

Song of Solomon 1: 3; “Christ’s Fragrant Ointments”, Sermon # 3 in the series – “I am my Beloved’s”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on March 27th, 2022, in the Afternoon Worship Service.

It has been some time now since I have preached to you from this book and so let me give you a little review. This book is speaking of the spiritual marital love relationship which exists between Christ and His Church. He is the Bridegroom; she is the Bride. This relationship of marriage between a man and a woman is expressly spoken of as a “mystery” in Ephesians Chapter 5, verse 32. There are spiritual realities in this relationship between Christ and His Church which are well pictured by the earthly marriage relationship. When a couple comes to see how important their faithfulness is to one another; how it pictures the love of Christ and His Church, and they live this out in their relationship, it is a good witness to others. A good marital relationship preaches the gospel to the people in picture form, to those who are looking on, at their life. In this message I want to speak to you about one of the great reasons that Christ’s virgins love Him. Specifically, we are told here in verse 3, it is because of the fragrance of His good ointments. So let us ask ourselves now, a couple of important questions.

1st of all – Who are these virgins and what are the ointments which they are so pleased with?

The last time that I preached to you, I spoke to you about the virgins from this verse 3. The virgins represent believers in Jesus Christ. I labored to show you that we who believe are betrothed to Christ. We are legally married to Him, even though the relationship has not yet been consummated. The Apostle Paul spoke of this in 2nd Corinthians 11: 2 when he said, “For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy.” “For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” If you have believed in Jesus Christ for the salvation of your soul, for the forgiveness of your sins, you are betrothed to Him. You are married to Him already, and He is your husband, even though you do not see Him now.

By faith you know that you will someday see Him face to face, along with billions of other Christians who will all make up the Bride of Christ. Christ’s Bride is made up of many persons and yet they are all chaste virgins who hold fast to the truth of the gospel and his word. They are those who are attempting to be faithful to Him in their personal, private, and public relationship with Him. In each of these aspects of our relationship with Him as believers, He is expecting that by His grace we shall be found faithful. These good ointments represent the manifold graces of Christ which come to us through the working of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit ministers to the believer’s heart in many ways, but His influences are realized by us as the sweet fragrance of ointment poured forth.

They are called, Christ good ointments because all of the various graces of the Holy Spirit come to the believer because Christ was anointed above his fellows (above all other men) with grace to accomplish salvation on their behalf. Turn with me to Psalm 45 and you will see this. Psalm 45 is written very much in the style of the Song of Solomon. Just like the virgins of our text, the sons of Korah who wrote this psalm were overflowing with an eagerness to tell others about the grace of their King. It is not simply King David that they are speaking of here, in such glowing terms. It is also, and much more, the King of glory; their future Messiah whom they speak of. “My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.” “You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured out upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever.”

So we can see here that the anointing of the Lord Jesus was a very special anointing. He was filled with the Spirit to accomplish His task as a man. Part of that task was His preaching and teaching the very word of God to the people of His day, so that they would come to know that He Himself was, and is, the Christ (The Anointed One of God). Grace was poured out upon His lips by the Spirit so that His words had an appealing fragrance to the listener whose mind and heart was

also being touched by the Spirit's working and illumination. Christ's words were spiritual words and they had spiritual life in them. "Never a man spoke as this man" said the temple guards who came back empty-handed when they had been instructed to take the Lord Jesus as their prisoner. His words had the power to change the heart and life of the listener. They still do today. Now look at verse 6 – "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." "All your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia."

You can see from this verse that not only was Jesus perfect in His words as a man, but that He was perfect in every other aspect of His righteousness as a Man because of the anointing of God upon Him. His "oils" had a pleasing fragrance. He was, and He is, a King who wields the scepter of truth and justice righteously. He rules men righteously in the fear of the Lord. His good works and His love for men's souls was, and it is, perfect in every sense. He was clothed in righteousness, and all of His works and words had a good and appealing fragrance to them, even as they are pictured for us here. His garments had the scent of myrrh and aloes and cassia. That is, His obedience and His perfect righteousness were very pleasing to God His Father, as it says in Ephesians 5, verse 2 – "And 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."

Myrrh was one of the gifts brought to the Lord Jesus by the wise men when they came to visit Him. It was one of the spices used by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea when they prepared His body for burial. It is a fit emblem of His sufferings having a good savor to God. When His atonement was finished, His sacrifice was accepted by God the Father. There was no stench of death there; only the fragrance of life. His body did not decay and His grace is always lively and powerful. Aloes were also used in Christ's burial preparation. John Brown says in his Dictionary that – "The graces of the Holy Spirit in Christ, and his people, are likened to aloes because of their agreeable savor; their tendency to prevent, or purge away sinful corruption, and to keep their subjects for ever fresh and sound."

Brown says concerning Cassia – "The fragrant Cassia which is said to have been the bark of the tree, was one of the sweet spices, from which the anointing oil was extracted; and was sometimes used to perfume garments." "It signified the savory and medicinal graces of the Holy Spirit." So the ointments of our text are good ointments which produce a sweet smell. And they are healing and strengthening help to men spiritually. These ointments were also used as a preservative to embalm bodies, and to help people to feel stronger and better physically. They are fit emblems of the work of the Holy Spirit now, for believers in Christ.

The Holy Spirit's work was first of all to anoint our Lord Jesus so that He would fully accomplish the work of His ministry; that of living a perfectly righteous life. And then He would lead Him to the cross to suffer and die for all who would believe in Him. And then upon Christ's resurrection and ascension, He would be sent to minister Christ's grace to all believers so that they would know the reality of all His good spiritual blessings. The good fragrance of Christ's grace would help them on to know Him, to love Him, and to obey Him. His anointing would then be upon them so that they would be changed and transformed by His grace working in their hearts.

Having known the power of the fragrance of His life, their lives and behavior would then reflect what they had received and experienced. Then they, too, would manifest the fragrance of Christ to others. If you turn over to Exodus Chapter 30, verse 22, you will find how the ointments were used in the anointing of the Old Testament priests, kings, and the vessels of the tabernacle. "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), 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 an 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.” “And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations.” So, you see from these verses that the consecration of the priests was done by applying to them this holy anointing oil. And, we read that it was “an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer”. It was not used for just any persons, it was used for those who were consecrated for service to God as priests.

It was very applicable to Christ our High Priest. And it is very applicable, because of Him, to us, who have been made kings and priests to our God through Him. I like what Thomas Robinson says in his commentary about this. “All Christ's mediatorial garments were thus made to smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, by which He was made glad (Ps. 45: 8).” “His human nature was thus made full of all excellence and sweetness.” “Christ was fully endowed with all the virtues that can either adorn the character, or that can render a man lovely and attractive in himself, and a benefactor and blessing to his fellow men.”

“All the excellences and charms that can either beautify or exalt humanity are found in Him in their combination and perfection.” “Graces and virtues apparently contradictory and exclusive of each other, are found beautifully harmonized in His character.” “This was symbolized by the holy anointing oil, composed of the various ingredients.” “Loftiest wisdom combined in Jesus with child-like simplicity; awe-inspiring dignity with meekest humility; inflexible justice with tenderest compassion; spotless holiness with sweet affability; abhorrence of sin with pity and love to the sinner.” “The gospel is an exhibition of the good ointments of Christ.”

And we might add that the Holy Spirit and His grace which are the anointing of the Christian, teach him these precious attitudes of righteousness and holiness. And these attitudes are noticed and observed in the lives of Christians, by others who are not. If you turn over to 2nd Corinthians 2, verse 14. The Apostle Paul says here – “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.” “For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.” “To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life.”

So you see, this is the fragrance of Christ's good ointments. It is the grace of the Holy Spirit, which Christ purchased by His righteous life and sacrificial death. It is Christ's grace then, which comes to be seen in our attitudes, our words, and our actions, which other people who do not know Christ smell, and they are either are drawn or repulsed by what they see. The object is to present Christ through our lives as sweet spiced perfume, and then pray the good Lord will do His gracious work through it.

A 2nd Question – Why is His name to them as ointment poured forth?

To answer this I would have you to turn with me to Mark 14, verse 3. Here we have a good physical representation of the words, “His name is as ointment poured forth.” “And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard.” “Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.” “But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, ‘Why was this fragrant oil wasted?’” “For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” “And they criticized her sharply.” “But Jesus said, ‘Let her alone.’” “Why do you trouble her?” “She has done a good work for Me.”

“For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always.” “She has done what she could.” “She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial.” “Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told as a memorial to her.” Now, surely we should be able to see this as the picture of what Christ would do in His death. “God would made His soul an offering for sin,” it

says in Isaiah 53: 10. Because of these sufferings, it says in Isaiah 53: 12, God would “divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death....” The Lord Jesus, then, as He was anointed by the Spirit for His awesome task, of going to the cross, was well pictured by this woman taking the alabaster flask and breaking it and pouring it over His head. She did what she could. She diffused the fragrance of Christ, His work, and the grace that was given to Him, and which was working in Him. And she poured this out as an emblem of His being broken at the cross, and being poured out in His death.

We can think of the name of Jesus as ointment poured forth because He was broken for us and because He was poured out, and His grace is now poured forth. There on the cross His body was given, it was broken for you. His blood, that ointment which saves us and heals us of all of our diseases of sin, was poured out for you, if you believe in Him. When the soldier took his spear and drove it into Jesus’ side, and up into His heart, blood and water poured forth. The merits of these wounds, spiritually poured out, are an ointment which He gives to you by His Spirit, to bring help and healing. When you believe in the Lord Jesus, the love of God is poured out in your heart by the Holy Spirit, and He Himself is given to you forever.

Thereby you become an earthen vessel with the precious treasure of Christ’s ointments filling your heart. On the Day of Pentecost the disciples got to experience the reality of this ointment poured forth when the Holy Spirit descended upon them and Peter preached the gospel powerfully. During his sermon he explained the experience of the Spirit’s baptism in this way to the people who had gathered there, who thought that they were drunk. He said – “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.” “For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.” “But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, you old men shall dream dreams.’ “And on My menservants and maidservants I will pour out My spirit in those days.”

This was the ointment poured forth. And in verse 33, after telling them that Jesus had been raised from the dead Peter said – “Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.” And then he said in verse 38 – “Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Truly Christ’s name is ointment poured forth. So let us ask ourselves in closing: Have I come to know the precious name of Jesus? Do I know His name as ointment poured forth? If so, what are you personally doing to diffuse the fragrance of His blessed name? His name is ointment poured forth to you; you as one of His virgins will love Him in this way. Amen.