in my life. And she is the one I want...flaws and all. So because of MY desire for HER, she is the perfect bride for me.

We are not perfect people. We all have struggles and issues but we (His church) are the perfect bride for Jesus because we are the one that HE wants...His desire is for us!

But Jesus can do something that no other groom can do...He can make us perfect!

On that day when He returns with fire in His eyes, passion for His bride, to wage war against His enemies...we will be perfected in Him.

But until that day...can we get the bride ready like we do for earthly weddings?

Can you help people apply Christ to cover their blemishes?

Can you help smooth out the wrinkles?

Can you help make sure we don't have anything of the sort that doesn't get attended to?

I think Jesus is worth it...I think He deserves it...

Get help. Help others.

Psalm 42:11 (NKJV)

Why are you cast down, O my soul?

And why are you disquieted within me?

Hope in God;

For I shall yet praise Him,

The help of my countenance and my God.

On the morning of the lift, July 30, 1988, nearly four hundred thousand people from eleven states were there. When everything was ready, Herman counted, 'one, two, three.' The 344 people lifted the barn, and it rose like nothing at all. The crowd cheered and applauded as they carried that 9 ton barn fifty yards up a hill in just three minutes.

How'd they do it? They got enough people to work towards a common goal, spreading the load evenly and equally, and at the same time, with one heart, one mind, one purpose, one direction and two hands they were able to accomplish the impossible.