

Song of Solomon 1: 13 and 14; "A Bundle of Myrrh", Sermon # 14 in the series - "I am My Beloved's", Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on September 13th, 2009, in the Afternoon Worship Service.

The fellowship that the Bride has with the Bridegroom is a fellowship which goes on day and night. The Bride; as all Brides are, or should be, is preoccupied with thinking about her Beloved and what he means to her. We have already seen that there is a fragrance which comes forth from this spiritual relationship of Christ and His Church. It is the fragrance of the good grace of Christ which the believer anoints himself with. It is the smell of the fragrance of Christ's grace flowing forth in his words and actions. It is a fragrance of life unto life for those who believe in the reality of the Love of Jesus Christ for them. It is the fragrance of the spikenard of what Christ has really done for us through His sufferings and death, and through His being raised from the dead. The spikenard, or the grace of Christ, is His gift to us; but we must apply all that He has done for us to our life and actions, and wear this grace proudly in the way that we speak and act. We, as believers must exercise the grace that is given to us so that Christ might be known and glorified, both by ourselves and others. We have seen that it is this love relationship with Christ which leads to a very practical outworking of that love. Christ's love for us, and our love for Him leads to the offering of ourselves to service to Him in the various situations of our life. We learn to "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." (Ephesians 5: 2) Ask yourself this afternoon; is this is what is taking place in me? Is my love for Christ hot or cold? Is my spikenard going forth? Am I doing good works for His name's sake? Is the fragrance of the grace of Christ going forth to people around me, so that they consider Him because of me? These practical good works are something which flow out of the fellowship that you have with Christ every day and every night, as we shall see in this text. Having described for us the situation of our fellowship with Christ; that our King is sitting at His table observing His Bride in all of her devotion and behavior, and desiring fellowship with her; the Bride sends forth her spikenard; the fragrance of His grace which she wears. We see the innermost devotions of the Bride's heart, being portrayed for us in verses 13 and 14. In these verses she is describing for us what her beloved is like. She gives us two descriptions of what her beloved is like; how precious and how wonderful His love is to her. She, in both of these descriptions, is describing in the fervency of her affection for Him, what He means to her and what He does for her. Are your spiritual affections for Christ, your spiritual Bridegroom, expressed to Him? Let's see, this afternoon, if your affections for him match Bride's; as they ought to; if you are a believer in Him and He is precious to you. In the first point I would like to speak to you about Myrrh and what it spiritually represents in relation to Christ. And then in the second point, I would like to speak you about the responsibility of the believer to wear this spiritual Myrrh.

1st - Lets think about Myrrh and what it spiritually represents in relation to Christ.

"A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, that lies all night between my breasts." Myrrh is a very aromatic spice that flows from a tree by the same name. It has a very pleasant smell, but a very bitter taste. In the days of Solomon, little twigs and sprigs, having this sap upon them, were collected and placed in a bag which was sometimes given as a gift by a husband to his wife. She would then, in the case of our text, take strings and lace them through the bag and hang it around her neck with strings long enough that the bag of myrrh rested between her breasts. The spiritual picture here is most certainly one of Christ held close to the bosom of the believer; in their wanting to have sweet fellowship and communion with Him at all times and in all situations of their life. All grace and all blessing is found in Jesus Christ our Lord even as Myrrh is bundled into a bag. All fellowship and communion with Him is based upon the constant recollection of what He has done and is doing for us by His grace, even as a woman would have this aromatic bundle of myrrh between her breasts. "Unto you who believe, He is precious," it says in 1 Peter 2: 7. All the blessings of grace and salvation are bound up in the bag of what He has done for sinners at the cross. The believer receives Christ by faith and holds Him to their bosom in love. In fact it is more than that. All the believers that Christ has purchased with His precious blood at the cross; themselves, are bound up in the bundle of living and are found in this bag too. (1st Samuel 15: 29) For it is the Church, Christ's Bride who was purchased by Christ's blood, as well as all the blessings given to her. The Bride of Christ is made up of many members. Believers consider Christ most precious; but they also consider other believers who make up Christ's purchase at the cross; precious as well. A believer spiritually wears the bundle of myrrh around their neck, remembering that they and all believers have Christ with them, the hope of glory. All that Christ has done for them; bringing them near to God; meriting favor and acceptance with God because of Him; and purchasing the many blessings of salvation from God; by living a perfectly holy life and dying as a sinless sacrifice and substitute for their sins; this they remember, and they hold it close to their heart.

Remember always, O Christian, that Myrrh first and foremost was a preserving agent to make dead and decaying bodies smell pleasant. Christ came into the world to overcome sin and death by His life and death and resurrection; to take away for those who believe in Him the unpleasant stench which came to all men because of sin and death at work in their souls and bodies. The stench of sin and death would not only be covered; but it would be completely taken away for all those who would trust and obey Jesus Christ; they would by His grace be made fragrant in a spiritual sense forever. The application of His sufferings would make their souls beautiful and the thoughts of their hearts fragrant even in this life. Our remembering the death of Christ is a bundle of myrrh which when brought to our heart brings the assurance to our souls that we who are trusting in Him will never suffer the eternal decays which sin brings, and the eternal punishment which we so richly deserve for having sinned

against God and rebelled against His authority. When the Lord Jesus was born, the wise men brought to Him the gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. The gold represented his divine nature and the preciousness of His life in relation to all the sinners in the world. The frankincense represented Christ coming into the world to save sinners from their sins; as the answer of the prayers of many to see God's salvation. By His precious life and His sacrificial death He would make their hearts and their lives to have this pleasing spiritual fragrance, so that their offerings and their prayers would then be accepted and acceptable. And the gift of myrrh represented the truth that Jesus was God's gift to fallen and sinful mankind. He would, as a man, have to suffer and bleed and die to keep sinners from eternal death. His life would be given to save all sinners who would trust in Him for the forgiveness of their sins. His death and His resurrection life would be a balm for all of the wounds of sin even as myrrh is reviving and strengthening. He suffered so that we as sinners would know the reality of salvation, and comfort, and blessing in our lives. As He went to the cross, Mark 15: 23 says, "Then they gave Him wine mingled with myrrh to drink, but He did not take it." In other words, He refused anything that would have lessened His own sufferings, so that we would know the reality of our sins being forgiven and the reality of our spirits being refreshed, and revived, and strengthened in our walk with Him day by day. And when Jesus had died on the cross and Joseph of Arimethea received His body, he and Nicodemus came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds, it says in John 19: 39. They wanted to give a sweet and wonderful fragrance to His dead body. They did not realize that it would not decay. But there is a spiritual meaning in this in relation to our text. It is that all true believers ought to preserve the death of the Lord Jesus on their behalf, fresh in their minds and close to their hearts.

Now Secondly - I would like to speak you about the responsibility of the believer to wear this spiritual Myrrh.

Why is it that believers do not experience the fullness of the reality of the blessings of salvation and assurance that I have just been describing for you? It is because they have not deliberately brought Christ as a bundle of myrrh close enough to their hearts. It is out of love to Him that you will hold every remembrance of Him close to your heart. If your love becomes cold, then you are not frequently bringing together all the blessings of what His grace does for you, into your conscious remembrance. You may be tolerating worldliness and spiritual adulteries in your heart which have hindered your communion with Him. He is precious to you, but you need to consciously wear a bundle of myrrh around your spiritual neck and untie the strings that hold it close and smell the fragrance of His death and resurrection, and know all the benefits of close communion with Him once again. Turn with me to Hosea 2: 2 and you will see what happened to sinful Israel when they forgot what God had done for them and became adulterous spiritually. "Bring charges against your mother, bring charges; for she is not My wife, nor am I her Husband!" "Let her put away her harlotries from her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; lest I strip her naked and expose her, as in the day she was born, and make her like a

wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst." "I will not have mercy on her children, for they are the children of harlotry." "For their mother has played the harlot; she who conceived them has behaved shamefully." "For she said I will go after my lovers, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my linen, my oil, and my drink." "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, and wall her in, so that she cannot find her paths." "She will chase her lovers, but not overtake them; yes, she will seek them, but not find them." "Then she will say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better for me than now.'" "For she did not know that I gave her grain, new wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold--which they prepared for Baal." You see, they had spiritually apostatized from God, and God divorced them from Himself. Their harlotry consisted in not believing that God had given them all the good things that they enjoyed and they attributed their blessings to other gods which are called "her lovers" in this passage. These could be other nations or people helping them.

What is wonderful is God's mercy promised to those who would believe in God's promise in the New Covenant, which is Christ and His grace. Look down at verse 13. "I will punish her for the days of the Baals to which she burned incense." "She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry, and went after her lovers; but Me she forgot, says the Lord." You would think that that would be the end of everything. But listen. Verse 14 - "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her." "I Will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt." "And it shall be, in that day, says the Lord, that you will call Me My Husband, and no longer call Me my Master, for I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered no more." You see those kinds of blessings are the bundle of myrrh that we as New Covenant believers wear around our neck and which we should remember. Christ has delivered us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. Christ has broken and will break the power of all the other things that we are trusting in besides God so that we might have a sincere faith and fervent love for Him only, above all other things and all other gods. "You shall have no other gods before Me," is fulfilled in Him, first; and then in us in Christ.

Myrrh was, in fact, one the first of the chief spices which made up the Holy Anointing Oil, as is mentioned in Exodus Chapter 30, verse 22. Turn with me there. It says, "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 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 holy 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." We can see here from these verses that if a priest was to minister to the Lord under the Old Testament that he must be anointed with the holy anointing oil which represented the graces of the Holy Spirit be given to him and poured out upon him. Everything that he was to use in his ministry was to be anointed with this myrrh-based oil. It is Christ and the myrrh of His grace which, poured out upon the New Covenant believer priest, consecrates him, and makes all of his ministry and offerings, service and labor for the Lord to be acceptable in God's sight. The believer delights to have Christ with him so that he might be able to have sweet fellowship and communion with Him in everything that does, and in every place that he goes. He knows that the best of his services and the best of his works all need to be anointed with the oil of the sufferings of Christ. The myrrh of everything that Christ has done in His life and in His death is bundled up and hung upon his heart that He might "set the Lord before him always." He knows that he needs the Lord's counsel, and His comfort and consolation to sustain him, in every respect, in his ministering to others. This is not simply for the pastor of the church. It is for every believer serving Christ. He has made every New Testament believer to be a priest unto Him. David says in Psalm 16: 7, "I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel; my heart also instructs me in the night seasons." I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved." Our text says, "A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, that lies all night between my breasts." It was David's heart that instructed him in the night seasons. He thought upon the Messiah who would come through his descendants. He thought about the faithful God who would give him this precious gift. He believed in all that God would do for him through Christ. It was the bundle of myrrh that he had around his neck and which he held in his hand before him; spiritually speaking. The grace and truth of the word concerning Christ, and Spirit were that which counseled him and instructed him in the night; God's Spirit and presence guided him and guarded him in his times of temptation and discouragement. These blessings of myrrh were what kept reminding him of the love of God shown to him and the promises of God given to him, as he walked on the path of righteousness; this is what kept him persevering in faith; and this was what kept his heart warm in love for God and man. This is the bundle of Myrrh, the abundance of grace and peace that is found in Christ; the fullness of blessing in Him, that gives the believer songs in the night. David knew that it was his responsibility to wear it.

Do you remember dear Job? Job was a man who let the bag of myrrh slip off his neck during his trial at certain points. He was God's faithful and obedient servant in righteousness, and yet for holy and wise reasons, God permitted Job to be fearfully abused by Satan's schemes, in order to prove to Satan that he was the man of integrity that God claimed that Job was. Satan is the accuser of the brethren and he will try to make fools and hypocrites out of men who are trying to be faithful to the Lord. Job had thought that since he was a man of integrity that God should not permit him to go through these trials. But God did permit it, in order that Job's

righteousness would be established as the noon-day sun. Part of Job's learning the ways of God in this trial was to have a younger man named Elihu speak to his situation. Job's three supposed friends had spoken to it, and they had not said what was right concerning God. (Job 42: 8) But Elihu did say what was right. And in Job 35: 2, we find Elihu trying to get Job to take up and to put around his neck, once again, the bag of myrrh which Satan had torn from his neck, spiritually speaking. "Do you think this is right?" "Do you say, 'My righteousness is more than God's?'" "For you say, 'What advantage will it be to you?'" "What profit shall I have more than if I had sinned?" I will answer you, and you companions with you." "Look to the heaven and see; and behold the clouds--they are higher than you." "If you sin, what do you accomplish against Him?" "Or, if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to Him?" "If you are righteous, what do you give Him?" Or what does He receive from your hand?" "Your wickedness affects a man such as you, and your righteousness a son of man." "Because of the multitude of oppressions they cry out; they cry out for help because of the arm of the mighty." "But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker, who give songs in the night, who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the birds of heaven?'" You see that it is God Himself that gives songs in the night when you as a believer are oppressed by afflictions. In other words, it is your beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, who through His sufferings at the cross, purchased grace for you to be able to stand in the evil day. Pick up the bag of myrrh and hold it in your hand once again if you are a Job. Re-tie the strings again and put it around your neck and hold the promise of His love and faithfulness close to your heart. Let not your remembrance of His favor and His blessings be taken off your spiritual neck. Let them be close to your heart, even in the night of your greatest afflictions, and in the darkness of your greatest discouragements. Christ is the bundle of myrrh that lies all night between your breasts.