

FINISHING THE MYSTERY OF GOD

LESSON #7

THE WEDDING GARMENT

INTRODUCTION

All emphases are the authors unless noted. All scriptures are from the K.J.V. Bible unless otherwise stated.

We have looked at some awesome and wonderful truths concerning the finishing of the mystery of God. A mystery that is continually expanding and growing in our understanding. It is never-ending! We must look at yet another portion of that mystery. The wedding garment and its reception and manifestation within each of God's children. We must all have this garment in order to enter the heavenly promised land. This subject is revealed in the parable of the wedding garment in Matthew 22:1-14, and in COL 307-319. And the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. This is also part of the everlasting Gospel found in Revelation 14:6, 7 in the declaration that the judgement is (present tense) come. "Is come" indicates that this judgment is in progress while these three messages are being proclaimed to the world! we will also look at Daniel 7: 9, 10, 13, 14 as part of the investigative judgment.

It is truly a mystery how God is able to transform a sinner from unholiness to manifest the righteousness of Christ's character instead! An amazing transformation. But not all who have claimed Christianity are truly disciples and true Christians! Therefore, the need to investigate the claimants to see who are truly converted.

Let us pray:

Holy Father, I come to you in the name of Jesus asking for Your holy spirit to transform our characters into the righteousness of Christ's character! Please Father, guide my thinking, give me the words that will express Your thoughts as I write. Send that same spirit to abide in each heart that studies this lesson, may all understand and accept only the truth to the glory of the Father! Amen.

GC 488:2, Sent. 3. "The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly

understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. **Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill.** Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. **Each must meet the great Judge face to face. How important, then, that every mind contemplate often the solemn scene when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, when, with Daniel, every individual must stand in his lot, at the end of the days.**" {GC 488.2}.

"All who have received the light upon these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. **It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them.**" {GC 488.3}.

NOTE: We are told on page 425 of Great Controversy that the messages of Revelation 14, the three angel's messages, are purifying messages to purify God's people just before He comes in the clouds of heaven.

GC 423:1, 2. "Says the prophet: "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Malachi 3:2, 3. **Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator.**

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Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, **there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.** GC 425.1}.

When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing. "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." Malachi 3:4. **Then the church which our Lord at His coming is to receive to Himself will be a "glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."** Ephesians 5:27. **Then she will look "forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."** Song of Solomon 6:10." {GC 425.2}.

NOTE: I will assume all have a basic knowledge of the judgment brought to view in Revelation 14: 6, 7. It is part of the everlasting Gospel to be preached to all the world. What is this "investigative judgment?" It is a very controversial subject, hotly debated in the S.D.A. Church, and also ridiculed by their opponents. It is much opposed by many who think that all judgment and salvation was finished at the cross! While Christ's death and shed blood is sufficient to redeem all sinners, that death and blood does no one any benefit till it is applied to the individual. How that is done is revealed by the work and the ministration of the priest in the earthly sanctuary. This is the reason it is essential and of utmost importance that all have a good understanding of Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary! This subject should be clearly understood by the people of God in these last days! Most people do not like to be told of an investigation into their lives because it requires a decision involving a deeper commitment to

Christ than they are willing to embrace or give. This is due to a misconception of Christ's gift of Himself. He gave everything in heaven for us, all the treasures of heaven Christ laid at the cross to purchase the pearl of great price! This is due, in part, to a misconception and lack of understanding that there are two phases of the investigative judgment. One is conducted by the Father; the other phase is conducted by the Son. The Father is looking to see if all have the robe of Christ's righteousness, "THE WEDDING GARMENT." The Son is looking for the faith of Jesus, confession and repentance! He is looking for those that sigh and cry for all the abominations done in the church that He might cloth them with the wedding garment of His righteousness!

Matthew 22: 11-14. "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few *are* chosen." (Italics in original).

NOTE: The statement of the Father, "friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" Indicates an investigative judgment why he does not have on a wedding garment! This is the reason and source for the phrase "investigative judgment." This judgment is further revealed in Daniel.

Daniel 7: 9, 10. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." (Italics in original).

NOTE: This definitely reveals a judgement by the Father, "The Ancient of Days."

Daniel 7: 13, 14. "I saw in the night visions and, be-

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hold, *one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days*, and they brought him near before him. **And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.**” (Italics in original).

NOTE: This is in the setting of the Fathers judgement and indicates the Son is also to judge the house of God!

John 5: 26, 27. “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him (the Son) authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.”

NOTE: The Father is judging whether the guest have on the wedding garment. The Son is not looking for the wedding garment in His judgment! What is he looking for?

GC 479: 1-480: 1. “I beheld,” says the prophet Daniel, “till thrones were placed, and One that was Ancient of Days did sit: His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool; His throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:9, 10, R.V. {GC 479.1}.

“Thus, was presented to the prophet’s vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to every man should be rendered “according to his works.” The Ancient of Days is God the Father. Says the psalmist: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.” Psalm 90:2. It is He, the source of all being, and the fountain of all law, that is to preside in the judgment. And holy angels as ministers and witnesses, in number “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,” attend this great tribunal. {GC 479.2}.

“And, behold, one like the Son of man came with the

clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away.” Daniel 7:13, 14. **The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth. He comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man—to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits. {GC 479.3}.**

“In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So, in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. “Judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begins at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?” 1 Peter 4:17. [GC 480.1}.

NOTE: Here, only those who had CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE and WHOSE SINS WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE SANCTUARY had a part in the Judgment on the Day of Atonement! Please notice that along with confession and repentance those who are cleansed from the memory and knowledge of sin must needs have had their sins transferred to the sanctuary in heaven prior to that investigation. If this transfer of sin had not occurred no blotting out of the memory and knowledge and experience of sin could be achieved. Our sins must be transferred to the sanctuary in order for the final atonement to have effect!

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This is also revealed on page 421 of the Great Controversy.

GC 421: 3. “As anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary. And as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works. Revelation 22:12. {GC 421.3}.

NOTE: Here, not only confession and repentance and the transfer of sin to the heavenly sanctuary are required but also faith in Jesus is added to what Christ is looking for. He does not look for the robe of His righteousness! He knows we don’t have it yet! Christ is looking for confession (by confession sins are transferred to the heavenly sanctuary) of sin, repentance, and faith in Jesus, a faith that believes He can blot out and cleanse the individual from sin completely. This is the faith of Jesus!

It is clear to me, only those who have confessed their sins, repented, or turned from the sins, and have faith that Jesus can cleanse them totally from defilement, and have their sins transferred from themselves to the heavenly sanctuary, are given the wedding garment, the robe of Christ’s righteousness. So, Christ is looking for faith and repentance; the Father is looking to see if you have that robe of righteousness, the wedding garment on, the proof that sin is absent in his people!

Zechariah 3: 2-8. “And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the

LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: *is* not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by. And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they *are* men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.” (In each one of them).

NOTE: This is the ultimate fulfilling of the new birth! We are actually a new creation of God! All things were created by Christ and this is another fulfilling of that truth! Jesus is our creator! This process of creation is explained in Christ Object Lessons page 307-319. We will study portions of this to understand some of the criteria involved in the creation of the wedding garment that all must have if we are to stand before the Father without a mediator in the time of trouble! We will not study the entire chapter but will comment on certain passages from that chapter. It would be good if you read the whole chapter for yourself in your spare time. It is filled with pertinent information about receiving the wedding garment.

COL 307: 1. “The parable of the wedding garment opens before us a lesson of the highest consequence. By the marriage is represented the union of humanity with divinity; the wedding garment represents the character which all must possess who shall be accounted fit guests for the wedding.” {COL 307.1}.

NOTE: Could the fit guest be the same as the fit man in Lev. 16: 21. I think there is a connection here!

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COL 309: 2, 3. “The king’s servants who went out into the highways “gathered together all as many as they found, **both bad and good.**” It was a mixed company. **Some of them had no more real regard for the giver of the feast than had the ones who rejected the call.** The class first bidden could not afford, they thought, to sacrifice any worldly advantage for the sake of attending the king’s banquet. **And of those who accepted the invitation, there were some who thought only of benefiting themselves. They came to share the provisions of the feast, but had no desire to honor the king.**” {COL 309.2}.

NOTE: This is the reason for the investigative judgment. It is to determine who are true disciples of Christ and who are only there for the loaves and fishes.

Let’s continue in Christ Object Lessons:

“When the king came in to view the guests, **the real character of all was revealed.** For every guest at the feast there had been provided a wedding garment. This garment was a gift from the king. **By wearing it the guests showed their respect for the giver of the feast.** But one man was clothed in his common citizen dress. **He had refused to make the preparation required by the king. The garment provided for him at great cost he disdained to wear. Thus, he insulted his lord.** To the king’s demand, “How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?” **he could answer nothing. He was self-condemned.** Then the king said, “Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness.” {COL 309.3}.

NOTE: “Lessons of the highest consequence.” Can anything be higher? The marriage represents the “union of humanity with divinity,” no wonder these things are of the highest consequence! This is the character of God which is His law! Finally, we have received the character we have been struggling to achieve all these years of our probation.

COL 311: 3, 4. “Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God’s presence. **This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul.** “I counsel thee,” He says, “to buy of Me ... white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.”

Revelation 3:18. {COL 311.3}

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. “All our righteousness are as filthy rags.” Isaiah 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. (The knowledge and experience and memory of sin).

Jeremiah 17: 1. “The sin of Judah *is* written with a pen of iron, *and* with the point of a diamond: *it is* graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars.” (Italics in original).

Let us return to Christ Object Lessons:

“But the Son of God “was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.” Sin is defined to be “the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:5, 4. But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. {COL 311.4}.

NOTE: Remember, sanctification is the work that was done in the first apartment or holy place in the sanctuary but that does not entirely remove the penalty for sin! How is that? Because that apartment does not deal with the knowledge, experience and memory of sin. This memory of sin is as much defiling as the sin itself! This defilement is what the most holy apartment is to deal with address and cleans. It is the receiving of the divine nature of Christ! It is the new birth of our mind!

GC 488: 2, 3. “Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour’s mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The precious hours, instead of being given to pleasure, to display, or to gain seeking, should be devoted to an earnest, prayerful study of the word of truth. **The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgment should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position and work of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs them to fill.** Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. **Each must meet the great**

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Judge face to face. How important, then, that every mind contemplate often the solemn scene when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, when, with Daniel, every individual must stand in his lot, at the end of the days. GC 488.2}.

“All who have received the light upon these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ’s work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that **all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them.**” {GC 488.3}.

GC 428: 1, 2. “...The marriage is introduced, and the investigative judgment is clearly represented as taking place before the marriage. Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Matthew 22:11; Revelation 7:14. He who is found wanting is cast out, **but all who upon examination are seen to have the wedding garment on are accepted of God and accounted worthy of a share in His kingdom and a seat upon His throne. This work of examination of character, of determining who are prepared for the kingdom of God, is that of the investigative judgment, the closing of work in the sanctuary above.** GC 428.1}.

“When the work of investigation shall be ended, when the cases of those who in all ages have professed to be followers of Christ have been examined and decided, then, and not till then, probation will close, and the door of mercy will be shut. **Thus, in the one short sentence, “They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut,”** we are carried down through the Saviour’s **final ministration,** to the time when the great work for man’s salvation shall be completed. {GC 428.2}.

Revelation 22: 11. “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and

he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

NOTE: After this pronouncement probation is ended, every case has been decided for life or death by Him who makes no mistakes! Satan’s kingdom is forever finished and will be destroyed in the lake of fire at the end of the 1,000-year term in the bottomless pit!

COL 314: 3-5. “The truth is to be planted in the heart. It is to control the mind and regulate the affections. **The whole character must be stamped with the divine utterances. Every jot and tittle of the word of God is to be brought into the daily practice.** {COL 314.1}.

“He who becomes a partaker of the divine nature will be in harmony with God’s great standard of righteousness, His holy law. This is the rule by which God measures the actions of men. This will be the test of character in the judgment. {COL 314.2}.

“There are many who claim that by the death of Christ the law was abrogated; **but in this they contradict Christ’s own words,** “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets.... **Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law.**” Matthew 5:17, 18. It was to atone for man’s transgression of the law that Christ laid down His life. **Could the law have been changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died.** By His life on earth He honored the law of God. By His death He established it. **He gave His life as a sacrifice, not to destroy God’s law, not to create a lower standard, but that justice might be maintained, that the law might be shown to be immutable, that it might stand fast forever.** {COL 314.3}.

“Satan had claimed that it was impossible for man to obey God’s commandments; and in our own strength it is true that we cannot obey them. But Christ came in the form of humanity, and **by His perfect obedience He proved that humanity and divinity combined can obey every one of God’s precepts.** {COL 314.4}.

“As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:12. **This power is not in the human agent. It is the power of God. When a soul receives**

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Christ, he receives power to live the life of Christ. {COL 314.5}.

COL 316: 2-4. “The righteousness of Christ will not cover one cherished sin. A man may be a law-breaker in heart; yet if he commits no outward act of transgression, he may be regarded by the world as possessing great integrity. But God’s law looks into the secrets of the heart. Every act is judged by the motives that prompt it. Only that which is in accord with the principles of God’s law will stand in the judgment. {COL 316.2}.

“God is love. He has shown that love in the gift of Christ. When “He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” He withheld nothing from His purchased possession. (John 3:16.) He gave all heaven, from which we may draw strength and efficiency, that we be not repulsed or overcome by our great adversary. But the love of God does not lead Him to excuse sin. He did not excuse it in Satan; He did not excuse it in Adam or in Cain; nor will He excuse it in any other of the children of men. He will not connive at our sins or overlook our defects of character. He expects us to overcome in His name. {COL 316.3}.

Those who reject the gift of Christ’s righteousness are rejecting the attributes of character which would constitute them the sons and daughters of God. They are rejecting that which alone could give them a fitness for a place at the marriage feast.” {COL 316.4}.

COL 318:1 SENT 8-319: 1. “They beheld the beauty of the character of Christ. But with the many it was all in vain. They would not surrender their own habits and character. They would not put off the garments of earth in order to be clothed with the robe of heaven. Their hearts were given to covetousness. They loved the associations of the world more than they loved their God. {COL 318.1}.

“Solemn will be the day of final decision. In prophetic vision the apostle John describes it: “I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand

before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” Revelation 20:11, 12. {COL 318.2}.

“Sad will be the retrospect in that day when men stand face to face with eternity. The whole life will present itself just as it has been. The world’s pleasures, riches, and honors will not then seem so important. Men will then see that the righteousness they despised is alone of value. They will see that they have fashioned their characters under the deceptive allurements of Satan. The garments they have chosen are the badge of their allegiance to the first great apostate. Then they will see the results of their choice. They will have a knowledge of what it means to transgress the commandments of God. {COL 318.3}.

“There will be no future probation in which to prepare for eternity. It is in this life that we are to put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness. This is our only opportunity to form characters for the home which Christ has made ready for those who obey His commandments.” {COL 319.1}.

NOTE: Many believe they will have seven years to get right with Christ after the rapture. NOT SO, Christ’s reward is with Him when He comes. That reward is life or death! There is no other opportunity for redemption at that time!

Deuteronomy 20: 3, 4. “And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: (for us it is the Devil and his host), let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them; For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.” (Italics in original).

NOTE: Just as the door to the ark in Noah’s day was shut so shall the door to salvation be shut to those who have refused to surrender all to Christ. When the decree goes forth “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22: 11. Probation for

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the human race is ended! Every case will have been decided for life or death. Where will you stand in that day? Will you have on the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness? Or will you still have your citizen's dress? This is your choice for life or death! Choose therefor life!

Let us pray:

Holy Father, please give conviction to all to re-evaluate their commitment to You. Send your holy spirit to convict each heart of the extreme importance of this commitment. Forgive our sins and create in us a new divine spirit that we might obey! I ask this in the name of Jesus Your only begotten Son. Amen.

Your brother in Christ

Virgil Prindle