

**His Banner over Me Is Love**  
Song of Solomon 2:4; Hosea 11:4  
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Greg L. Price

In the Lord's Supper, there is one truth that you cannot ignore or miss: it is the unsurpassing love of Jesus Christ that was displayed in suffering the hatred, mockery, beating, and excruciating pain of crucifixion by wicked men and in suffering the holy wrath of the Father as the perfect sacrifice for the guilt and punishment of the sins of His elect bride. Remove the love of Jesus Christ for His beloved bride (polluted and corrupted as she was with sin throughout her entire being), and the Lord's Supper becomes a mere common meal that has nothing to celebrate.

The Lord's Supper is a love feast—the greatest of all love feasts. There is no love feast on earth that can compare with the Lord's Supper. For in the Lord's Supper is displayed a love that humbles us; a love that convicts us of our sin, selfishness, ingratitude, and pride in all the ways that we seek to please ourselves; a love that drives us in sorrow out of ourselves and into the merciful arms of Jesus Christ to repent of our sin and renew our covenant with Him to be faithful to Him and His truth. You are humbled, convicted, repent, and commune with Him because and only because His banner over you is LOVE—a dying love that suffered God's just wrath for you—and an undying love that will never change or end for all eternity.

The Holy Spirit turns our attention today to this love feast that He has spread for you, His beloved church. The main points are: (1) King Jesus Brings the Church to the Feast; (2) King Jesus Provides the Feast for the Church; (3) King Jesus Showers the Bride with Love at the Feast.

**I. King Jesus Brings the Church to the Feast (“He brought me”).**

A. Having found safety and rest under the shadow of Jesus from the scorching heat of God's condemning wrath and from the evil of afflictions, trials, persecution, and temptations that the devil intends for your destruction, but the Lord Jesus intends for your sanctification, Christ's beloved bride enjoys communion with Him in partaking of His fruit and ordinances to the good of her own fruitfulness (Song 2:3). Fruitfulness in the Christian life comes from eating of Christ's fruit (ordinances) in daily and weekly communion with Him. Dear ones, there are no short-cuts to fruitfulness and overcoming temptation of sin.

B. But now we move from the safety and rest under the shadow of the Lord Jesus to the most glorious celebration of a love feast ever known to mankind. Jesus is the royal host and you (His chosen bride) are the guest of honor at this love feast.

1. But how did you as Christ's bride (you who had such a sordid past life of harlotry in serving other lovers and pleasures) come to such a love feast as the special guest of honor?

a. You were brought by King Jesus as He chose you in love from all eternity, redeemed you in love from your life of harlotry, and drew you in love unto Himself by the Spirit of God to be united in love to Him by faith alone. From eternity to eternity you were ever in His purpose and love. There has never been a moment that passed that you were not loved by Him.

b. Even when you were His enemy and hated Him, Jesus loved you and His almighty love overcame your hatred and rebellion and graciously gave you a new heart—a heart of love for Him. He took your shameful and sinful hand and placed it into His mighty and righteous hand, and led you step by step into His banqueting house (“He brought me”—the *Hiphil* pattern of the Hebrew verb is causative, meaning that Jesus caused you to be brought into the banqueting house).

c. It was not any natural goodness, love, or righteousness in you in cooperating with Him that brought you into the feast of love. It was entirely (from beginning to end) His goodness, love,

and righteousness that sovereignly brought you (John 15:16). You would never have come on your own. You were dead to Him. You would have continued to rebel against King Jesus if left to yourself. It is only because He set His unfathomable love upon you and gave you a heart of love for Him and His truth (the gospel and commandments of the Lord) that you have come (Hosea 11:4). There is no other reason. Even your faith is the gift of Christ's love to you (Ephesians 2:8-9). Just as Jesus caused you to be brought to Himself in salvation, so He has caused you to be brought to Himself in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

2. The fact that Jesus brought you into the banqueting house also means that His presence is truly with you in the banqueting house. He does not bring you into this celebration of His love for you and then desert you and take off. As you come to the Lord's Supper and are seated around the Table of the Lord, understand that Jesus escorts you to this feast of love (your hand in His). He brings you, seats you, and is the royal host that serves you spiritually His body and blood as you eat and drink by faith of Him (and all of the benefits of His sacrificial death for you). We believe in the real presence of Jesus at the Lord's Supper. It is a real spiritual presence, but not a real physical presence (since His glorified body is presently in heaven).

## **II. King Jesus Provides the Feast for the Church ("He brought me to the banqueting house").**

A. This love feast is called "the banqueting house" (literally, "the house of wine"). This is not a common, ordinary meal. It is a feast.

1. In other words, this love feast is a celebration of Christ's love and mercy for you, His elect bride. The house of wine is a feast not a fast. The banqueting house and the Lord's Supper set before you the riches and abundance in Christ Jesus that are yours because of His love—not a shortage or a famine of love and blessings. The treasury of heaven is placed before the Christian in the Lord's Supper.

2. Wine was served at feasts and celebrations in biblical times to lift up the heart in joy and gladness (Psalm 104:15). So likewise the wine in which we rejoice at the Lord's Supper is a fit symbol of the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed in love in which we rejoice. It was sacred blood that was shed. Thus, we show irreverence for the Lord Jesus by treating the body and blood of the Lord as that which is common and ordinary (it is profaning Him). If we do not approach the love feast of the Lord Jesus with love, joy, and gladness, we have forgotten and missed that which is most important—it is a feast that celebrates the infinite and unchangeable love of Jesus for you.

B. All of the benefits that Jesus purchased for you are signified and sealed at this banqueting table of love.

1. Whatever you need to live a godly life is signified and sealed at the Lord's Table. Whatever you need to overcome temptation to besetting sins is signified in the Lord's Supper. Whatever you need in putting to death the old man and bringing to life the new man is signified and sealed at His banqueting table. The fruit of the Spirit in persevering in all afflictions, heartaches, trials, and persecution is abundantly supplied by the Lord Jesus in the tokens of His body and blood that are spread before you in the house of wine.

2. Your worst enemy may be your own unbelief of the abundance of the spiritual blessings placed before you in the love feast of the Lord's Supper. You must look beyond the physical elements to behold by faith that every grace and fruit is yours in Christ Jesus. You must look beyond your fears and your sins to eat by faith of that spiritual grace that you need and is already yours in Christ Jesus. Is it not an insult to the King to not believe Him as you eat of the bread and drink of the wine? In fact, it is to profane the body and blood of the Lord to come to this love feast and merely partake of the visible signs and seals of bread and wine rather than feasting upon the Lord Jesus by faith in all of His love and abundance. Dear ones, bring an enormous spiritual appetite to the Lord's Supper, for all things are yours in Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 3:21).

## **III. King Jesus Showers the Bride with Love at the Feast ("His banner over me is love").**

A. The beloved bride of Jesus is here escorted by King Jesus into His banqueting house with all of the royal pomp and circumstance and with banners and flags of the King being raised high over the royal bride (His Church).

1. It was common in biblical times to inscribe some identifying motto or emblem upon the banner or flag of the King around which the royal forces gathered. Jesus has His royal banner and upon it is written His identifying mark: “love” (i.e. the all victorious love of Jesus Christ for His bride). As Jesus escorts His beloved Church into the banqueting house and seats her at His table, He seats her beneath His public (not secret) banner by which He has conquered her rebellious heart and by which He enjoys blessed communion with her (a banner that is over only His chosen bride and not over all men indiscriminately).

2. The presence of King Jesus would only bring fear and dread to you without the banner of love. That banner of Christ’s love is your peace of mind, your safety against all enemies, your nearness to Him not loneliness, and your guarantee that you are His and He is yours—that every spiritual blessing in heavenly places belongs to you—that He will never leave you nor forsake you—that He will finish what He has begun in your life in every hardship and blessing, in every sorrow and joy, in every temptation and victory, and in every tear and smile—that you will be victorious over every enemy: the world, the flesh, and the devil, even death and hell (Romans 8:37)—and that He will love you to the end (John 13:1).

B. The love of King Jesus is “better than wine” (Song 1:2).

1. It is better because it is eternal, unchangeable, and is most powerful to overcome our rebellious hearts. All other loves of this world are vanishing and changing from moment to moment. All other loves betray, are unfaithful, and are selfish. They promise much, but cannot deliver because of their weakness and selfishness. It is the love of Jesus Christ that changes and transforms a heart and a marriage.

2. When you enjoy the love of Jesus Christ in sweet communion with Him, you are nearest to the very courts of heaven itself. To know and enjoy the love of Jesus Christ is to make your service and obedience to His commands a delight rather than a burden. Just as Jacob's hard service of seven years for Rachael seemed to him but a few days “for the love he bare unto her”, so will believing and enjoying Christ’s love for you and your love for Him bring joy in all that you suffer for Him. It will be no hardship to the Christian that lives under, that serves under, and that submits under Christ’s banner of love. When you are discouraged and find the cross you are called to bear so heavy, look up and see by faith the banner of Christ’s love that is over you. What hardships did He endure out of His love for you? Look upon His painful wounds. Listen to His desperate cries. Those are the wounds and cries of sacrificial love for you whom He has brought under the banner of His love. It is that banner of love that is over you that causes you to persevere when you fall before temptation and cry out in desperation that you cannot take another step.

3. The inevitable response of all (not some) who are brought by Jesus into the banqueting house, seated at His feast of love, and have the banner of Christ’s love over them will be an ever growing love for Jesus in following Him, serving Him, and obeying Him (like the woman that brought the alabaster of sweet ointment and anointed Jesus, Luke 7:47). How do you show that you truly know that you have been forgiven much? You love much (God, then the members of your family, your brother and sister in the Church, your neighbor). On the other hand, you show you have not been forgiven at all or not forgiven much, by your lack of love, by your harshness, cruelty, anger, bitterness, and selfishness. What are you displaying to others? That Jesus has forgiven you much, or that He has forgiven you very little? If love in covering a multitude of sins does not begin in the family, how will we without hypocrisy show it outside the family? Constant battles in a marriage evidence that the love of Jesus has much more work to do in your hearts (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

4. Dear ones, let us earnestly prepare our hearts to come to the Lord’s Supper. Let us examine ourselves, confess our sins to the Lord, repent of our sins, and seek the forgiveness of our Savior. But in all of our preparation, let us not overlook that which is most important in our preparation: “He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love” (Song 2:4). Looking only at your sins is a weight

that none of us can bear. You must look up and behold that glorious banner that flies over you—His banner over you is love.

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