



READY FOR THE KING

A JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF JESUS TO PREPARE FOR HIS RETURN

CATHERINE M. VITETTA

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Ready for the King, E-Book, PDF

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DEDICATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to dedicate this book to its “ghost writer” - the Holy Spirit of the living God!

I found it quite amusing that the Lord would have me write a devotional because honestly, I have never even read a devotional. I have always read the Bible as my devotional material, in order to learn of God directly through His Holy Word. I truly feel that as I wrote this book, I was only a scribe for the Holy Spirit and a willing vessel for the Lord.

The Lord never ceases to amaze me in the myriad of unexpected ways in which He chooses to utilize His willing children for His Kingdom purposes. Although many times we feel that we lack the skills to do what the Lord has personally called us to do, we must always remember Matthew 19:26 which states “WITH God, ALL things are possible,” especially when we keep our eyes on Jesus! We serve an amazing God!

I would also like to thank my dear friends and siblings in Christ, Pastor Tom and Marcia Patterson, for their friendship, mentorship, prayers, wisdom, guidance, and assistance in helping me to complete this assignment for the Lord. They truly have a servant's heart!

Finally, I would like to thank Manifest International for their prayer filled, Holy Spirit led guidance in the process of the final work necessary for the completion and production of this book for the Lord. I truly believe it was a “match made in Heaven.”

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Introduction

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus, desires to draw all of us into a deeper understanding of His heart and into a deeper relationship with Him. If you are reading this right now, I want to assure you that it is not by accident. The Master Potter, our sovereign Lord, is seeking you out at this time to fashion you into ALL that He has designed for you to become in order to fulfill His Kingdom purposes here on planet Earth.

As you will see, the Lord will reference His letters to the seven churches in the Book of Revelation as the framework upon which we will learn more about what is in the heart of Jesus, what pleases Him, and what displeases Him. We will unpack these scriptures one at a time beginning with some Biblical history. These letters to the seven churches in Asia were written by the Apostle John while he was banished to the island of Patmos as punishment for preaching the gospel. He received these words directly from our Lord and Savior, Jesus. We must keep in mind that these letters written by the Lord through his servant John were specifically intended for the church. It was not intended for the unbelievers. The Lord's intention was to provide encouragement as well as correction for His followers. It was the Lord's desire that the seven churches shine their light in an otherwise spiritually dark world.

I find it very interesting that God chose to utilize a small portion of scripture from the Book of Revelation to provide to all of us a deeper revelation of His heart and what He would like to see from us, His children. In the past, I hurriedly skipped over these particular passages because I was so eager to read

about the end-times events which will precede the return of Jesus, some of which are still yet to come in this world.

Like me, you may now be thinking, “Well, what does this have to do with me today?” I believe that one of the most important goals of the Lord for writing this book is to prepare His church for His return in ways that are far more important than preservation of our physical body. His goal is to ensure that His church is prepared spiritually and emotionally to endure the anticipated end time events.

Many of us who await the Lord's return with joyful anticipation have done some preparing in practical ways for the events to come. Some of us have stored up food and water for the time of lack ahead, others have been led to physically move to another area, others have started small home churches, etc. It is one thing to do these things in obedience to how the Lord leads us specifically, but another thing altogether to do these tasks out of fear for what may lie ahead. We must each be led by the Lord, and not by our fear or our flesh.

With this said, if we are not right with God spiritually, and we are not emotionally prepared to serve Him with all that is in us, no matter what happens in world events in the days to come, what difference does food, shelter, and short-term physical survival make? After all, as Mark 8:3 states, “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

Therefore, these passages are actually a very timely word from the Lord for believers living today. The Lord continues to speak to all of us through His Holy Word in the Bible. I believe the Lord is asking us as His children to examine ourselves in order to ensure that we are all fully ready for His return. His deepest desire is to spend all eternity with us! We don't want to miss it!

You see, the Lord already expressed His intense love for us through His actions: His humble birth, life, horrific death, and resurrection from the dead to free His creation from the bondages of sin and death! Rather, this book is about what the Lord longs to receive back from His beloved creation! As followers of Christ Jesus, it is our job to learn of Him, worship Him, serve Him, and obey Him. These words can cause a carnal person to *shudder*. However, for those of us who love the Lord, the funny thing is that the level of personal joy we experience when we follow, learn, worship, serve, and obey Him is incredible and hard to put into words! It is our job to always remain open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and follow as He leads us.

The Lord's perspective is always the eternal, not the temporal. It is His greatest desire that ALL of His children spend eternity with Him in paradise! John 6:39 states, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day." It is important to know the Lord's heart and desires, and what pleases and displeases Him, so that we can repent of any wrongdoing and act upon that which is pleasing to the Lord. In other words, we need to be fully ready at all times to meet our Lord and Savior. We know not the day or the hour when we will finally meet Him face to face.

As I was pondering how we do not know the day or hour of the Lord's return, the parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25 came to mind. As I thought about this parable, I realized something that had never occurred to me before. All ten virgins believed in their bridegroom, all were awaiting His return, and all were prepared to varying degrees to meet him upon His arrival. This is how all current followers of Christ are the same as the ten virgins: we believe in our Bridegroom, we await our Bridegroom's return, and we are all ready to meet

our Bridegroom in varying degrees of preparation. It is that last clause *in varying degrees* that needs to be more closely investigated.

In the story of the ten virgins, all of them had oil in their lamps initially, but only five of them kept the oil levels full, and had additional oil on hand just in case it was needed in preparation to meet their bridegroom. These were the five wise virgins who later went on to the wedding supper with their groom. The five foolish virgins were slothful in that they did not bother to plan ahead and bring extra oil for their lamps. When the bridegroom approached, the foolish virgins found that they had run out of oil and were actually not ready for their bridegroom's arrival. Because the foolish virgins were not ready to meet the bridegroom when he arrived, they were not allowed into the wedding supper. Their bridegroom said to them in Matthew 25:12, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

Please let that sink in! These were fellow believers who did not make it into the wedding supper because they became slothful and were not, in fact, prepared for their bridegroom's arrival! Please don't let that be you! The Lord wants to share His heart with you to ensure you remain or become a wise virgin. Our actions and the motivations thereof will determine our eternal destination – heaven with the Lord or hell without Him.

Are you truly ready for the Lord's return?

As we go through these passages of Revelation, we will also stop to ponder what this means in our lives today. Questions for reflection are posed throughout the book so that we invite the Word of God into our hearts to help us prepare and be ready for the Lord's return. As you consider your answers to these questions, please be honest with yourself. The Lord already knows your answers and He already knows the truth

about you. Now, He wants YOU to know the truth about you so you can be led by His Spirit into making wiser decisions and choices.

My prayer for you is that the Lord uses this book to touch your heart in such a way so as to ensure that you remain ready for His return and so that you can spend all eternity with Him! As you use this book to examine yourselves through the lens of His eyes and His heart, may the Lord Jesus richly bless you. Amen.

CHAPTER ONE
The Church at Ephesus

Revelation 2:1-7 - 1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 4 Nevertheless I have [somewhat] against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

The very first letter was written to the church at Ephesus, which happened to be a coastal city in what is now Turkey. Of all the seven churches, the church at Ephesus was the closest to Patmos. Ephesus was a major city at the crossroads of Greek and Oriental cultures and so, Ephesian people participated in idolatry of false gods and goddesses, such as Diana – the goddess of fertility. Ephesians were also immersed in magical arts. Therefore, since these false religions flourished in this area at this time in history, the true Church at Ephesus suffered much persecution.

Also of note, is that every letter is addressed to the angel of each church. In both the Greek and Hebrew languages, angel refers to a “messenger,” which actually refers to the church leaders. Following His address to the church leaders, Jesus begins by identifying an aspect of Himself so that there is no question in the recipient’s mind who is addressing them. In His letter to Ephesus, which is quoted above, Jesus states He is the one holding the seven stars in His right hand, and the one who walks in the midst of the seven candlesticks. Revelation 1:20 had stated that the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, while the seven candlesticks represent the seven churches. In other words, Jesus is the ultimate head and overseer of the true church. He is God!

Jesus then continues his letter to the Church of Ephesus by commending them on their diligent work, patience in suffering, and firm stance against evil. In the face of great opposition and persecution, the Christians in Ephesus held strong to their beliefs in the gospel message. They did not compromise their beliefs to gain acceptance or popularity in the general population at Ephesus, and they willingly suffered in the natural because of their firm stance. The Lord commended them for this.

It is clear that the Lord expects His children to stand steadfast and true in their faith, and to speak the truth in love. He commends those who suffer for His namesake, and for righteousness. How do we know this? Because the Word of God in the Bible says so! Some examples are:

Matthew 10:33 - 33 [Jesus speaking] But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

1 Peter 3:14-15 - 14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy [are ye]: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and [be] ready always to [give] an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness [gentleness] and fear [respect.]

Again, the Lord wants us to present and defend the full truth of the gospel message in a kind, gentle, and respectful manner.

QUESTION: Do I compromise my statement of faith and beliefs in order to gain acceptance or avoid confrontation? Do I only present partial Biblical truths instead of the full truth? Do I keep my faith to myself so that I do not have to defend my beliefs to anyone?

Next, we understand that the Church of Ephesus did not tolerate