

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

“With this ring I promise I’ll always love you, always love you.” That was the old 60’s song title that I mentally filed this letter’s outline under over a month and a half ago. It was to remind me of a precious, tender moment, so precious and tender and rich that I knew I couldn’t immediately write about the happening. It’s like having your cup so full that you know that if you take even one teensy-weensy step some of the drink will spill, so you need to just stand still for a while and savor the moment and with time there will be a little evaporation so that you can safely take a step. Some experiences are so exquisitely lovely that they just fill us up like that cup and they are so dear that it is best to savor the moment for a little while before sharing. I experienced such a moment right before Valentine’s Day.

For the first time I was attending a “Praise and Worship” gathering at a friend’s home. I had known about this weekly meeting for months, in fact, I’d even been encouraged by one of my daughter-in-laws to attend. But no, I had been dragging my feet, thinking I already have enough activities. (Hello? When can you ever have too many activities if it’s praising the Lord?) Why, I’d even rationalized that it was my daughter-in-law’s group and she didn’t need me barging in. (Hello? How can anyone barge in on a “Praise and Worship”

gathering if all you're truly wanting to do is to praise and worship the Lord?) So, after knocking down these silly mental blocks, I decided to attend and I'm so glad I did and do.

There were about 25 ladies of which I knew three or four, all different ages and representing various churches. We sang our hearts out for about 30 minutes, and then we were given a teaching by one of the ladies. She said that seeing it was almost Valentine's Day, she wanted us to concentrate on the theme of us each being the bride of Christ. Just that statement made me get a lump in my throat. I wanted to instantly raise my hand, jump up and say, "Why, that's been my heart's prayer for the last six months. How did you know?" But, being the new girl and hardly knowing anyone, plus not knowing what the norm was at this gathering, I restrained myself and remained seated and silent. And thank the dear Lord I did, for there was a wondrous gift to be given and if I'd jumped up, I could have spoiled the present.

Now, before we go any further, allow me to give you a little background information. It's strange what you miss after a divorce. One thing I really missed was my wedding ring. That little gold band hadn't been off my finger for over 29 years. And when I'd look down and see that disfigured skinny indentation on that poor pitiful finger, it would make me so sad. It looked so naked. What did it do to deserve having to go around looking like that? So, to make it and me feel better at night, right before I'd go to bed, I'd slip on a

ring, one I'd bought years ago and just say, "Lord, I just want to be your bride. Please take care of me. Goodnight." Being the Lord's bride was and is my desire, but I hadn't told anyone but the Bridegroom.)

After the poignant teaching, we began worshipping again and in mid-song, a dear lady, Cam, came over with tears streaming down her face and said, "The Lord said I was to give you this ring and to tell you that you are His Bride." She took this golden ring, which looks like a king's crown off her own finger and gave it to me.

What does one do at such a moment? Humbly accept. I couldn't even let it sink in. It was too gracious to comprehend, not just Cam's actions but, even more -- the Lord's. It says in Psalm 21:2 that the Lord grants us our heart's desire. Mine had been for months to be his Bride, but as I said, nobody knew -- that is except Him. I wanted to cry, to run, to hide, to jump up and down. But what did I do?

After leaving, I took the ring off my wedding ring finger. I didn't want anyone to think I was weird and I truly did think it looked too much like a wedding ring for a recent divorcee to be wearing.

I tried it on my other ring finger but, of course, it didn't fit -- so I put it on my little pinky. It was very loose, but I thought probably secure. Wrong! While picking out flowers to fix for my mother's birthday party, the ring fell off my finger. Internally I was beating myself up, saying, "Lucy, if you hadn't

cared what people think, you wouldn't have lost that ring."
Well, God is so good and as I was leaving the store, one of the employees came up with the found ring. I couldn't believe it! I immediately asked for tape and wrapped that ring so it would fit snugly on my pinky finger -- notice pinky, please. Pitiful!

I started driving the hour and a half to my mother's. I gave myself a good talking to -- "did I or did I not want to be the Lord's Bride and if I did, why didn't I put that ring on, the one I believe He wanted me to have, and put it on my right finger and forget what people might think. But what about Mama? She would notice that ring immediately and think it inappropriate. I prayed for the Lord to prepare her. Isn't that silly? But the good news I believe is that nothing is silly, Pilgrim, to the Lord if it is important to us. He wants to be that intimately involved in our lives. So, I ripped the tape off and put that ring on my wedding ring finger once and for all and that is where it is now. Then, I had the nerve to timidly say, "Lord, if I am going to wear this ring, it's O.K if my finger eventually turns green, but if you don't mind, someday if you would, I'd appreciate it turning it into 14K gold." Hello? Pitiful, Lucy!

Well, Mama thought the ring was lovely and didn't make any negative comments at all. And on the way home, after her wonderful birthday party, I stopped at the store from which the ring had come to buy one for Cam. I asked how much it was. She told and oh, my goodness, guess what? It was 14K. I burst

out laughing.

I took that ring to Cam and we giggled and laughed together. She said the reason she had been crying when she gave me her ring was that she didn't want to give it to me. We both laughed. And Precious Pilgrim, guess what the good news is? It's that she was obedient and guess how the Lord honored her obedience? She went from no rings to three rings, for you see, the day after our meeting she found at her front door a package and in it was a lovely ring and a note that said the Lord wanted her to be his Bride, too. Then a ring, which was made up of some of her mother-in-law's jewels, which Cam had designed and been waiting for for months, it arrived the same day and then here I came with an identical ring. From one to none to three. Ah, God is so good.

Precious Pilgrim, I just opened the Bible up to Hosea 2:19-20, which says: "I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and companionship. I will betroth you in faithfulness and you will acknowledge the Lord."

*I don't remember ever reading these verses before.
Another gift. Not only for me, but you too, Pilgrim. Peace.*

*I am your betrothed Sister in Christ,
and my dear Pilgrim, you're a bride too,
Lucy*

God bless.