

Comely With Christ

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- [0 : 0 0] Now just by way of brief recap, as some of you will know, we began last Wednesday evening with an introduction into the Song of Solomon. And just very briefly we set out, sometimes it's one that we can recoil from a wee bit because some portions of it are rather more anatomical than we are perhaps comfortable with in our day and culture.
- There probably would have been less embarrassment in the days of Bible times, partly because it was largely an agricultural people. People were familiar with the ways of how animals procreated. It was in front of them in the fields.
- People lived in very close facility to each other. They knew how babies were born. They knew how babies were fed. They knew how babies were made. People lived in very much, if they were the normal people, there'd be several people in a family to one house.
- There wouldn't be many rooms in the house. Privacy would be, you know, almost unknown. So people were probably a little bit less squeamish about anatomical references than perhaps we might be in our day and age.
- But leaving that to one side, mentioned how the part of our desire in devotion ought to be to rediscover the language of the lover and the beloved.
- [1 : 2 0] And that there is nowhere safer and better to do that than in the Word of God. And there is no higher expression, no fuller or richer expression of the language of the lover and the beloved than in the Song of Solomon.
- We said that it is a spiritual, if you like, hymn of praise to the Lord, despite the sometimes quite plain references to the physical love.
- Yet this is intended as being a description of the intimacy of love between Christ and his church. And there is, of course, that uniqueness in Christ's love that whilst he has died for every single one who trusts and believes in his name and always died for all of those who are his people, there is in a sense that each one is unique to him and each one is loved as though there were no one else to love.
- And so that kind of intimacy and closeness that we have in Christ, in joy with Christ, although we feel that he is our beloved, our savior and so on, and we recognize, of course, he is the savior of all his children, yet we feel that closeness, that relationship, that bond with him as though it were exclusive, as though it was the only one.
- And it is not diminished in any way by the knowledge that, yes, he has that same closeness, that same intimacy with all those who he has redeemed to himself at such cost.
- [2 : 5 7] In the same way as, perhaps as we might say, if you take one candle and then you light ten different candles with it, the light is not diminished of the original candle. It is not reduced.
- The flame remains just as bright and just as big as it was before. It has just been multiplied without diminishing at all. Christ's love is multiplied across his children and those for whom he has died without being diminished in any sense, but those to whom it is, those into whose hearts it is poured as individuals.

So, it is a spiritual treatise, if you like, a spiritual gem of praise to the Lord, although, in the first instance, it is Solomon who is inspired to be the author of it.

Now, many and everything in the Old Testament, of course, is ultimately pointing us to Christ. And we have different figures who pre-figure Christ for us more clearly in different ways.

Aaron, for example, is the first high priest, pre-figures Christ in his priestly office, Christ as the ultimate high priest. Moses pre-figures Christ as one of the ultimate prophets, certainly.

[4 : 11] You could argue for Elijah as well, of course. You could also say Moses in the sense of the law, which is fulfilled in Christ. But Moses, let's take him as the pre-figuring of Christ, the prophet.

David pre-figures Christ as the suffering king. David has many problems, many trials throughout his long and ultimately successful reign.

But in Solomon, we have, if you like, the pre-figuring of Christ, the king, triumphant. Not the suffering king now, as David was. Not the suffering saviour on the cross, but the triumphant king.

Risen, ascending, victorious, glorious now. Rejoicing in the love of his children, his people. So the song of Solomon, which is Solomon's.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. For thy love is better than wine. First of all, the kisses of his mouth. Now if a king, especially in the ancient East where kings were absolute monarchs.

[5 : 12] If a king allowed a courtier or a visitor or a petitioner to kiss his garment, that was an honour. To allow them to kiss his hand, that was greater honour.

But if he himself bestowed kisses with his own mouth upon somebody coming into his court, this was the highest ultimate honour of all.

He's not just allowing you sort of distantly to kiss his ring or kiss his hand. He is actually bestowing the kisses himself upon such a one, such a suppliant, such one approaching his throne, who is clearly so beloved that he himself kisses them with the kisses of his mouth.

Let him do that. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. For thy love is better than wine. Now in the past, of course, we haven't looked at this particular verse. It's better in terms of it's, what do we think of for wine?

We think of the fragrance, the bouquet, if you like, of the wine. Like, inhale it, say, oh yes, that smells like a good vintage or whatever. And then we have its refreshing nature.

[6 : 19] Remember that in those days, people, they only had water to drink or they had wine. The wine that they had, in many cases, would be a little more than fruit juice by comparison with us.

It didn't tend to be that strong in terms of its fermentation. Sometimes there was strong liquor, strong wine. But that was certainly wine was the sort of celebratory drink of refreshment, of joy and enjoyment.

And also, of course, there was a sense of its intoxication. And a literal intoxication is not condemned in Scripture. I mean, I think we have to recognise, for example, in Psalm 104, we have reference to, you know, wine that maketh glad the heart of man.

Now, how does it make glad the heart of man? It's not so you take a wee sip of it, oh, I feel so much better now. But rather, a wee bit of it maybe loosens up the inhibitions, it makes you forget some of the problems of life.

A little of that slight intoxication gladdens the heart of man. And this is what we have reference here in Psalm 104. There's also the sense in which, of course, it can blot out unhappiness or unpleasantness in the world.

[7 : 38] Proverbs 31, verses 6 and 7, Now, if that is the sense where the soul is heavy, is miserable, then there is a sense in which the love of Christ doesn't banish that, but it kind of overcomes that.

And it is even stronger than that, that depression, if you like. Habakkuk 3, verses 17 and 18, the last two verses, we've got a sense of this here. Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the foal, there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet will I rejoice in the Lord.

I will joy in the God of my salvation. There's nothing to be pleased about in the world. Everything's failed. Everything's disastrous. Starvation, famine, death, staring us in the face.

But I will rejoice in God. If I could drown my sorrows in the strongest drink possible because of all the misery that Habakkuk is referring to there, yet the love of Christ is better, is richer.

Thy love is better than wine. Now, we have to remember that wine, of course, turning a water into wine was Christ's first miracle, a cane out of Galilee.

[9 : 11] Also remember that when he comes to, as it were, take his leave of his disciples, it is in giving them the cup of wine, in remembrance of his death and his shed blood, and his last supper.

So, both the beginning of his miracles and the end of his earthly ministry, it is, if you like, sanctified with the symbol of wine, both of the enjoyment and blessing and rejoicing, and also the solemnity.

So, there are occasions when love is painful, and love hurts. I mean, for example, it's, you know, if you're at a funeral, the funeral of somebody who has been much loved, there will be tears.

Why are there tears? Because we are parted from one we have so loved. But if you're not loving somebody, if you're, you know, you're kind of there at the duty, well, they certainly were in the same village, so they're out of respect, and enough, yeah, and you're there, and there they were, sort of distant neighbour, but, you know, you weren't in their pockets, and you knew them, but they weren't the lover of your soul, they weren't the beat of your heart, you know, but for those who were close to them, and to whom they were beloved, there are tears, there is sorrow, there is heartbreak, because love hurts.

Love has a cost, and even the greatest, deepest love, which is till death we must part, ultimately that's what happens. Your love for all of your lives, one of you will be parted from the other, and there will be heartbreak, there will be tears, there will be pain, with and because of love.

[10 : 49] You see, love that is better than wine will at times have a solemnity to it, at times have a pain, with it, and there's reference to that in the Song of Solomon, we'll come to it in subsequent chapters, as well as being better than celebration, better than the world's joys, better than the intoxication that the world can afford, and the refreshing of the sweetness, and so on, and love is better than why, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, his love is better than anything, as Paul says, rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, rejoice.

I love this better than wine, because of the savour of thy good ointments, perfume as it were, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee, and we mentioned last week, how you know, the virgins love thee, those are not tainted by any kind of, you know, worldly intimacy, or fleshy relationship, that love is pure, that love is untainted by the world, and the flesh, the virgins love thee, they are devoted to thee, we said how, how Jesus, in his earthly ministry, had women literally falling at his feet, but, but none of that was in any way, fleshy, or carnal, or tainted by any kind of abuse, of that magnetic personality, or power, he never trod over anyone, never sought to take advantage, never sought to, to cheapen, or debase, the love that people felt for him, into something carnal, or fleshy, or earthbound, but rather, because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name, is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee, and the purest of the pure, love thee, or devoted to thee, thy very name is sweet, and to those who are in cuts, to those who are born again, and redeemed by his precious blood, the name of Jesus, is the sweetest name of all, how sweet, the name of Jesus sounds, in the believers here, truly it is the sweetest, the holiest, name of all, thy name, is as ointment, it's like perfume, it is sweet, it is fragrant, it gladdens the heart, it encourages us, when we are cast down, and this sentiment, of course, which is, which is being expressed, by the, the, the love, beloved, the bride, if you like, the woman, in this, this is reciprocated, chapter 4, verse 10, you know, how fairest thou love, my sister, my spouse, how much betterest, thy love, than wine, the smell of thine ointments, than all spices, it's almost exactly, a mirror, of the expression, of that love, the female to the male, the male to the female, and so on, in this sense, so it is a purity, and yet there is a power, within it, draw me, we will run after thee, the king, hath brought me, into his chambers, this intimacy, this closeness, we will be glad, and rejoice in thee, we will remember, my love, more than wine, the upright, love thee, and all this, these expressions, of intimacy, all these expressions, of the closeness, the infall, the enveloping love, of the king, for his beloved here, the upright, lovely, and who wouldn't, love Christ, well, to put it in, it's most simple, those who would rather, have sin, those who, desire darkness, hate the light, those who desire sin, hate that which is virtuous, those who wanted, to use the temple, as a money making racket, were offended, that Christ, overturned the tables, of the money changers, and released all the doves, and chased away the animals, and so on, he was spoiling, their legal scheme, he was spoiling, their racket, their money making scheme, they got rid of them, he was showing them up, those who were merely, legalists, and wanted the name, of being holy, without the actual, spiritual reality, he was showing them up, they wanted the pride, they wanted the adulation, of men, they didn't necessarily, want the spiritual, relationship, to that extent, there was hypocrisy, but hypocrisy, doesn't like to be shown up, vice, doesn't like to be shown up, as being vice,

it would rather, present itself, as tolerance, openness, free love, non-judgmentalism, and when it is identified, for the sin that it is, when the true, purity, and chastity, and faithfulness, and fidelity, is presented, as that which the Lord, teaches, and the Lord requires, then all manner of venom, is poured out, upon that, those who love darkness, hate the light of the world, those who love sin, hate that which is righteous, but the upright, love thee, those who delight in goodness, I would suggest, without saying in any sense, that they would be saved, because of this, that those, even who follow false religions, but who delight in goodness, and virtue, see in Jesus Christ, things which they admire, see in Jesus Christ, things which they, honor and say, well, there is an honorable man, there is one, who is truly, like God, we don't follow that religion, we don't have, faith in him, but we admire, that which he is, the upright, love thee, even those, who may be the best, examples, of false religion, where such virtues, as they do possess, they see, reflect them, or rather, shining forth, from Jesus Christ, as they recognize that, the upright, love thee,

I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon, now, this is not a reference, to sort of a racial discrimination, here rather, but the sense of being black, remember this is a spiritual hymn, the sense of being black, how are we black, we are black, because of our natural sin, because of our fallen condition, how can we then, at the same time, be comely, how can we be beautiful, how can she, the beloved, be both beautiful, but black, at the same time, well because the one, is the natural condition, into which we are born, and conceived, I am black, I am a filthy sinner, and yet, I am made beautiful, I am comely, I am black, but comely, all ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, these were the goatskin tents, that in the Arabian, the Nusra, the nomadic tribes, tend to have, they were black, goatskin tents, as the curtains of Solomon, this is contrast, with the sort of, golden, pavilion, that the king, would receive his bride into, so the one, is sort of, gleaming with light, and brightness, and golden, and ornate hangings, which is, is fit for a queen, to enter into, and the others, the black tents of Kedar, and she says, not that she is one, instead of the other, but she is both and, how can we be both and, we can be both and, because, we are sinners, saved by grace, and the grace, is rather, exalted, and emphasized, the more, we recognize, how black, and sinful, we are, in our hearts, the more, we recognize, how dark, our life was, and would be, without Christ, the more, we recognize, where we were heading, and what we were like, and see the reality, of who we were, and what we were, without Christ, and we know, that that, part of that, old man, that old self, still continues, we are black, with that sin, black, with that, natural condition, and reality, and yet, we are comely, made beautiful, by the beauty, of holiness, his holiness, not ours, the righteousness, of Christ, it is both and, it is not either or,

Christ, is glorified, in the redemption, of sinners, he said, I have not come, to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance, so those, who are redeemed, by Christ, they are both black, in their natural condition, as the tents of fear, but they are comely, as the curtains of sun, the pavilion, of the king, ready to invite, his queen into, look not upon me, because I am black, don't just see, the outside, of what I am like, don't just see, what I was, don't stare upon me, as though I were, the only one, because the sun, hath looked upon me, because I stayed, too long, in my old life, in my old condition, my mother's children, were angry with me, they made me, keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard, have I not kept, in other words, they gave me, this sort of, lowest of the load, a meaning of employment, they cast me out, they made me a slave, and worked for them, but my own vineyard, have I not kept, the sense he does not, oh,

[20 : 33] I'm busy keeping, these vineyards, so I can't keep, this vineyard, remember this is, illustrative, it is a picture, being painted, it's not meant, to be understood, in a literalist, sense, now, some of the bible, is literal, some of it, is poetic, this is an example, of poetic, scripture here, my own vineyard, I have not kept, means, I haven't, looked after, my own beauty, I have lost, something of my own, freshness and beauty, because, I've been in the vineyards, to which I was, relegated, to which I was sent, my mother's children, were angry with me, notice that the children, of my mother, but not the children, of my father, those, in other words, who ought to have been, of my family, in an earthly sense, you know, Matthew 10, verse 36 says, a man's foal, shall be the heir, of his own household, but what's the context, of that, the context, of that in Matthew 10, is Jesus, saying that, when people, come to receive, and embrace Christ, it will set, fathers against sons, mothers in law, against brothers in law, and families, will be divided, a man's foal, shall be the heir, of his own house, so we have, the same perhaps, family, relations, racial background, whatever, nationality, whatever the case may be, we have the same, physical affinity, but we don't have, the same father, we have the same mother, but not the same father,

Jesus says in John, chapter 8, verse 41, ye do the deeds, of your father, then said they to him, we be not born, of fornication, we have one father, even God, Jesus said to them, if God were your father, you would love me, for I proceeded forth, and came from God, neither came I, of myself, but he sent me, why do you not, understand my speech, even because you, cannot hear my word, ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts, of your father, you will do, he was a murderer, from the beginning, and above not, in the truth, and so on, so those, who are in Christ, God is their father, that's why, he teaches the disciples, to pray, our father, which art in heaven, but there is, the Pharisees, and those, who don't believe in Christ, say, oh God is our father, if God is your father, you would love me, you would receive me, my mother's children, were angry with me, but not my father's, it is of one mother, but not of the same father, because God is the father, of those, who trust, and believe in Christ, and God, in that sense, is not the father, at all, of those, who will reject Christ, he is their creator, but he's not their father, they say, oh but, but I can't be the case, because we're all, we're all taught to pray, our father, which art in heaven, yet we are taught, that which Jesus taught, his disciples, those who will believe, and follow, and trust in him, and his desire, his intention, is that all, should come, to be saved, that all, should have that opportunity, but simply because, we may recite the prayer, let's not make God, our father,

God is the father, of those, who trust and believe, in his blessed son, Jesus Christ, and we may discover, God to be our father, but he is not, automatically so, he is not the father, of all, he has created, he loves all that, which he has created, he has made, everything he has made, but he loves, in a different way, those who are, his own children, those of whom, he is the father, you may have, for example, a devoted, dedicated, school teacher, and she may pour, her heart, and her effort, and her training, into bringing on, the youngsters, under her care, and she may have, 30 children, in her class, and she might have them, for maybe, two years, maybe even three years, and she pours, so much love, and effort, and exertion, into bringing them on, bringing out, the best in them, you could truly say, when they finally, walk out the door, for the last time, that she's, starting to see them go, because, she loves the children, under her care, perhaps, one of those children, is her own, son or daughter, if that be the case, although she loves, her children, she doesn't love, the mom, the same way, because the one, that is, bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh, she loves, in a different way, she may be, the beloved, school teacher, of all the children, but she's the mother, of only one, and the only one, has, the father, that she shares, with the mother, that is her child, specifically, so likewise,

God loves all, of his children, but his own children, are especially precious, tell me, O thou, whom my soul love, where thou feedest, where thou makeest, thy flock, the rest of noon, for why should I be, as one that turned aside, by the flocks, of thy companions, now, the language here, one that turned aside, in the original, Hebrew, it implies it, one who is veiled, might think, oh that's good, because that's modesty, and so on, yet, in the original context, you think of like, I think it's in, chapter 38 of Genesis, where Judah, turns aside, to the harlot, that sits at the wayside, she is veiled, which was the standard, method of, of clothing, for those, engaged in that profession, and the suggestion is, I don't want to be, like a harlot, I don't want, one to be, turns aside, to the flocks, of thy companions, I don't want to share, the intimacy, of my love, even with those, who are your companions,

Lord, and lover, I don't want to share, with anybody else, just with you, Lord, there is a sense, in which, we have to recognize, even though, you are the companions, of the lover, of our souls, we cannot give, the same kind of love, to, as we give to him, that would be, harlotry, that would be, idolatry, and there is a sense, in which, we have to be careful, some branches, of organized religion, of course, are specifically, guilty of this, they would say, oh the church, you are going to give, your love to the church, is what, another church, you know, and all, the people within it, yes I mean, but I love them, just as you love God, no, you love them, yes, you honor, you respect them, the church, yes, is to be your mother, God is your father, but it's not the same, you don't give, your love to, leaders, or ministers, or preachers, or bishops, or popes, or statues, or anything else, or anyone else, than Christ, and the danger, may be, that sometimes, perhaps, if we feel, unworthy, to be loving, the Lord Jesus, with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, you know, we're just not, or anyone, let's, let's turn aside, and let's, let's focus on these saints, or let's focus on these,

[27 : 52] God, the memory of these, godly ministers, that went before, or those who were great evangelists, or preachers, and we'll, light a little candle to their memory, or we'll, praise them out, and we'll, almost, in fact, we will, perhaps, focus on them, more than we focus on the saviour, that they preached, and is one of the most subtle, and, perhaps, dangerous, forms of idolatry, unintentional idolatry, the danger that, the servant may be exalted, more than the master, that the companions, may be given the same level of love, as only the beloved, ought to receive, why should I be as one, that turneth aside, by the flocks of thy companions, they are your companions, they are your side, they are disciples, saints, followers, they are those who, love the Lord, yes, but they are not, the Lord himself, and there is danger, that we may give, that a level of love, to the church, or to the memories, of those who have been used, well by the Lord, those who faithfully serve them, those who we may admire greatly, but they are not Christ, the badge, is not Christ, the denomination, is not Christ, the church, is not Christ, those who have, we have been blessed, by their ministries, or sermons, or in the past, or whatever the case may be, are not Christ, and they would turn in their brains, if they thought, that somebody, anyone was focusing upon them, rather than upon the master, whom they proclaimed, upon the saviour, tell me,

O thou, whom my soul loveth, where thou fearest, where thou makest, thy flock, to rest at me, why should I be as one, that turn aside, by the flocks, of thy companions, tell me where you are, let me come to you, and then, the bridegroom, the husband, the lover, in reply, verse 8, thou know not, O thou fearest among women, go thy way forth, by the footsteps, of the flock, and feed thy kids, beside the shepherd's tents, you go with your flock, you soon find out, when I am, I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses, in Pharaoh's chariots, thy cheeks are comely, with rows of jewels, thy neck, with chains of gold, and you'll make thee, borders of gold, with studs of silver, now the company of horses, in Pharaoh's chariots, is probably a reference, to magnificence, and the sort of, power of presence, you can't say exactly, what this particular, illustration, is meant to be proclaimed, the likelihood is, magnificence, a company of horses, in Pharaoh's chariots, thy cheeks are comely, with rows of jewels, now jewels of horses, in italics, it's not there, in the original, in the Hebrew, thy cheeks are comely, with rows, rows of what, some have suggested, that it's the, the falling down, of her hair, that sort of, appears to be, almost jewel, like on the, sparkling like, on her cheeks, as it falls down, the sides of her head, thy neck, with chains of gold, as though it's, sort of, curling down, under her chin, and that's the, the chains of gold, that her hair, is the magnificence, and that which draws, the eye, of the beloved, we will make thee, borders of gold, with studs of silver, won't do, beautify thee, even more, the lover, and the beloved, by her husband, by her, her lover, while the king, sit at his, at his table, this is her, speaking again, now, my spike, now, sendeth forth, the smell, and all, a bundle of myrrh, is my well beloved unto me, now, myrrh is expensive, a highly expensive spice, to have even a little of it, even a little drop, was expensive, a bundle, of myrrh, was an abundance, of myrrh, is my well beloved unto me, that fragrance,

I, I inhale, his presence, almost, a bundle of myrrh, is my well beloved unto me, he shall lie all night, betwixt my breast, now, we shouldn't get, overly hung up on this, if you think of it, if some of you, lovers are lying together, one has their head, cradled on the other, and so, they lie in their arms, you know, where else is their head, going to be, without getting too, anatomical about it, it just means, lying up, upon the other one, the one, his head is, is being cradled, in her arms, now, if it's being cradled, in her arms, that's where it's going to be, so, we don't need to get, hung up on that, but this is, how she longs, to have him in her arms, to fall asleep, as it were, with him, resting there, my beloved, is unto me, as a cluster of tram fire, in the vinyons, of En Gedi, now, in Gedi, is, an oasis, the spring, on the shores, of the Dead Sea, as the, the cliffs that rise, on either side, of the Dead Sea, from a distance, at the base, of one of these cliffs, on the western side, of the Dead Sea, is this, this oasis, this spring, where, in Gedi, is, where an abundance, of fresh water, bubbles up, and comes out there, in a contrast, with the, the completely dead, salt sea, not so far away from it, so there is, this huge contrast, the vineyards, of En Gedi, only possible, because of the abundance, of this sweet, fresh water, he's unto me, as a cluster of campfire, in the vineyards, of En Gedi, behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair, thou'st dove's eyes, gaze in you, to his eyes, and he replies, behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant, also our bed is green, this isn't a reference, the bed sheets, it means, they're lying on the grass, and inside, there's abundance, of green grass, our bed is green, the soft grass, lying together, outside, the beams, of our house, are cedar, and our rafters, are fair, otherwise, the trees, are stretching up, over us, shading us, from the, the brightness, of the, the Middle Eastern, sand, the cedars, their branches, are like a roof, over us, and our rafters, are fair, some translations, would say, cypress, but here, is the, here is the, the love, the intimacy, the embrace, of the, the lover, for his, beloved, now, we said earlier, how it says, you know, my, my mother's children, weren't, weren't angry with me, and, there's a sense, in which, as we mentioned, previously,

Christ, has to be, our, ultimate, loyalty, we all, have, an identity, our local, culture, our native, place, or land, or island, or nation, we might be very proud, to be Scottish, or Irish, or Welsh, or whatever the case may be, but whatever, our nationality, whatever, our affiliation, Christ, must be, our first call, my mother's children, in one sense, they have to be less, than Christ, in every sense, you know, Psalm 45, remember the daughter of the king, verse 10, Harpon, O daughter, and consider and incline thy ear, forget also thy own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king, greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thy hand, now, of course, nobody should worship a new man, nobody should worship a mere person, this Psalm, like the son of Solomon, makes its perfect sense, only in the context, of the king, being Christ, of the king, being the ultimate, redeemer, saviour, lover of our souls, forget your father's house, forget any other, allegiances, you may have, yes, you can still have them, yes, they can still have their place, but their place is below Christ, so that if we are in him, we identify first and foremost, not by our profession that we do, not by our nationality, or the colour of our skin, or the language that we speak, we identify first and foremost,

I am his and he is mine, I am a Christian, I am Christ, and that is the ultimate, so, hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline on you, forget thy own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king, greatly desire thy beauty, what is our beauty, our beauty, is not about ourselves, I am black, but come me, why am I come me, because, we are clothed, not in the filthy rags, our own false righteousness, but in the beauty of holiness, which is the house, the garments with which, we are clothed upon, by the lover of our souls, the one in whose arms, we long to lie, or to cradle his head, and ours, that we may lie together, as it were, upon the bed, of the green grass, with the sea that was over our head, with the shade from the sun, in the coolness, in the beauty, in the closeness, and the intimacy, not of his companions, not of nearly the church, or the badge, or outward relations, or even those who have helped us along the way, in Christ himself, because there is nothing higher, nothing sweeter, or purer, or more divine, than the love of Christ.

[37 : 26] Let's pray. Amen. Amen.