

Title: Rise Up, My Love, Come Away
Text: Song of Solomon 2: 10-13
Date: October 30, 2014
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Last evening, everything in this life passed away from our dear sister Mary Bell.

Mary was many things on this earth: a faithful pastor's wife, a faithful mother and grandmother, a loved daughter, a loving sister in Christ, a loyal friend and it would not be right not to mention a lover of good music. But most of all Mary was a sinner with a good hope, resting all her eternal care in the hands of Christ Jesus.

Do you have this good hope? The death-bed will be a terrifying place for all who are resting their eternal acceptance upon some work of their hands. But for those resting in Christ, we will close our eyes, then be awakened by our Savior, with these sweet words,

Song of Solomon 2: 10: My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. 11: For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone; 12: The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of *birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; 13: The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

The one speaking is Christ Jesus, the Bridegroom. The one to whom he speaks is his bride, his church, each individual sinner given to him of God his Father.

AUTHORITY

Her Beloved speaks to her with authority, "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up." As the husband is head of the wife so Christ, our Beloved, is Head of the church. And he is the Savior of the body. Therefore, his voice is the voice of supreme Authority. Our Bridegroom is Jehovah, Immanuel. Christ is King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is the Head of all principality and power. His bride—each member in particular—is his purchased possession. He speaks with the authority of ownership. So when he speaks his command gives his bride life, strength, power by his Voice and his Power.

When dead in our sins—"my beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up." And we had spiritual life. His command produces the gift of faith and repentance and willingness to cast all care into his hands. Throughout the life of faith, each time we fall, in every trial we face—"my beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up." Suddenly we have strength in our inward man to arise and follow him. Then comes the hour when we close our eyes in death—yet like every time before—"my beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up."

LOVE

Also, Christ's voice is not the voice of judgment and wrath but it is the tender voice of love, he says, "Rise up, my love." Christ's love for his bride is a love that passes knowledge. His love for his bride is everlasting, unchanging love, the love he speaks of when he says, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." (SOS 8: 7) His love for his bride is saving love.

ADORATION

Furthermore, Christ's voice comes not only with love but with sweet admiration for his bride, he says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one." When God the Father betrothed Christ's bride to him—all the elect whom God

the Father chose in Christ—Christ knew she would not be fair in herself. She became defiled when Adam sinned in the garden. It was then that we became full of sin and iniquity and all uncleanness before God’s holy law.

Yet, Christ gave himself for his bride. He sanctified her. Christ cleansed her, washing her with water by the word. He made her glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, holy and without blemish. So he says to his bride, “thy beauty: [is] perfect through my comeliness, which I [have] put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD.” Now, when he looks upon his bride, his heart is ravished with her beauty—he says, “**My fair one...**...thou fairest among women,...thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee. (SOS 1: 8; 4: 7)

COME AWAY, WINTER IS PAST

Therefore, at the appointed hour, her Beloved comes to deliver his bride from all her troubles, “My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone;” (SOS 2: 10-11)

This life has much joy in it. God has given us many things to enjoy and we should enjoy them. But overall this life is much like a long cold winter. Satan’s temptations blow hard like arctic winds. Persecution comes with cold hard blasts. Afflictions are icy-sharp. Then occasionally a dark N’oreaster blows in from off the coast and sets upon us. Heavy clouds keep us from our Beloved. Our hearts grow cold. The blizzard lays a heavy snow upon us till all is still, silent, lifeless.

Our bodily members soon cast off their strength like the grey, barren trees of winter. The inward man, hides out of sight, like some weak, starving animal in its den. Our bodies eventually become like frozen ground. We learn what we knew by his grace all along—we have no strength in us! But then comes the voice we long for, “My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.”

HIS NEW CREATION

Then her Beloved ushers her into his new creation, where, “The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing *of birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle [dove] is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* smell.” (SOS 2: 12-13)

Springtime is come! Life is come! She is brought into the garden with her Beloved! We experience a foretaste of this each time our Beloved brings us out of the cold wintery trial into communion with Christ our Righteousness, when he separates us into Christ our Sanctification, when he sweetly reminds us the work is finished—we are complete in him, our sins he remembers no more.

But one day, our Beloved shall usher into that eternal garden, that eternal Spring, that eternal Life which he has promised. John describes it,

Revelation 21: 1: And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2: And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3: And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5: And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

Revelation 22: 1: And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2: In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3: And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5: And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

When that “time of singing is come” then this shall be what we shall hear and sing, “the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” (Rev 19: 6-8)

ARE YOU READY TO DIE?

Now, answer this question, “Are you ready to die?” Is your only hope of glory in that Christ has put away your sin? That God himself has justified you? All those without Christ shall be judged according to their works.

Revelation 21: 7: He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8: But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Do you have the peace in your heart with God that only Christ our Peace gives? When you are unable to lift your hands or lift your head, when you have no strength, when that dying hour comes then the only thing that will comfort a sinner in that day is to be complete in Christ, to have the righteousness of God, Christ himself! The only comfort then will be to be made holy as holy God by Christ alone! Sinner, there is no time to spare: Christ says,

Revelation 22: 12...behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14: Blessed are they that do his commandments, [repent from you and believe on Christ] that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. 15: For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. 16: I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. 17: And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Sinner, will you obey and believe! Are you satisfied with this life or can you say, “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” Psalm 17:15. For those who obey and rest in Christ by faith, that last day will be best day of our lives.

I have experienced nothing like what Brother Donnie experienced last night. But I have sat with a loved one as they reached the end of this life. There was Mary in her bed, in her pain. Her earthly beloved praying for God to take her. He watched as she took her last breath. It is a awesome sight to see the life leave the body. But as her earthly beloved watched the life slip away, I picture her heavenly Beloved speak to her in Spirit, saying, “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;

The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; 13: The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

Oh to go to sleep in a cancer-ridden body and awake completely whole, an heir of God and joint heir with Christ, seated beside him as his bride, his queen, in gold of Ophir. Scriptures says of God our Savior and his perfected people, then “They shall reign for ever and ever.”

Amen!