

# Prepare with Strong Fellowship

Sane and Sensible Perspectives on the Last Days

The picture Paul gives in Ephesians of Christian maturity is of believers who have united together, finding their place and purpose within the Body of Christ as a whole. Not a fractured Body, but a living, loving whole, undivided by bitterness, jealousy and suspicion. To survive the troubled times ahead, we will need to be in close, committed fellowship with other believers.

This means we will need to trust each other and sacrificially serve one another at more than superficial levels. If we can't do that now, how can we expect to be a part of the "spotless" Bride for whom the Lord is returning?



**And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV**

## End Times Challenge

We know, we have been warned, that there will be a great falling away from the faith at the End of the Age.<sup>1</sup> The enemy wants to "reap" that great falling away. How can we make sure that we won't end up in his net?

## Bridal Response

### Step 1. Pray!

This must be repeated with every new challenge, because our usual reaction is to look to past experience and our abilities and say, "No way!" or try slugging it out bravely in our own strength. We all-too-easily forget that our strength is in Him, our hope is in Him—not in ourselves. So, if the Holy Spirit is making us aware (waking us up) to a fresh challenge, then the first thing the Lord wants us to do is cast that care on Jesus, because He cares for us enough to help us with it.<sup>2</sup> Pray, therefore, until fear and doubt fall away. Jesus is willing and able to help us with anything, that's why He guarantees in scripture that if we call on Him, He will rescue/save/help us every time.<sup>3</sup> How much do you have to call? Cry out in prayer until you receive confidence that He has heard you and the help is on the way.



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## Step 2. Forgive and Embrace

The Lord's antidote for the world (with all its woes) is the church. Don't think buildings. Think people. But that's the problem, isn't it? We rarely get wounded by or offended with the architecture; it's with the people on the inside. Nevertheless, Jesus' plan evidently includes making sure we come into close personal fellowship with other believers. That sounds good and can be really great, but it also includes rubbing shoulders with people who are sinful like ourselves (though perhaps in different ways). If we have not learned how to say grace over this, we are already "falling away" from the condition of heart Jesus requires of us. He said we are to love one another in the same way that He loves us.<sup>4</sup> His kind of unselfish, sacrificial, over-coming love can only be grown in close, committed relationship with people of His choosing. That's the church.

When we are united with one another a supernatural "force multiplier" goes to work. We are dangerous to the enemy's kingdom when we stand "as one" against him. Likewise, Jesus can do wonders at advancing His kingdom when we are all pulling at the oars with one heart and mind. Knowing this, the enemy has done his best to sow discord and offense within the Body. Already there are many who have dropped out, become discouraged, lost their passion and ceased "meeting together" with other believers. We are all going to have to work at overcoming this self-defeating tendency! Maybe we aren't overcome by it (yet), but probably we know and love some who are. What can be done?

Offense is a combination of pride and unforgiveness. We hold Christians and Christian leaders to a higher standard, but we forget that we need mercy all the time, especially for the judging we do of fellow believers. Jesus commands us to love and forgive one another from the heart. Until now, He seems to give grace on this issue, weighing with compassion the wounds we carry and, therefore, not bringing our own sin of cold love under strict judgment. But the time is coming when "cold love" will cause many to become lost. So, let's practice the warm love of a rekindled heart by forgiving everyone for everything and re-open our hearts wide to loving every fellow believer. Close fellowship is a luxury now. It will be life-support in the future.

**Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 ESV**

## Next Way to Prepare

**Prepare by Learning Guidance** Jesus says that His sheep hear His voice. They not only know the scriptures, but they are able to listen for direction, encouragement and correction coming directly from Him. In the days ahead, it won't be enough to know His Word. It's won't be enough to hear from His prophets. It's highly likely that we will all need to listen directly to Him in one



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situation of danger or hardship after another. The truth is that we should all be doing this now! If we aren't, there is still time to learn, but guidance isn't a science that can be taught in a classroom. It's an art that is best learned by daily practice. Here's how.

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.

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<sup>1</sup> And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. Matthew 24:10 ESV

<sup>2</sup> Pride (in us) tries to find the answer to life's challenges in us; humility casts all cares on the One who wants to help us: Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7 ESV

<sup>3</sup> This promise is given numerous times in scripture. The Lord wants us to know His help is always available to anyone who calls on Him for anything—lavishly available ("bestowing His riches"). For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him: For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:12-13 ESV

<sup>4</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. John 13:34 ESV

