



Berean Christian Fellowship

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Renewing our Vows—P2

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service” (1 Timothy 1:12).

When Christ took Communion with His disciples, He was establishing a covenant with them—a betrothal covenant between Himself and His Church through the impending sacrifice of Himself for her. Hence why He said, “do this in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22:19).

In this way, the Church taking Communion today is similar to a husband and wife regularly acknowledging, reflecting on, or renewing their vows—examining their relationship and recalling that they once pledged themselves to be committed, responsible, faithful, and accountable to each other. It is an opportunity to reflect: have I been? And it is an opportunity to reinvest ourselves. This is why Paul tells us to examine ourselves before taking Communion: “*Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup*” (1 Cor. 11:27-28). Are we taking our vows seriously?

One of the chief responsibilities of a betrothed woman in the Jewish marriage custom was to sew and prepare her wedding garment while she waited for her bridegroom to come for her and take her to the marriage supper. The more dedication and care she put into it, the more splendid she would appear for him. In Heaven, John saw a vision in the future when Christ’s “*bride has made herself ready. It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints*” (Rev. 19:7-8). These righteous deeds do not earn you salva-

tion, for you have already “*clothed yourself with Christ*” (Gal. 3:27b) through the betrothal covenant in His blood. Rather, these deeds of the Church are what pleases Christ and honors His Father. And they can only be pleasing if they are the fruit of His Holy Spirit in us—He enables us to do the works that please Him.

“*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them*” (Eph. 2:10). Are you preparing your “wedding garment” to honor His return?

“*Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God*” (Col. 1:10). “*Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord*” (1 Cor. 15:58). Indeed, “*Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve*” (Col. 3:23-24), “*who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds*” (Tit. 2:14). This is important to Jesus as He addresses five out of the seven churches in Revelation by saying, “*I know your deeds*” (Rev. 2:19a).

As with any intimate human relationship, half-hearted devotion is not pleasing—“*he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me*” (Matt. 10:38), for “*My righteous one shall live by faith; And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul*” (Heb. 10:38-39).

Through faith, we have not shrunk back, but dedicated our lives to Jesus and we belong to Him. May we live like we belong to Him.

Even so, Amen.

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