

# Session 3: Praying for the Corporate Man

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## I. The Mandate for Eternal Purpose Prayer

1. A brief overview of the approach we use at Lifeschool to pray for God's eternal purpose will be helpful as we begin.
  - a. Now that we have explained the end-time church's summons to the golden altar and have defined eternal purpose prayer, we want to discuss four overall prayer themes which characterize the approach we use at Lifeschool to pray so as to do our part to fill the bowls of incense at the golden altar and to pray according to God's eternal purpose. Even though these are the overall prayer themes that we have highlighted for eternal purpose prayer, there are many prayer topics under each theme. We have listed a few topics in each of these four sessions to give insight into how one might pray into the various prayer themes, but as always we must be led by the Holy Spirit as we pray into God's eternal purpose.
  - b. The four different prayer themes are:
    - Praying for the mature corporate man to arise
    - Resisting the great harlot
    - Restraining the spirit of antichrist
    - Praying for Israel
  - c. This session focuses on the first of these four prayer themes—praying for the mature corporate man to arise. Before delving into the topic of praying for the arising of the corporate man, let's very briefly explain how these four themes fit together and why they are appropriate for our study about becoming an eternal purpose house of prayer.
  - d. First, praying for the mature corporate man to arise. As we know from other classes and prior sessions, the coming forth of a mature corporate man who will be a family of mature sons for the Father and a spotless bride for Christ is the overall objective of the church age and the primary goal for prayer that will fill the golden incense bowls. Therefore, the primary objective of eternal purpose prayer is to pray for this mature man to arise in fullness.
  - e. The question naturally arises as to why—if the above is the goal of eternal purpose prayer—should an eternal purpose house of prayer also include in its prayer focus the resisting of the great harlot and the restraining of the spirit of antichrist. I must admit that some who would pray into God's eternal purposes would not include prayer into these issues. Our reasoning for including these two themes into eternal purpose prayer is that the spirit behind the great harlot is the demonic world ruler that attempts to create a culture in which individuals and even entire nations are seduced away from purity and devotion to Christ. In partnership with the great harlot is the spirit of antichrist. The spirit of antichrist, many times working through governments and governmental agencies, opposes people following Christ in fullness, thus likewise attempting to take people away from Christ. Therefore, both of these issues attempt to hinder the arising of the corporate man in fullness, and thus become important prayer themes of an eternal purpose house of prayer.

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- f. Next, the question arises of why is praying for Israel an appropriate theme for an eternal purpose house of prayer. In one sense, it is debatable if praying for Israel is a topic directly related to God's eternal blueprint. Even so, from our perspective there are reasons to include prayer for Israel in eternal purpose prayer. First, the scriptures tell us to pray for Israel. Second, Jerusalem will be the place of Jesus' throne following His second coming and during His millennial kingdom reign; and, third, it is a prayer topic that God will use to fill the golden incense bowls. Therefore, we include it as a prayer theme for an eternal purpose house of prayer.
- g. Now that we have introduced the four themes, let's focus in this session on praying for the arising of the mature corporate man.

### 2. In order to understand what is involved in praying for the coming forth of the mature corporate man, let's begin with a brief summary of the ultimate goal of the church age.

- a. Simply said, the ultimate goal of the church age is to prepare a mature corporate man. If you are a student in the *Forerunner School*, the following paragraphs might be repetitive. Even so, let's spend a little time discussing who the corporate man is beginning with the goal of the church age.
- b. The ultimate goal of the church age is to prepare a mature corporate man as a mature son for the heavenly Father and a prepared bride for the eternal Son. Revelation 12 records the birth of the mature corporate man (also referred to as the manchild) who will have been made ready as a full representative of Christ in the earth. Here is the passage,

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a son, a male child [*manchild in KJV, italics mine*], who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne (Rev. 12:1-5).

- c. The manchild is the mature corporate man who will be a prepared bride for Christ and a mature corporate son for the Father. The scriptures teach that when the manchild is made ready, the great tribulation will begin. Thus, Revelation 12 foretells of an event which will initiate a shift from the church age to the millennial reign of Christ. This is the event which initiates the casting of the dragon to earth, the rise of the antichrist, and the beginning of the last three and one-half years of the church age. The manchild will be the first fruits of the corporate man made ready.
- d. The scriptures also teach that three and one-half years later, the bride will have been fully made ready,

Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready (Rev. 19:7).

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- e. Four verses later, the scriptures record the second coming of Christ. When the bride is fully made ready, Christ will return. Therefore, we see from Revelation 12 and 19 that the coming forth of the mature corporate man who will be a family of sons for the Father and a prepared bride for Christ will bring to conclusion the church age and transition the earth into the age to come. Therefore, when the full complement of mature sons/bride are made ready, the church age will end. Summarizing, the events which will facilitate the end of the age will not be the increase of darkness in the earth but the arising of the corporate man—the manchild of Revelation 12 and the prepared bride of Revelation 19.
  
- f. The book of Revelation is not the only place which discusses the coming forth of a mature man. The apostle Paul also wrote of the preparation of a mature corporate man. The book of Ephesians records God’s mandate to fivefold leaders, that being to prepare a mature man to be presented to Christ at His coming. To illustrate, in the context of Christ and His bride, Paul wrote,
  - ...that He might present to Himself the church [the bride] in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless (Eph. 5:27).
  
- g. And, in writing about the role of fivefold leadership, he stated this,
  - And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to *a mature man*, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:11-13).
  
- h. In this epistle, the theme of which is God’s eternal purpose, Paul expresses the goal of a mature man and gives the mandate to fivefold leaders of the global church to equip the saints until they become *a mature man in fullness*. Note that he says “a” mature man, not many mature individuals but a corporate mature man who represents Christ in fullness.

### 3. Therefore, God’s primary purpose for the Church age is to prepare a corporate mature man who will be made ready as God’s eternal partner.

- a. So that we can pray effectively, let’s be clear about the primary purpose of the church age. It is to prepare a people for the Lord. It is to prepare a people as mature sons for the Father and as an equally yoked bride for the Son to live as a temple for the Holy Spirit. This company of prepared believers will partner with God in the end times and will become God’s eternal partner as He expands His kingdom throughout the creation.
  
- b. This is the purpose of this age, not to get rich, or to walk in health, or to have our own kingdom ministry. It is not to take dominion over the seven mountains of culture or to restore Jewish practices. It is not to get us from one week to another through the counsel and wisdom of man—it is to prepare a bride who can live in full union with Christ in passionate love, radical pursuit, and full nature and character so as to be equally yoked with Christ. That is the primary purpose of this age.
  
- c. Even though we do not know the timing of the end of the church age, when God accomplishes His objective for this age, the age will end. Christ’s second coming will not be dependent on the coming of the antichrist and the darkness which will surround his reign; instead, it will depend upon God fulfilling His objective for the church age. When He has completed His “to do list” for this age, the transition three and one-half years of this age.

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- d. When God's remnant has made herself ready as God's eternal plan so dictates, the purpose of this age will have been completed and the transition to the age to come will commence. No matter how dark it gets in the earth and no matter how much evil arises, the Lord will not come back until the bride has made herself ready—why because there is an eternal plan for this age and it must be fulfilled before God moves to the next age.
- e. Thus, we see that God's eternal purpose for this age is to prepare a corporate mature man who is passionately in love with Christ, has taken on His image in fullness, and represents Christ as His bride/body—that is, as His eternal partner and representative throughout the ages. This group we are calling "the corporate man" will dwell in great intimacy with the Godhead sitting with Him on His throne and partnering with God forever in the expansion of His never-ending kingdom. The Holy Spirit is on a journey now to prepare an equally yoked bride for the Son and a family of mature sons for the Father to dwell eternally as a temple for the Holy Spirit.

## II. Praying for the Arising of the Corporate Man

### 1. The church must *grow* into maturity so as to be made ready.

- a. The mature corporate man does not arise automatically once someone is born again. Maturity does not occur at salvation; instead, believers must grow into maturity. In quoting Ephesians 4:11-13 as we did previously, we note that both the fivefold ministry and the church in general are called to build up the body of Christ until it becomes "a mature man to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Drawing from Ephesians 4, we note several attributes that the church must possess in order to become this mature man. The church must be built up so as to attain unity of the faith, true knowledge of the Son of God, be conformed into the stature of Christ in fullness, become steadfast in beliefs and doctrine, and be built up in love.
- b. Certainly not a complete list, we see from this and other passages that the mature corporate man/prepared bride/mature sons must exhibit the following traits.
  - Be filled unto fullness with Christ.
  - Be in full union with Christ in body, soul, and spirit.
  - Live in an intimate dining relationship with Christ.
  - Be conformed into the image of Christ.
  - Be passionately in love with Christ.
- c. In a message spoken on August 8, 2021, my son, Bryan, listed twelve traits of the bride made ready. I list them here as they offer a more comprehensive set of traits that the prepared bride must possess. They are:
  1. The bride made ready will love Jesus as her all-consuming first love.
  2. The bride made ready will be faithful to the Lamb in the face of persecution and even death.
  3. The bride made will wholeheartedly love the truth, seek the truth, obey the truth, and proclaim the truth.

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4. The bride made ready will overcome Jezebel and resist her influence in every area of our lives and spheres of authority.
5. The bride made ready will overcome spiritual apathy and slumber and will be wide awake for the coming of the Bridegroom like a wise virgin whose lamp is filled with oil and whose light is burning brightly.
6. The bride made ready will persevere in the victory of Christ until the end.
7. The bride made ready will burn with the fire of God's jealous love for His beloved Son, as this fire removes all that hinders first love in our hearts, souls, and bodies, including lukewarmness and self-satisfaction. She will enter into a dining-relationship of deep internal intimacy with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
8. The bride made ready will have her self-life fully crucified by the Holy Spirit and will live fully by the indwelling life of Christ, empowering her to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil and to be internally possessed by the Spirit of God.
9. The bride made ready will be an equally-yoked wife, having the Lamb's nature formed deeply within her heart and soul, making her lamb-like in character.
10. The bride made ready will be glorious within, having no spot, stain, or wrinkle internally or externally. She will be pure in heart and holy in action.
11. The bride made ready will follow the Lamb wherever He goes, living in moment-by-moment reliance and absolute obedience to the indwelling Spirit.
12. The bride made ready will have purified lips that only speak the truth in love.

### 2. For these traits and others to emerge in believers, the church must partner in prayer with the Holy Spirit for the corporate man to mature.

- a. Again drawing from Ephesians 4 and other scriptures, we note several tasks that must be performed by the church in order for the mature man to arise. Fivefold ministers and the church at large must devote much energy to calling the church to maturity and to building up of the body of Christ. This includes speaking the truth in love and equipping the body of Christ for works of service.
- b. The church must also pray. The books of Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians, referred to as Paul's prison epistles, were written around the same time in his ministry and are all focused on the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose and the maturity of the church. They all contain the exhortation to pray and include prayers to that end. Some of the references for these prayers are,
  - Ephesians 1:15-23
  - Ephesians 3:14-19
  - Ephesians 6:18-20
  - Philippians 1:9-11
  - Colossians 1:9-14
- c. Therefore, for the purposes of this class, the church must pray for the arising of the corporate man.

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### 3. Prayer for the mature corporate man to arise is a mandate to the church.

- a. Even though we have listed these passages before, we will do so again as they illustrate the necessity of filling the golden bowls of incense that are connected with the heavenly altar of incense,

When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints (Rev. 5:8).

Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake (Rev. 8:3-5).

- b. The first of these passages speaks of the golden bowls of incense which are the prayers of the saints being full as a prerequisite for the seal judgments to be released into the earth. The second which speaks of the prayers of the saints ascending to the heavenly golden altar and there being mixed with incense from that altar being necessary to release the trumpet judgments. These two passages make it clear that prayer which ascends to the golden altar is a necessary component to the bringing about the conclusion of the church age, the transition to the age to come, and the preparation of the mature corporate man.

### 4. An eternal purpose house of prayer must labor until Christ is formed in a people in fullness.

- a. The coming forth of the corporate man in fullness will require a concentrated effort on the part of the church for this to happen. Paul wrote these simple yet profound words, “My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you” (Gal. 4:1, NASU). The King James Version of this same verse reads, “My little children, of whom I *travail* in birth again until Christ be formed in you” (Gal. 4:19, KJV). There are two important components to this important verse—labor or travail which we look at in a moment and Christ to be formed in a people. Paul’s ministry was to fulfill God’s eternal purpose in a people in fullness. His task in so doing was to form Christ internally within a people.
- b. The same idea of Christ being formed in a people as being the goal of the church age also appears in Paul’s letter to the Colossians. Paul wrote “to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). As illustrated in these and many other verses, the corporate man/prepared bride/mature son is made ready when Christ is formed internally within a people. Therefore, Paul was laboring to produce the mature corporate man.
- c. A second point from Galatians 4:19 is that God’s mature sons/bride/body *must be birthed from within the womb of the church through fervent prayer*. The eternal purpose church must labor, in fact, travail if necessary to facilitate the emergence of a people who have overcome so as to take on the nature of Christ in fullness. Without fervent, passionate intercession—even travail—the manchild will not arise in fullness in either nature or number.

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- d. Paul wrote in the book of Romans a similar idea calling the church to pray with great fervency, even travail, for the emergence of mature sons,

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that *the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth* together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, *even we ourselves groan* within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body...In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but *the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words*; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God...And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren*" (Rom. 8:19-29).

- e. The eternal purpose church must take on the attitude of fervent prayer to birth a present day manchild. It will take fervent prayer, even travail to see the mature corporate man birthed in our day. We must take up the mantle of intercession and pray fervently until the manchild is birthed.
- f. My wife, Donna, wrote this wonderful summary in her prayer journal in September of 2014 as she was beginning a prayer group to pray for the arising of the corporate man. She wrote,

We have a mission-critical role to play in the earth. There is still a lot we do not understand about Revelation 12, but we sense that the woman represents the church, the dragon represents the enemy, and the manchild represents the mature church. As this passage reads, the church is to be in travail for the purpose of birthing the manchild in the earth in these last days. The manchild will rule the nations with a rod of iron as Christ's representative and must be birthed in our day from the womb of the church. The manchild is the worthy bride, the overcoming sons, the remnant, the exceedingly great army, etc. being birthed in these end times. They are all different ways of stating the same group. This manchild company of believers must be birthed through the travail of intercessors within the church. The dragon is standing before the church to abort the birth but the woman must persevere in travail until the birth takes place. This is the overriding purpose of our prayer group –to birth the manchild.

### 5. In praying for the corporate man to arise, there are a variety of prayer themes that can be categorized into this overall theme.

- a. To help us understand some specific types of prayers which fall into the category of prayer for the arising of the corporate man, we have attempted to highlight a few prayer themes that will fit into the category of the maturing of a corporate man. We are including these topics not in an attempt to be comprehensive but to illustrate several ways we might pray into the overall theme of praying for the corporate man to arise. We should be aware that even within each topic, there are numerous issues for prayer. As you study the classes of Lifeschool and the Forerunner School, you will quickly gain your own vocabulary for ways you will pray for the corporate man to arise.

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b. With that explanation, we now list ten prayer points which would fall into the category of the coming forth of the mature corporate man. We are presenting these topics in a format in which we might pray them. Again, these are presented for the purpose of illustration. When actually praying into these topics, we must be led by the Holy Spirit.

- Lord, make ready Your bride by clothing her with wedding garments of righteousness.  
Within this category, one could pray for believers to overcome specific areas of unrighteousness; we could pray into the issues highlighted in Jesus' messages to the seven churches of Revelation; or we could pray into some of the traits of the flesh listed in Paul's epistles.
- Lord, lead Your church to overcome and to be a company of overcomers.  
Under this category, you could ask the Lord to grant grace to the church to overcome the variety of issues highlighted in Jesus' messages to the seven churches of Revelation. Issues like overcoming Jezebel which influenced the church at Thyatira or lukewarmness that affected Laodicea would be prime examples.
- Lord, form Christ in Your people in fullness.  
In this category, prayer topics could include asking the Lord to allow Christ to arise within the soul lives of His people so that it is no longer "I [soul life] who live" but Christ who lives within a people in fullness. You could pray into a variety of issues where believers and churches are pursuing the soul life rather than the life of Christ.
- Lord, draw Your people into closer union with You.  
Here, one could pray acknowledging that when we are born again our spirit is in perfect union with the Spirit of Christ and, in addition, asking that the same level of union in body and soul.
- Lord, lead Your church to greater intimacy with Christ.  
There are many ways one could pray into this category. Much or all of the Song of Songs highlights ways to pray for greater intimacy. John's gospel is filled with ideas especially John 13-17, and the Parable of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25 are great examples.
- Lord, empower Your church to dine with You.  
Under this heading, one could pray that the church would open the door of their heart so that Christ might come in to dine. Or prayer could be offered for the church to come out of its busyness, distractions, and love of worldly pleasure in order to devote time for the Lord.
- Lord, create in Your church a passion and lovesickness for You.  
Prayers asking the Lord to put a longing in the heart of the church for Him above all other things. Prayers could include praying that the church would put the Person of Christ above the things of God, the blessings of God, or the gifts of God.
- Lord, we ask for a fresh revelation of the love of the Father and Son for Your church.  
In this category, one could pray from Paul's apostolic prayers in Ephesians and Colossians, the gospel of John, or a number of other sources for a fresh and deeper revelation of God's love for His people. You could pray for God's people to go free from guilt, condemnation, and shame and to accept how God cherishes them even in their weaknesses.



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- Lord, wake up Your church and cause them to keep their lamps alight.  
Under this category, one could pray from Luke 12:35-36 or Matthew 25:1-13 to ask the Lord to wake up the church to the urgency of the hour, to be alert, and the need to get ready for the Lord's coming.
  - Lord, produce a healthy fear of the Lord in Your church.  
The fear of the Lord is a very important attitude to have in light of the urgency for believers to make themselves ready. When there is not a healthy fear of the Lord in the church, believers live in compromise, lawlessness, and complacency. The fear of the Lord causes people to seek God wholeheartedly knowing that they will one day stand before the Lord at the judgment seat of Christ. At that divine appointment, every believer will give an account of their life and to be evaluated as to whether they will be a part of the bridal company made ready or not. Therefore, praying for a healthy fear of the Lord is an important issue to include in our prayers for the corporate man to arise.
- c. There are many other biblical texts and subjects that easily fit into the overall theme of praying for the corporate man to arise. Prayers into the subjects covered in John 17, Paul's prayers in his epistles, the messages to the seven churches of Revelation, and the apostle John's gospel all have a wealth of subject matter to choose from. Again I repeat, it is important to be led by the Holy Spirit in praying for the arising of the corporate man.
- d. One final point before closing this session. It is crucial that forerunners become intercessors before the golden altar praying into this essential topic of the arising of the corporate man/bride/sons. As we stated in the *Understanding the Forerunner Call* class, some forerunners may have as their primary assignment to be an intercessor for God's eternal purpose to be accomplished. Other forerunners might have as their primary calling to be messengers or wise master builders. Whatever your call as a forerunner is, it is essential that prayer focused on the arising of the corporate man be included in your ministry.