

**Psalm 45: 1-17; “Christ – My Heart’s Theme”, A Communion Sermon
delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on August 2nd, 2020,
For the Afternoon Worship Service.**

Whenever we come to the Lord Table, as we will at this hour, we ought to be able to come with a heart that is overflowing with the good theme of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our focus will be mainly upon the first 9 verses which describe the beauty and glory and power of our Lord Jesus Christ. Pray that my tongue, like the Psalmist David’s will be the tongue of a ready writer. These verses do not speak of Solomon specifically, for never is he said to be fairer than the sons of men. He was wiser than most of the sons of men, but not fairer. No, these verses are a prophecy of Christ and His kingdom; Christ and His Bride, the Church. In them we find that there is a response which is expected from us, when we realize who it is who has called us into this holy relationship of union with Him, and what the effects of our mutual love for each other will bring.

Each of our hearts ought to overflow with love to our Savior, Shepherd-King during our time together around this Table. He has brought us into His banqueting house and His banner over us is love. 1st of all – We will consider the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ in His person, and the kind of Kingdom that He has come to bring to the realm of fallen sinners. 2nd – We shall consider the victorious war that He has waged in order to see sinners changed into saints. And 3rd – We shall consider what it is that stirs the heart of our blessed Lord to draw near to His Bride and to greatly desire her beauty. All 3 of these points I will relate to the Supper that we will partake of in just a few minutes.

1st of all – The beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Person and the kind of Kingdom that He has come to bring into the realm of fallen sinners.

Oh how our tongue ought to be a ready writer to declare the words of verse 2. You, Lord, Jesus, are fairer than the sons of men. For, as it says in Song of Solomon chapter 2, verse 3, Jesus Christ is like an apple tree among the trees of the woods. This is how the Bride’s Beloved is among the sons. We sit down in His shade with great delight. It is His fruit that is sweet to our taste. There is no comparison between our Lord Jesus Christ and any other man who has ever lived. The Lord Jesus Christ is fairer than any other man who ever lived, because He is the only man who ever lived who has had a perfect sinless nature. There is not a spot, not a speck, not a blot, not a wrinkle of sin in Him at all. Jesus Christ was born of a woman and born under the law but neither one could find anything wrong with Him.

Now, I suppose if I were to attempt to seek to find out about some of you children, what you are like, and what you have been like in your life, that I could talk to your father. He would point out to me all your finer points and your good characteristics, and I might be duly impressed. He has great hopes for you and He sees great things in you. He may be reluctant to tell me of what he sees as faults in you, and this would only be right. But if I really wanted to find out about you, what you were really like, I think that I would ask to speak with your mother. She would no doubt tell me about all the good characteristics she sees in you as well, but if I am a trustworthy man, and she can confide in me, she would also convey to me all of her concerns about you; the things that she worries about concerning you when she thinks about you. She loves you so much.

She might mention your impulsiveness to do things that were not right. Perhaps she would say that sometimes you have been hurtful to your brothers and sisters. Perhaps she might relate you have not spoken the truth at times. You wanted to avoid being punished for something that you did wrong; taking something that did not belong to you, or perhaps you had been doing something that you knew that your parents and God’s holy law commands that we should not do. Perhaps she would relate to me certain of the bad things that you have said, careless things,

unthinking things, things; things that have hurt others because you spoke before you thought. You had your mouth in gear before the engine of your heart had thought over what you should say. I'm saying, Mary, Jesus' mother, saw nothing of this in her boy Jesus.

All of us who are here today, especially those who will partake of the Lord's Supper, know that we have not done what is right in word and in deed in many ways. We who are believers think to ourselves sometimes concerning ourselves – "If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?" "But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." (Psalm 130, verse 3) The reason that there is forgiveness is because of Jesus. Jesus never sinned in word and deed in all that He ever did. This proves that He was sinless in His nature. What a person says and does flows out of their heart. When Christ was born of the virgin Mary, God by-passed the normal way that children are brought into this fallen world. The Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of Most High overshadowed her, so that the "Holy One who was born would be called the Son of God". (Luke 2: 35)

In the book of James chapter 3 it says – For we (we who are sinners by nature), we all stumble in many ways. "If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body." So Jesus is the only truly perfect man and we can only just begin to be perfect because of Him." It says in our text in verse 2 again – "Grace is poured upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever." It is says this because Jesus Christ was a man with a human nature that was given to Him by His Father. In Him was the fullness of the Spirit without measure to be able to speak in a way that never a man spoke before. People noticed this when they listened to Him. Even His enemies noticed this.

Turn with me over to John 7: 37. It says here – "On the last day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying – "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." "Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet." "Others said, "This is the Christ." "But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee?" "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" "So there was division among the people because of Him."

"Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him." "Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?" "The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!" And this is true of Jesus; even His enemies acknowledged it! He was, and He is, "fairer than the sons of men" in his speech. But do you not see that this was because He was fairer than all the sons of men in His heart and in His person, first of all? There was, and there is, a beauty in the Lord Jesus which is intrinsic to Him. His is a beauty that none of us by nature have. He brought this beauty into the realm of fallen sinners when He was born into the world. He demonstrated it all during His life and earthly ministry. But when you believe in Him, you find that His grace works in you to transform you to be more and more like Him. That is why we come to this table today; to confess His beauty and glory, and our deformity by nature. And then if you are a believer, in the next breath you also confess the power and beauty of His grace and Spirit in your life. And you will continue to ask for more.

2nd – Let's consider together the war that He has waged and still wages to see sinners changed into saints.

Verse 3 says, "Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with your glory and Your Majesty." "And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; and Your right hand shall teach You awesome things." "Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; the peoples fall under You." I trust that you can see from these verses that it is

not only the beauty and glory of the Person of Christ that we adore and magnify this morning. It is also His deeds of valor that we extol. He has been and is a Mighty Warrior with a cause. And the cause is God's cause. And it is the best and highest of causes. It is the cause of truth, humility, and righteousness.

In John chapter 18, verse 33, when our Lord Jesus came before the Roman governor Pilate, he said to Jesus – “Are You the King of the Jews?” “Jesus answered him, ‘Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?’” “Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew?” “Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me.” “What have you done?” “Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.’” “If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.” “Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’” “Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king.’” “For this cause I was born , and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.” “Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” And Pilate said Jesus – “What is truth?”

So Jesus' cause is the cause of truth. Jesus said to His disciples in John 14: 6 – “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” “No one comes to the Father except by Me.” But how can men come except the ransom price be paid to God for the salvation of their souls. And so the Lord Jesus must do battle for us. He must do battle for us to bring us out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of His Father, the kingdom of light. But our Lord knew that He must do battle against the Devil, and overcome Him. And He knew that He must overcome sin and death in a perfectly righteous way. His was a righteous battle for a righteous cause. Nothing else would do, if we would be saved.

He must go the Devil's ground and overthrow His kingdom of darkness, on the very ground that the Devil thought that he could forever hold; the ground of man's sinful disobedience to God's Holy law. In this sense, He was completely cast out at the cross. Christ represented the very righteousness of God personified in this holy battle. He knew that He must fulfill all of God's Holy law and not only stand the tests to His own personal obedience, but He must go on to fulfill all righteousness for us, His dear people, in the Way of full and complete obedience to all the commandments of God. And He did this in relation in all their righteous implications to both God and man. He would always be doing good thinking of God first. And He would always be doing good thinking of others as He would Himself; thinking of others before He would think of what He would personally want.

And so He went to the cross for our sakes as the perfect sacrifice. He took the wounds for our wounds of sin. He took the stripes of being scourged, knowing that we were the guilty ones. He took the mocking and the reproach which all of us, His people, deserved because of our sinful disobedience, and even our sinful inconsistencies as believers. He knew that He must go to the cross and die for our sins, and bear them there, in His own body on the tree, so that we could die to sin and live to righteousness. This by the way was the way that the Lord Jesus came to rule in righteousness as our Mediatorial King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He humbled Himself to the point of death even the death of the cross, so that being raised from the dead, He would be completely victorious, and His kingdom and cause would ride on victoriously through this Church age.

God has highly exalted him and He has given Him a name which is above every name. “His right hand taught Him awesome things, and His arrows were sharp in the heart of His enemies. “The peoples fall under You.” At the cross all the wrath of God's arrows were shot at Him so that in His dying He might shoot His arrows of love at our hearts and overcome us who are sinful, by His death. We fell under Him at the cross, and He raised us up when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, and He made us alive. He gave His life at the cross so that we might bear witness to the glory of King, and the glory of His kingdom. Verse 6 says – “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.” It was for the joy that was set before Him that He endured the cross and despised the shame.

3rd – We must consider what stirs the heart of our Lord to draw near to His Bride and to greatly desire her beauty.

What is it that will stir the heart of our Lord as He views this Supper as we partake of it now? What will stir His heart, as He beholds us going about the live the Christian life? Verse 10 says – “Listen, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your own people also, and your father’s house; so the King will greatly desire your beauty; because He is your Lord, worship Him.” Christ will desire the beauty of us His saints because He has purchased that beauty that He now sees in us. As He looks at us now, He remembers what it cost Him in sufferings, but it brings Him joy. It is His joy that we would forget everyone else around us for a few minutes and that we would be enraptured with His love. That each of us will think of what He has done for us personally, what He suffered for us on the cross, and seeing what He has done, to worship Him.

Think to yourself – The Lord Jesus has died for me and my sins are forgiven. His love led Him to the cross where He suffered on my behalf. His power towards me has accomplished this great thing. My heart has been changed so that I no longer to love sin, but I now love Him more than any sin or all sins. I find that I want to repent of all of my sins when I find them in myself. And when I see my sins, I remember that He paid the full price in sufferings for all of them. And you will say to yourself – Can I can still pursue this sin? No, I will forsake it. I will leave it behind, and I will pursue righteousness and the beauty of holiness. It should bring you great joy and great relief to think that He has done what you could never do in righteousness; that He suffered to bring us into full acceptance with God and into His daily love for you.

Whatever your sins have been, I hope that you will resolve never to justify one of them again. After you confess them, resolve that you will forsake them. And where there is a stubbornness to hold on to some sin, or the things of this world, ask God to help you to overcome it. Pray that God would make you make you a tenderhearted person who is willing to forgive others even as you yourself have been forgiven. Pray to live a humble life, even as Christ did. Forget your people and your father’s house in the sense that you know that in Christ you have a New Life with the people of God here in this church. Live your life seeing them as your close relatives, just as much as you do your immediate family members.

Verse 12 says – “And the daughter of Tyre will come with a gift.” What will your gift be to Christ today? Will yours be a heart of praise? Yes, it must be. Will yours be a thankful heart; a heart that longs to be more faithful, and more obedient to His commandments? Will it be a hopeful heart; that it is your hope that you will be a better witness to Him, and to His truth? Married people often give gifts to each other. You are spiritually betrothed to Christ. Verse 13 says – “The royal daughter is all glorious within.” “Her clothing is woven of gold.” Yes, your spiritual clothing as a Christian is beautiful because it was woven through the gold of Christ’s sufferings. You are not only clothed with a robe of righteousness, but you are glorious within by His grace. As you partake of this Supper, think of how His grace is going to change you more and more to be a holy person, and think of what joy and gladness shall be yours when you shall be brought into the King’s palace one day and meet your Lord face to face.