

Preparing for the Opening of North Korea

Part IV—Healing the Bride of Christ

Fr. Ben Torrey, Director, The Fourth River Project, Inc.

© 2006 Reuben G. Torrey. All rights reserved.

Jesus weeps.

He weeps for His Bride. She is filthy with her sin; her body is gashed, torn and marred by disunity, by jealousy and pride. We are the Bride of Christ, one day to be presented before him clean and whole, beautiful and in pure garments. We are not that way now. The journey from what we are now to what we will be then is not easy but we must take it if we hope to be gathered into that great wedding feast of the Lamb.

We have written about the importance of unity for the mission to North Korea—how horrible it will be to bring the disunity of the Church into a land now empty of the Church. But that is not reason enough. The unity of the Church of Jesus Christ is not just for the mission to North Korea—in fact, if the mission to North Korea is the basis upon which we seek unity, we will never attain it. The unity and healing of the Bride is far more important than the mission to one nation, even one as dark and broken, as dear to the heart of God as North Korea. No, we do not seek unity for the sake of North Korea; we seek it for Jesus' sake... and for our own.

Jesus weeps.

How do we respond? As He commanded...

These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (John 15:11-12)

The healing and the cleansing of the Bride of Christ begin with repentance.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! See, your house is left to you desolate. (Matthew 23:37-38)

We are Jerusalem. Why is the Jerusalem of the East desolate? Because we have turned upon one another in our pride and our greed, our desire to receive honor. We are the scribes and Pharisees of Matthew 23. We begin with repentance, but that is only a beginning. We must, together, search the Word of God to find the truth that will heal the wounds of centuries of mutual condemnation and warring, differences of theology and governance. We must find a solid foundation in God's Word that will bring lasting healing, upon which to build a humble and united Church. It is there if we will see it. It is there in such passages as 1 Corinthians 10:17, Ephesians 4:4-5, Ephesians 5:29-30, Galatians 3:27-29 and many others.

Oh, my brothers and sisters let us repent and seek unity for the sake of North Korea, for our own sake and, most importantly, for the sake of Him who has called us to be his bride and died that we might be clean and whole. To do any less is to spit on the blood of Jesus. How can we not do less?

Ben Torrey

Director

The Fourth River Project and the Three Seas Center

bentorrey@thefourthriver.org

www.theforthriver.org