

**Psalm 45: 1-17; “Christ – My Heart’s Theme”, A Communion
Sermon delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on July 5th, 2015,
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

Whenever we come to the Communion Table, as we will do after I preach to you this message, we ought to be able to come with a heart that is overflowing with the good theme of Jesus Christ. We will address our verses to Him this afternoon. This Psalm is full of that theme, so full, that we can scarcely see Solomon in it at all. It is a Psalm of prophetic beauty which gives us an in-depth spiritual and mystical picture of the relationship between Christ and the Church which encompasses the whole Church age and enters into the gates of the eternal City. When I say “mystical” I mean it in the holy sense of the spiritual relationship which exists between Christ and His Bride, the Church. This wonderful relationship goes far beyond our understanding and comprehension in terms of the greatness of His love toward all of us together who believe in Him. He loves all of us who believe in Him individually, but He loves all of us who believe in Him together as His Bride. Our focus will be mainly upon the first 9 verses which describe the beauty and glory of Christ. They speak of His glorious Person and His kingdom. But we shall also touch upon the response expected from Christ’s Church, His Bride, as she comes to realize Who it is that has called her to be His bride, and what the effects of their mutual love will bring. There are 3 things which make up the theme that our hearts ought to overflow with. We will consider 1st of all - The beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Person. 2nd - We shall consider the glory of His warfare on behalf of sinners. 3rd - We want to consider the strength and beauty of Christ’s desire to have deep and meaningful fellowship with each believer. All 3 of these points I will relate to the supper that we will partake of in just a few minutes.

1st – Our hearts ought to overflow with The beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Person.

Oh how our tongue ought to be a ready writer to declare the words of verse 2. “Thou, O Lord Jesus, art fairer than the sons of men.” For, as it says in Song of Solomon chapter 2, verse 3, our Christ is like “an apple tree among the trees of the woods.” “Even so, is my beloved among the sons.” “We sat down in His shade with great delight.” It is Christ’s fruit that is sweet to our taste. There is no comparison between our Lord Jesus and any other man who has ever lived. This is why He should be the theme of our heart’s meditation. 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 His mother nor the Law could find anything wrong with Him. 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 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 of you. But Mary, Jesus’ mother had nothing of sin to worry about when she thought about her boy Jesus. All the rest of us here today know that there have been times when we have not done what is right in word and in deed. We think about Psalm 130, verse 3 – “If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?” “But there is forgiveness

with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.” The reason that there is forgiveness is because of Jesus. Jesus never sinned in word and deed in all that He ever did. And the reason for that was because He was sinless in His nature. What you say and do flows out of your heart. When He 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 Mary, and the power of Most High overshadowed her, so that the “Holy One who was to be born would be called the Son of God.” (Luke 2: 35) In the book of James chapter 3 it says, “For we (who are sinners by nature), all stumble in many ways.” “If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body.” Jesus was the only truly perfect man but you and I, by His grace, now have the power to strive to do what is right and learn what it is to be perfect.

It says in our text in verse 2 again, “Grace is poured upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever.” It says this because Jesus Christ, as a Man with a human nature, was given by His Father the fullness of the Spirit without measure, so that He would 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 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!’”

You see here that this was true of Jesus, because even His enemies acknowledged it. He was “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? There was and there is a beauty intrinsic to the Lord Jesus that is in none of us by nature. He brought this beauty into the realm of fallen sinners. But when we believe in Him, we find that His grace works in us to transform us to be more and more like Him. This is why we come to this table today; to confess His beauty and glory, and to confess also our deformity. And we will confess also the power and beauty of His grace and His Spirit’s working in our lives.

Now, 2nd – Let us consider together the glory of His warfare on behalf of sinners.

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.” It is not only the beauty and glory of the Person of Christ that we adore and magnify this afternoon. 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, meekness, and righteousness”. “I came into the world,” Jesus says when he stood before Pilate, “to bear witness to the Truth.” “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life”, He declares to His disciples. “No man comes to the Father, except by Me.” But how could sinners come, unless the ransom price was paid to God for the salvation of their souls? And so the Lord Jesus had to do battle for us. He had to wage war with the Prince of Darkness, Satan, us to bring us out of his kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of His Father, the kingdom of light. But He had do battle against the Devil and sin and death righteously. Righteous battle for a righteous cause. Nothing else would do. He had to go the

Devil's domain and defeat him on the very ground that he thought that he could forever hold; the ground of man's sinful disobedience to God's Holy law. He must represent the very righteousness of God in this battle. He must fulfill all of God's Holy law, and not only stand in the tests to His own personal obedience, but He must go on to represent us His people, in a full and complete obedience to all the commandments of God in all their implications to both God and man.

He would always be doing good and thinking of God first. And He would always be doing good and thinking of others as He would Himself. He would think of them and their needs before He would think of what He would want. And He must take the wounds and stripes, the mocking and the reproach which all of His people deserved because of their sinful disobedience, and their sinful inconsistencies. He must go to the cross and die for their sins and bear them in His own body on the tree. Then we could die to sin and live to righteousness. This is the way that the Lord Jesus came to rule in righteousness as the King of Kings. He humbled Himself to the point of death even the death of the cross. Therefore God highly exalted him and gave Him a name above every name. His right hand taught Him awesome things, and His arrows were sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; the peoples fell under Him. At the cross, all the wrath of God's arrows was 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 together with Him. He gave His life at the cross and was raised from the dead in order that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

"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. And even as Christ is fairer than the sons of men, so too because of what Christ did at the cross, God has anointed Him with the oil of gladness more than His companions. What great joy must our Lord Jesus have had in thinking of us before the cross. What joy He must have had in thinking of us when He went to the cross and knew what He would accomplish for us there. What joy He must have had on the day of His resurrection when He said to His disciples, "Behold I am risen!" And what joy He now has at the right hand of the Father in seeing us changed into His own image and likeness through the power of His imputed and imparted grace. And what joy should you and I have today as we contemplate what He has done, and what he will yet do for us, because of these His sufferings on our behalf.

3rd – We want to consider the strength and beauty of Christ's desire to have deep and meaningful fellowship with each believer.

I am sure that I could preach whole sermons on this Psalm, but we do not need to do that now. What we need to do is to draw near to Him in this ordinance of the Lord's Supper. What is it that will stir the heart of our Lord as He views this Supper as we partake it, and the Christian life as we live it? It says in our text, "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." Your beauty is a beauty which is derived from His grace at work in your heart. Christ is enamored with the holiness and righteousness that you cultivate in your life, and the fellowship that He has with you in the midst of that cultivation. This is something that He desires to have with you every day, but especially at this time; the time of partaking of His Supper. It is first of all, that when we come to this table, that we would forget everyone else around us for a few minutes, and that we would be enraptured with His love; what He has done on the cross for us who are sinners and unworthy; for us who are foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all that He has spoken to us. And seeing what He has done; let us

worship Him. Jesus has died for us and our sins are forgiven. His love led Him to the cross where He suffered on our behalf. His power towards us has accomplished this great thing; that our heart has been changed no longer to love sin, but to love Him more than sin. When you see, and you remember what it cost Him; can you still pursue sin? No, you will resolve, here and now, to pursue righteousness and the beauty of holiness. It should bring us great joy and great relief to think that He has done what we could never do in righteousness and in suffering to pay for our sin debt and bring us into acceptance with God and into His daily love for us. Christ has done this and continues to do this for every one of His people. Let us forget everyone else and everything else for a few moments and remember this. Let us remember, when we think of His sufferings, of what our sins deserve, and let us resolve not to sin any longer.

Whatever your sins have been or whatever you see in your heart now, I pray that you will resolve that you will never justify them again; that you will confess them and forsake them. And where there is a stubbornness to hold on to some sin or the things of this world, ask God to break you of it, and make you a tenderhearted person. Ask yourself if you are willing to forgive others even as you have been forgiven. Ask yourself if you are too worldly for Christ to desire your beauty. I pray that none of us be trying to obtain great things for ourselves in this world. May we live in humility even as Christ did. May we pursue truth and righteousness with all of our heart. Let us not live seeing ourselves as better than others. Forget your people and your father's house in this sense; that you would remember that you have a new life in Jesus Christ. And just like when you get married, you leave the past behind to begin a new life with the one you love, even so, live that way in Christ Jesus with Him. Live your life unto Him, and not unto other people. Love other people and submit to your parents, your elders and your teachers. But live your Christian life with the realization that Christ is with you and is watching over you for your instruction and your good. Remember that the One Who died for you also lives to change you into His own likeness. Have you not taken His Name as Christian? Then live like one who is married to Him. "The royal daughter is all glorious within." Remember that Christ's grace has planted the seed of righteousness within your heart and you should now be thinking of how you can bear fruit unto Him in righteousness. Think of the robes of righteousness that He has given to you O believer. Think of how His grace is going to change you more and more to be a holy person, and think as you partake of this supper of what joy and gladness and shall come to you when you shall be brought into the King's palace one day soon.