

Song of Solomon 1: 3; "The Fragrance of Your good Ointments",
Sermon # 3 in the series - "I am my Beloved's", Delivered by
Pastor Paul Rendall on May 10th, 2009, in
the Afternoon Worship Service.

It has been a few weeks now since I have preached to you from this book and so let me review where we have been. This book is speaking of the spiritual marital love relationship which exists between Christ and His Church. He is the Bridegroom; she is the Bride. This relationship of marriage between a man and a woman is expressly spoken of as a "mystery" in Ephesians Chapter 5, verse 32. There are spiritual realities in this relationship between Christ and His Church which are well pictured by the earthly marriage relationship; when a couple comes to see how important their faithfulness to one another is; how it pictures the love of Christ and His Church. A good marriage relationship preaches the gospel to the people who are looking on at their life. In a good marriage a woman is submissive to her husband as unto the Lord. She loves him not only as her lover and her friend, but she loves him as her head; the one who is leading them in their relationship. 1 Corinthians 11: 3 says, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Headship was important to God and Christ before it ever was important to men and women in marriage. If it is important to God and Christ now; then it should be important to us as well. A Christian woman doesn't mind submitting to her husband and following his lead because she has learned to be submissive to Christ, and she knows that Christ is the head of her husband. She knows that he is trying to follow Christ, and that God and Christ have appointed him to be the head of the household. As the Church is subject to Christ, so the wife is subject to her husband in everything. And it is also most definitely true that if a man loves his wife and is giving himself for her, then he is well picturing the love of Christ for His Church. He doesn't force his wife to do his will, but he gently, lovingly, and thoughtfully interacts with his wife over the issues of where he would like to take them as a couple in their obedience to God and how they will live to God's glory. He has learned that it is not his own will that they will live for, but God's, and because of that he is willing to give himself for his wife to obtain that objective. People looking on are amazed when they see that kind of grace at work in the lives of two people who could easily rationalize and justify being selfish and trying to get their own way in everything. But the grace of Christ makes a couple over into a standing powerful witness of what Christ and His Church are like; and thus the gospel is preached because those who were sinfully selfish once, have now changed and become one in heart and mind in their purpose to glorify God. It is this grace of Christ which I want to speak to you more about this afternoon.

The last time that I preached to you I spoke to you about the virgins. The virgins represent other believers in Jesus Christ. I labored to show you that we who believe

are betrothed to Christ; legally married to Him, even though the relationship has not yet been consummated. The Apostle Paul spoke of this in 2 Corinthians 11: 2 when he said, "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy." "For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." If you have believed in Jesus Christ for the salvation of your soul, for the forgiveness of your sins, you are betrothed to Him. You are married to Him already, and He is your husband, even though you do not see Him now. You will someday see Him face to face, along with millions, perhaps billions of other Christians who will all make up the Bride of Christ. Christ's Bride is made up of many persons and yet they are all chaste virgins who hold fast to the truth of the gospel and his word. They are those who are attempting to be faithful to Him in their personal, private, and public relationship with Him. In each of these aspects of our relationship with Him as believers, He is expecting that by His grace we shall be found faithful. The Shulamite bride's experience is the experience of one believer among many virgins who are all betrothed to the King. The virgins, I believe, are the same as the "daughters of Jerusalem" in this book. They appear to be young and inexperienced believers who would follow the Shulamite and look upon her experience with the King and learn from it. Each believer experiences Christ individually in their relationship with Him and also corporately as part of Christ's Bride, His Church. The last time that I preached to you from this book we looked at the first of the 3 reasons that the virgins love Christ. It was because Christ's love is better than wine. It is better than all the pleasures that this vain world has to offer. His love is better than everything in our earthly experience which satisfies us now in this life. His love gives greater joy and gladness than when the earthly-minded man's grain and new wine abound and when he has great riches. He thinks that he has it made, but really it is the person who has Christ who has all things. That is the first reason that the virgins confess that they love Him. The second and the third reasons we will now set forth. The second is: They love Him because of the fragrance of His good ointments. And the 3rd is: They love Him because His name is as ointment poured forth. So let us ask in relation to the **2nd reason** that the virgins love Christ -

What are these good ointments and why are the virgins so pleased with them?

These good ointments represent the manifold graces of the Holy Spirit, which minister to the believer's spiritual life in various ways, but they all come to him as a result of the grace of Christ. They are called, "His good ointments", because all of the various graces of the Holy Spirit come to the believer because Christ was anointed above his fellows (above all other men) with grace to accomplish salvation on their behalf. Turn with me to Psalm 45 and you will see this. Psalm 45 is written very much in the style of the Song of Solomon. Just like the virgins of our text, the sons of Korah who wrote this psalm were overflowing with eagerness to tell others about the grace of their king. It is not simply king David that they are speaking of, in such glowing terms. It is also, and much more, the King of glory; their future Messiah whom they speak of. "My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my

composition concerning the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." "You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured out upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever." We can see here that the anointing of the Lord Jesus was a very special anointing. He was filled with the Spirit to accomplish His task as a man. Part of that task was His preaching and teaching the very word of God to the people of His day so that they would come to know that He Himself was, and is, the Christ (The Anointed One of God). Grace was poured out upon His lips by the Spirit so that His words had an appealing fragrance to the listener whose life was also being touched by the Holy Spirit. They were spiritual words and they had spiritual life in them. "Never a man spoke as this man" said the temple guards who came back empty-handed when they had been instructed to take Him as their prisoner. His words had the power to change the heart and life of the listener. They still do today. Now look at verse 6 - "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom." "You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions." "All your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia." You can see from this verse that not only was Jesus perfect in His words as a man; that He was perfect in every other aspect of His righteousness as a man because of the anointing of God upon Him. His "oils" had a pleasing fragrance. He was, and He is, a King who wields the scepter righteously. He rules over men righteously in the fear of the Lord. His good works and His love for men's souls was, and is, perfect in every sense. He was clothed in righteousness, and all of His works and words had a good and appealing fragrance to them, even as they are pictured for us here; His garments being scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia. His obedience and perfect righteousness was very pleasing to God His Father as it says in Ephesians 5, verse 2. "And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. Myrrh was one of the gifts brought to the Lord Jesus by the wise men when they came to visit Him. It was one of the spices used in by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimethea when they prepared His body for burial. It is a fit emblem of His sufferings having a good savor to God. His atonement was finished, His sacrifice accepted. There was no stench of death here; only the fragrance of life. Aloes were also used in Christ's burial preparation. John Brown says in his Dictionary that, "The graces of the Holy Spirit in Christ, and his people, are likened to aloes because of their agreeable savor; their tendency to prevent, or purge away sinful corruption, and to keep their subjects for ever fresh and sound." Brown says concerning Cassia, "The fragrant Cassia which is said to have been the bark of the tree, was one of the sweet spices, from which the anointing oil was extracted; and was sometimes used to perfume garments." "It signified the savory and medicinal graces of the Holy Spirit."

So the ointments of our text are good ointments which produce a sweet smell, and healing and strengthening help to men spiritually. They were used as a preservative and to embalm bodies, and to help people to feel stronger and better physically. They are fit emblems of the work of the Holy Spirit now, for believers in

Christ. The Holy Spirit's work was first of all to anoint our Lord Jesus so that He would fully accomplish His work of living a perfectly righteous life, and then lead Him to the cross to suffer and die for all who would believe in Him. And then upon Christ's resurrection and ascension, He would be sent to minister Christ's grace to all believers so that they would know the reality of all His good spiritual blessings to help them to know Him, love Him and obey Him. His anointing would then be upon them so that they would be changed by grace working in their hearts, so that their lives and behavior would reflect that grace of Christ. Then they, too, would manifest the fragrance of Christ to others. If you turn over to Exodus Chapter 30, verse 22, you will find how the ointments were used in the anointing of the Old Testament priests, kings, and the vessels of the tabernacle. "Moreover the Lord spoke to Moses saying: 'Also take for yourself quality spices--five hundred shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty shekels), two hundred and fifty shekels of sweet-smelling cane, five hundred shekels of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.'" "And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer." "It shall be an anointing oil." "With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony; the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense; the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base." "You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them must be holy." "And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister to Me as priests." "And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations." You see from these verses that the consecration of the priests was done with this holy anointing oil and that it was an "ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer." It was not used for just any persons, it was used for those who were consecrated for service to God as priests. It was very applicable to Christ our high priest. And it is very applicable because of Him, to us, who have been made kings and priests to our God through Him.

I like what Thomas Robinson says in his commentary about this. "All Christ's mediatorial garments were thus made to smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, by which He was made glad (Ps. 45: 8)." "His human nature thus made full of all excellence and sweetness." "Christ fully endowed with all the virtues that can either adorn the character, or that can render a man lovely and attractive in himself, and a benefactor and blessing to his fellow men." "All the excellences and charms that can either beautify or exalt humanity found in Him in their combination and perfection." "Graces and virtues apparently contradictory and exclusive of each other, found beautifully harmonized in His character." "This was symbolized by the holy anointing oil, composed of the various ingredients." "Loftiest wisdom combined in Jesus with child-like simplicity; awe-inspiring dignity with meekest humility; inflexible justice with tenderest compassion; spotless holiness with sweet affability; abhorrence of sin with pity and love to the sinner." "The gospel is an exhibition of the good ointments of Christ." And we might add that the Holy Spirit and His grace

which are the anointing of the Christian, teach him these precious attitudes of holiness. And these attitudes are noticed and observed in the lives of Christians by others who are not. If you turn over to 2 Corinthians 2, verse 14. The Apostle Paul says here, "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place." "For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing." "To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life." You see; this is the fragrance of Christ's good ointments. It is the grace of the Holy Spirit, which Christ purchased by His righteous life and sacrificial death; and it is that grace being seen in our attitudes, words, and actions which other people who do not know Christ smell, and either are drawn or repulsed by what they see. The object is to present Christ through our lives as sweet spiced perfume and then pray the good Lord do His gracious work through it.

Now let us state the 3rd reason that the virgins love Christ - They love him because His name is as ointment poured forth.

Turn with me to Mark 14, verse 3. Here we have a good physical representation of the words, "His name is as ointment poured forth." "And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard." "Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head." "But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, 'Why was this fragrant oil wasted?' "For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." "And they criticized her sharply." "But Jesus said, 'Let her alone.' "Why do you trouble her?" "She has done a good work for Me." "For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always." "She has done what she could." "She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial." "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told as a memorial to her." Surely this is the picture of what Christ would do in His death. "God would made His soul an offering for sin," it says in Isaiah 53: 10. Because of these sufferings, it says in Isaiah 53: 12 that God would "divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death..." The Lord Jesus; anointed by the Spirit for His awesome task, in going to the cross, was well pictured by this woman taking the alabaster flask and breaking it and pouring it over His head. She did what she could. She diffused the fragrance of Christ, His work, and the grace that was given to Him and which was working in Him; she poured this out as an emblem of His being broken and being poured out in death.

We can think of the name of Jesus as ointment poured forth because He was broken for us and because He was broken and poured out, grace poured forth. There on the cross His body was given, it was broken for you. His blood, that ointment which saves us and heals us of all of our diseases of sin, was poured out for you, if you believe in Him. When the soldier took his spear and drove it into Jesus' side and up into His heart, blood and water poured forth. But spiritually they are an ointment

to heal and treat the wounds of your sin. When you believe in the Lord Jesus, the love of God is poured out in your heart by the Holy Spirit, and He Himself is given to you forever. Thereby you become an earthen vessel with the precious treasure of Christ's ointments filling your heart. On the Day of Pentecost the disciples got to experience the reality of this ointment poured forth when the Holy Spirit descended upon them and Peter preached the gospel powerfully. During his sermon he explained the experience of the Spirit's baptism in this way to the people gathered who thought that they were drunk: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words." "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day." "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, you old men shall dream dreams.'" "And on My menservants and maidservants I will pour out My spirit in those days." This was the ointment poured forth. And verse 33, after telling them that Jesus had been raised from the dead he said, "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God and having receive from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear." And then he said in verse 38, "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Truly Christ's name is ointment poured forth. Let us ask ourselves in closing: Have I come to know the precious name of Jesus? Do I know His name as ointment poured forth? If so, what are you personally doing to diffuse the fragrance of His blessed name? His name is ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love Him.