

## THE BRIDE OF CHRIST



David Wilkerson March 24, 2016

The truth is, not all our trials are tests of faith. Often, the Lord is after something more when we're in the furnace of affliction. Indeed, the closer you walk with Christ and the deeper your trials, the more He is working in you to accomplish something other than faith.

Yet, don't misunderstand: whenever our faith wavers, tests of faith will come. We will never be completely beyond such testing. But here is another of God's purposes in our trials: The Father is preparing a Bride for His Son.

He wants more from us in our trials than greater faith. This Bride is going to be tried severely, and her love for the Bridegroom will come through the fire. Her trust in Him will be refined through fires, floods and afflictions. Yet, these trials aren't a matter of testing her love and devotion. Rather, they're about refining a love that is already fully committed. Let me explain.

I believe many reading this message are fully committed to Christ. Jesus is the great love of your life, and your trust in Him is flourishing. Certainly, there still are times when that trust is tested. But God is looking for something else from you, something more. His preparation of the Bride requires that He do a supernatural work in you.

This Bride—Jesus' chosen beloved—must be consumed with a longing to be with her Bridegroom. She has to be weaned from all other attractions. She must be obsessed by a desire to always be in His bodily presence. Paul refers to this longing when he writes of his own desire "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

This was not a morbid fixation with death on Paul's part. The apostle clearly lived a full, useful life, but he said, "Something in me yearns to be with the Lord, where He is. I long to be face-to-face with Him." To make such a claim, Paul had to be completely weaned from this world and its attractions.

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