

**Song of Solomon 1: 1-3; “The Virgins Love for Christ”, A Communion Sermon
delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 6th, 2020,
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

The two main characters of this divinely inspired allegory are the Bride and the Bridegroom. The things that are spoken of here, between the two of them, are meant to picture for us the relationship which we as believers have with Christ; both individually, and all together as His spiritual body. There is much to speak of, in regard to the marriage of Christ to His Church. Christ so loved the Church that He laid down His life for her. After He was raised from the dead He began to show His His love for her very practically. From the right hand of the Father, He has shown her all the riches of His grace, for some two thousand years now. Christ always treats His Church as His closest spiritual companion. He is, even now, showing each believer His love by leading them through this life, so that He might bring us into eternal life with Him forever. He anticipates the time when we will all be partakers with Him, of eternal glory.

The thing that I want to bring to your attention at this time, before we partake of the Supper, is that you are betrothed to Christ; you are spiritually united to Him in a marriage relationship that has not yet been consummated. You are a yet a spiritual virgin in relation to Christ. You love Christ, even though you have not yet seen Him, with physical eyes. Since you know the Lord, you find yourself wanting to cultivate this love relationship with Him more and more as the days go by. Since this is so, we should ask ourselves, what are the practical spiritual implications of this love relationship that we have with our Lord? Let me share with you 3 things about the love of Christ’s virgins for Him.

1st of all – It is a love where we ask Him to kiss us.

“Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth.” In Psalm 2 we read that the kings of the earth ought to kiss the Son lest His wrath be kindled in the way. Their “kissing” of Christ means that they should come and touch Him by faith. They should spiritually come, and place their mouth upon His face or His lips and show by that expression of their soul that they are confessing their need of His salvation and that they will submit to Him. Let me ask you if you have done this spiritually with the lips of your heart? Have you confessed your own sinfulness to Christ? Have you confessed His beauty and His righteousness? Have you seen your own personal need of His kingly help to deliver you from all of your spiritual enemies who are bent upon your destruction; the world, your own sinful heart, and the Devil? If not, will you not consider it now? Christ died for this, to deliver you from the world, your flesh, and the Devil.

And I want you to see here from verse 2 that the Bride is asking Christ to show her His spiritual affection for her. Now that she had trusted in Him, she wanted to know the reality of Christ’s love, not only as a merciful and faithful High Priest to save her, but also in that He would be a compassionate King to her, One who would protect her, and lead her, as the closest of spiritual companions. Have you come to realize this? And have you further come to realize that Christ is not only a loving Savior and King, but He also would be a loving Friend, Companion, Guide, and Husband to your soul? You want Him to express His spiritual affection for You.

You know that Christ has made the first overture to you, in letting you hear the gospel. You know that He willed to reveal the Father to you. He has shown you His great love and great mercy in this. If you have received His overture of marriage, you should now let your spiritual desires be made known to Him. Let Him know that you want the kisses of His mouth, now that you have become a part of His Bride. The kisses of His mouth are those sweet touches of the words of His mouth to your soul. It is His taking His word and by His Spirit He makes it so very real to you that it makes an impression upon your soul, just as a kiss of affection does. It is

Christ by His Spirit who actually communicates Christ's love to you. The love of Christ is poured out in your heart through the Holy Spirit who was given to you. Christ lets your soul know these holy affections that He has for you. He conveys them to you by your actually realizing His work in your heart. The Spirit witnesses with your spirit that you are a child of God, and an heir of eternal life.

He kissed you when you first came to Him as a sinner seeking salvation. You probably never dreamed that you would find in Him a spiritual Husband and a Companion who would never leave you nor forsake you. But what is very glorious is that He continues to come to you, especially when you request it, to show you His affection in conveying to you more of His grace. This is sensed and known when you observe the Lord's Supper. Christ lets you taste from His lips, the truth of His love for you, in the word which is preached to you. He accompanies His word with the motions of His Spirit. In the Lord's Supper, you reflect upon the dying love that let Him to the cross where He purchased these blessings to give to you. He very willingly gives these blessings to those who ask Him for them; the sense of assurance that you are His. This is all a part of the glory of your salvation. He sovereignly ordains that you will be able to behold His Personal glory and the glory of His grace in the Lord's Supper.

Will you not pray even now and when we partake of the elements, that He will come anew and afresh to your soul, to spiritually kiss you; that He would delight your soul with His kisses; all of the holy delights of His presence, and that He would make all of these things of His word real to you in your experience? This is how your relationship with Christ will deepen. This is how it will grow into that delightful kind of spiritual love, where you will realize that you want to know more of His mind, more of His will, and more His holy affection towards you in relation to your keeping of all His commandments. You will ask this out of love to Him, and you have the faith that He will give it to you. There are many expressions of affection and love which come to you, the believer, from your heavenly Bridegroom when you say – Kiss me with the kisses of Your mouth.

2nd – The love of Christ's virgins is a pure love.

We find in these verses that there is another group of persons who are related to the Bride, who are introduced to us here in verse 3. They are called "the virgins" by her. And they are said to love the Bridegroom too. Indeed the Bride considers herself one of these virgins because she says in verse 4, "We will be glad and rejoice in you." "We will remember your love more than wine." And so it will be appropriate to inquire, "Who are these virgins?" And why do they love the Bridegroom? If the Bride is the only one married to Christ in this story, then in what sense do these virgins love Him? The way that I believe that this can be answered is to think about the Church of Jesus Christ as composed not of one believer, but of many believers. And it is the entire group of all believers in all ages which make up the Bride of Christ. There is one Bride and one Bridegroom.

But the spiritual Bride of Christ is made up of many multiplied millions, even billions of members. And yet each of these individual believers has the spiritual desire to keep themselves pure, while they walk here upon the earth, in relation to the consummation of their marriage with Christ. This consummation will take place when He returns to literally spiritually join Himself to His Bride, the Universal Church, forever. Virginity; remaining sexually pure before marriage, is not generally prized in the way that it should be in our time. But in the holy mind of God it is the essence of godliness and thoughtfulness, as well as love, to be able to wait to give yourself to your future spouse at the right time. And so, even though engagement in the apostle Paul's day meant that you were legally married; it was never used as a license for immorality.

Virginity has always been highly prized by all godly people, and so it was spoken of by the Apostle Paul, in 2nd Corinthians chapter 11, verse 2, in this way – "For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy." "For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste

virgin to Christ.” The Apostle was saying to them that he was jealous over the believers there in Corinth. He said that even as he had preached the gospel to them, and they had received Christ, they were now espoused to Him. They were now betrothed, spiritually, to Him. And so the reason for his holy jealousy was that he knew that even though he was sure that he had betrothed them in the gospel to Christ, he was still concerned that they might be led astray by Satan; that their minds might be “corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ, and that they somehow might receive another gospel which was false. Thus their reputation as pure virgins would be stained, and then they could in no sense be considered as having been faithful to Him.

This was the same predicament that Joseph, the supposed father of Jesus, found himself in when he was betrothed to Mary. She was found to be with child. And he did not know that she was with child, being still a virgin. He thought to “put her away privately, because he thought she was no longer a virgin. And so the Lord had to send an angel to him in a dream, to tell him that he should not be afraid to take her as his wife. The sense in which the word “virgin” is used in the Scriptures, is in reference to a person who is morally pure before they are married. They may be betrothed, as Mary was, and yet the husband-to-be has not yet taken her to be his wife, physically and sexually. They are legally considered married already, even though the marriage has not been consummated. And so, if there was sexual unfaithfulness during that time of betrothal, then the unfaithful one would be “put away” or divorced.

This concept, in the New Testament, is transferred over to the spiritual relationship of marriage with Christ in this way. A spiritual virgin is one who is spiritually pure in terms of their moral and spiritual faithfulness to Jesus Christ. When a person believes in Jesus Christ they are espoused to Him as a pure virgin. They take Him as their Lord and spiritual husband. And they will eventually be married to Him forever if they are faithful to Him. But if they are unfaithful to Him, in apostatizing from the truth of the gospel, through believing in another gospel; or by not repenting of their sins, then they prove themselves unworthy of being married to Him forever. He will eventually have to put them away from Himself.

And this should be remembered; that salvation is really at Christ’s initiative. And it is based upon His finished work at the cross. The continuance of your relationship all depends on His faithfulness to His promise; this is most certainly true. When Christ really does come to your soul and He unites Himself to you, you are His forever. Of this, there is no doubt. He will not cast you off, or throw you out, or put you away from Himself. It is not possible for you to lose your salvation if God has begun a good work in you. God will perfect that work in preparing you to meet Christ face to face on that great Day, the Day when you will see your beloved and the marriage will be consummated. Christ will not divorce you once you are married to Him and become a part of His Bride.

But what we all need to understand about spiritual betrothal is this: A person may take Christ and yet Christ not take Him. You say – How could that possibly be? Well, they may have tried to take Him to be their husband on their own terms, and not on gospel terms. Or they did not do it in conjunction with the truth of God’s word. And Christ cannot, and He will not, have a treacherous or a false Bride to be His forever. He cannot marry you forever, spiritually, to Himself, on false pretenses. The Scriptures tell us that Christ will have a Bride, that after she has gone through this period of betrothal, shall be without spot or wrinkle. That is what a good portion of this book, and the book of Revelation, are all about. Christ’s intention is to have a spiritually beautiful and glorious Bride.

Therefore, if a person is treacherous, or if they are hold to what is false, they will be very disappointed when they find out that the marriage they thought was real was annulled because they really loved their sin, or a lie, and not Christ. If a person is sincere they will take Christ on His terms of their desire to be pure in mind, soul, and body. It then becomes evident, over time,

that Christ is helping them to do this. He is, by His intercession, undertaking on their behalf to save them from all of their sins, because they want to be saved from all of their sins. Let us now prepare our hearts to partake of the Lord's Supper. This is the reason that we can have a sincere faith and know that Christ has betrothed us to Himself forever, because Christ died for this.

3rd – Christ's Virgins love him because His love is better than wine.

“Kiss me with the kisses of Your mouth, because Your love is better than wine.” The wonderful thing about the wine of love of Christ is that it is it never runs out. Turn with me over to John chapter 2, verse 1. “On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.” “Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.” “And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, ‘They have no wine.’” “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?’” “My hour has not yet come.” “His mother said to the servants, ‘Whatever He says to you, do it.’” “Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.” “Jesus said to them, ‘Fill the waterpots with water.’” “And they filled them up to the brim.” “And He said to them, ‘Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.’” “And they took it.” “When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.” “And he said to him, ‘Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior.’” “You have kept the good wine until now!” “This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.”

No one remembers who it was that got married that day; it is not recorded for us. But the miracle was written down that you might taste of Christ's love and see that it is better than wine. Wine was a great blessing, very necessary to this particular wedding that Jesus attended. They had run out of wine, and Jesus' mother, the Virgin Mary to Him, told him that they had run out. And so, Jesus would show them all that His love was better than wine by giving them better wine than what they had run out of. He would change what was common and ordinary water, into better wine than they had ever tasted. He said – “Fill the waterpots with water.” “And they filled them to the brim.” “And He said to them, ‘Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.’” “And they took it.” When the master of the feast tasted it, he said – “You have kept the good wine until now!”

The commentary on this by John was this: “This beginning of signs Jesus did in Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.” You see, the people that day were being pointed to a greater glory and excellence than simply the earthly marriage of this couple, and a greater love which was present at this wedding than simply earthly love of two people. It was the love of Christ for His people, His Bride, the Church. It was the love of Christ that was better than wine. He can change the water into wine. And He can change your heart so that wine is not the major focus of it any longer. But His love is. There was an earthly bride and a bridegroom there that day and Christ honored the estate of marriage by His presence there that day. But there was also a heavenly Bride and Bridegroom there that day, and neither earthly wine, nor the heavenly wine was lacking. Therefore, when we partake of these elements, let us remember that Christ died so that we might know His saving love, His saving grace; something which is much, much better than any earthly wine, as exhilarating as it might be.