

MISSIONS MONTH 2021

The Bride Made Ready

PASTOR NICOLO PADILLA

As a young boy, I looked forward to Sundays. Back then, Sundays meant eating out at our favorite restaurants - Aristocrat or House of Minis were our usual picks - after church, then immediately heading to Lola's to spend time with the rest of our family. This was our routine for years and we enjoyed it! It was something I anticipated and longed for, and in a way, it became a source of hope, because regardless of how dreadful and dragging my days seemed, I knew that, ultimately, Sunday would be just around the corner!

In a general sense, I believe that anticipating and longing for something greatly affects how we live and respond in the present. Having something to anticipate and long for gives a sense of purpose and direction, and, as mentioned above, it is a source of hope. In the context of eschatology, C.S. Lewis puts it this way,

"If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were precisely those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this." Clive Staples established the relationship between our focus on the coming restoration of all things and our participation in the here and now. In other words, he believes that our anticipation and longing for our blessed hope directly influences our participation in His Kingdom building. To put it

simply, the more we anticipate, the more we participate!

For this year's Missions Month, we will continue to give emphasis on the glory of the soon return of Jesus. This time, however, we will approach this through the lens of a bride who is longing for the day of her wedding. Revelation 19:6-10 paints a beautiful picture of the grandest wedding of all - the coming wedding of the Lamb and His bride!

Can you imagine what this must have been like for John to witness? This was something that the prophets of old anticipated and longed for:

"For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." - Isaiah 62:5

"And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me my Baal...And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy." - Hosea 2:16, 19

The vivid imagery of the LORD's desire to be one with His people is seen throughout Scripture. For the Apostle Paul, this was the very reason why Jesus gave himself up for the church,

"Husbands, love your wives, as

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish." - Ephesians 5:25-27

As we journey in the next weeks, I pray that our hearts would long for this glorious day! I pray that our anticipation for the coming of our groom would fuel our participation for making disciples of all nations, that with one voice, with one cry, we would all declare, "Come, LORD Jesus!" ✱

Join our upcoming events.
For inquiries, visit our FB page.

