

The Love of the King for His Bride

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[0 : 0 0] We're here to worship the Lord. We can do so from Sing Psalms, Psalm 18. Sing Psalms, Psalm 18. That's on page 19.

Sing Psalms, Psalm 18 on page 19. We can sing verses 1 down to verse 6. Psalm 18 on page 19, verse 1.

I love you, Lord. You are my strength. Our fortress is the Lord to me. My rock and my deliverer. For refuge to my God I flee. He is my stronghold and my shield. The Lord who saves me by his might.

I call on him and give him praise. I'm saved. He puts my foes to flight. Psalm 18, verses 1 to 6. To God's praise. Psalm 18, verse 1.

Psalm 18, verse 1.

[1 : 5 7] Psalm 18, verse 1.

CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

Let's join together in a word of prayer. Let's pray. Amen. Lord God, we thank you for the privilege we have once more of gathering at this time of worship together.

We understand we gather today with that added purpose, that added solemn but also glorious duty of remembering you until you come again, of engaging together in the simple meal, the simple supper you gave to us.

We are understanding that this is also a time of worship. Like every other week, we have the great privilege of spending just a short time together on this set-aside day.

[4 : 1 4] Help us then to come to this place with hearts and minds focused on you. Lord, we come to this place times of worship and we confess there are many things in our mind.

We come just now bringing to you the burdens and the strains and stresses of this past week. We bring to you just now also the responsibilities that lie before us this coming week.

We bring just now before you our own personal worries, our own personal issues. We bring just now before you family worries and health worries.

Perhaps financial worries and job worries. You know that the full reality of who we are. Help us to lay aside all these things for this short time and understand we come just now to a God who sees us and who knows us.

And a God who, as we'll see later on from your word, who desires and who takes great pleasure in the worship of his people. We thank you, Lord, we can worship you.

[5 : 1 5] We thank you that together today as brothers and sisters we can raise up our voices together and know that we are heard by our Saviour. That he who gave his life for his people.

That he is the one who rose from the grave and at this moment he is the one who both hears and receives our worship. Help us then not just in our words but also in our hearts to make sure that we are worshipping our Saviour today.

Thank you, Lord, for the great privilege we have of worship. For in a world where there is so much sadness, in a world where even in our own lives we face so much disappointment and so much stress and strain and worry.

We come to a God who is worthy of worship. That we can lift up our voices publicly and privately in reading and prayer and song and know that we have a God who hears us.

A God who tells us to worship. Help us then this day to worship truly with hearts and minds full of understanding and full of joy. We know as we come to the table we are reminded we come to eat that broken body and to drink that shed and spilt blood and symbol form.

[6 : 34] As we take normal elements, normal things, normal wine and normal bread. We are reminded that these are symbols of something much greater. These are symbols that we are part of the family of our Saviour.

That he is our elder brother. That he is our king. And that he is our friend. We ask, Lord, that as well as a time of remembrance, this would be a time of spiritual nourishment for us.

Not in terms of just feelings, but a real spiritual nourishment. We would say it was good for us to be here. It was good for us to gather together as brothers and sisters.

Let's pray, Lord, for the friends who join us today. We thank you for them. We ask you to bless them also through your word today. Friends who have been joining with us for many decades now.

For many, many years. We ask you to encourage them and bless them and be with them. We ask the word would have an impact on their hearts. We're also praying mindful perhaps of some whose place at the table is still there waiting for them.

[7 : 49] We ask, Lord, that this day again they would know that, although they have not yet availed themselves of that chance, that their place is there, and that the welcome to them is still extended to come, eat and drink, to sit at the table of the Lord and their friend.

We pray for ourselves, for the members, as always, the other brothers and sisters in this village. We pray just now for our brothers and sisters next door as they begin to meet for their time of worship.

Just now we pray for them. Pray for the one who will be leading them in worship today. Pray for them in their time of vacancy, Lord. You would bless them and look after them. Let's give praise that we are in a village where we have many of your people, some who go to our congregations and our denominations, Lord.

We give you praise for that. We have that reminder that despite some differences here and there, we are together for the gospel cause, and together we desire to see your name known and glorified in North Tolstead.

Help us, Lord, today to understand that. We are here today as salt and light in a village that is glorious, that is beautiful, a village where you have blessed your word over many years, but a village where increasingly there are fewer and fewer of your people and more and more of those who have no idea of the gospel, who are ignorant to the very basics of it.

[9 : 12] Help us, Lord, then to be salt and light, to be good neighbours, to be kind neighbours. Help us, Lord, to be friends to those around us. And through our words and through our conduct, to show them the love of Christ, and then to show them the great hope that is found in Jesus.

We pray, Lord, for your gospel blessing on North Tolstead, from every home, from the Glen to Gary, that every home, every family, every individual represented in this village would come one day to have that saving hope and that saving knowledge in who you are.

Pray for ourselves, especially this day, especially those at the table just now, as we shortly will eat and drink. As we reminded ourselves yesterday, we are so aware that in many ways we find no beauty and no worth in ourselves.

We know that if it was left to ourselves, we would not deserve to be here. We have no right to be here. But also, as your word reminded us, we come just now to our table to sit and to eat and drink with our saviour and our friend, the one who calls us his bride, and more than that, the one who calls us beautiful.

We are beautiful to our saviour as we find ourselves clothed in his perfection, clothed in his righteousness. As we reminded again from your word last night, as we had the aromas of our salvation, the aroma of glory, the aroma of the King, surrounding us and showing us it's all about him.

[10 : 55] Because we are in him, and because he reigns and rules, because he is perfect, he has perfected us in his sight, so we can now come blameless before the throne of grace and know when the Lord looks on us, he sees us as clean, he sees us as perfected, and he loves us as the word tells us.

He loves us as he loves the Son. Help that love to be clear to us today, to be known to us today. Pray, Lord, for the procedure that takes place, we know that this is not about a ceremony, this is not about the act, this is not about the process.

The process is also part of it. But all will be done carefully, all will be done to bring no attention to ourselves, but all the attention to you. Pray just now, Lord, for those who are heavy on our minds, those who we love, and those who we long to come and to know Jesus for themselves.

family members, sons and daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, close friends, neighbours, we bring these many names and faces before you.

Give us the zeal, and give us the energy, and give us just the love to be faithful witnesses to these many faces, these many names. Help our conduct, both in private and public, be glorifying to the fact that we worship and we know the risen Saviour, who brings sinners to himself, the friend of sinners, who transforms any and everyone who comes to him.

[12 : 43] And we ourselves are living examples of that. Help us, Lord, then, to understand that where we feel ourselves having no power, we come to you, the one who has all power. So remember, time together, we give you praise for the freedom we have to meet and to worship like this.

We are mindful, as always, of brothers and sisters, even brothers and sisters today who are meeting in secret, but also are partaking in the elements. Brothers and sisters who are, at this very moment, behind locked doors, who are doing this in secret, but who are also eating and drinking and remembering until you return again that they are yours and that you are theirs.

Be with them, Lord. We often forget them, but you do not. These brothers and sisters who are willing to give even their lives, if need be, for the sake of the gospel.

Lord, encourage us as we think of these brothers and sisters and convict us, we ask, convict us of the freedom we have and at times how little we make use of it.

Pray, Lord, for gospel blessing in our congregation, gospel blessing in this village, and gospel blessing across our island and across our nation, that you be glorified in it all and all is done in your power and for your name's sake.

[14 : 05] Ask all these things just now, coming to Jesus, as we at times feel ourselves clinging on to him, we come knowing that he holds eternally on to us.

In his name and for his sake. Amen. Let's again sing this time from the Scottish Psalter. Scottish Psalter, Psalm 130.

The Scottish Psalter, Psalm 130. That's page 421. Psalm 130, page 421.

We can sing the whole psalm together. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried. My voice, Lord, do thou hear, and do my supplications voice give and attend to thee.

Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, but yet with thee forgiveness is that feared thou mayest be. Psalm 130, the whole psalm to God's praise.

[15 : 08] Lord, the cares sin to thee ouw die, my voice toil fps His trustfully to provide and deliver to God.

You shall sound in my work to smile He will be with me, the end will be, for goodness is bound in a million feet.

I wait for all my souls of Him, my hope will still be firm.

For God, dear God, O Lord, in one, my soul is over the Lord.

I say for I'm in a blue world, the morning I do see.

[17 : 23] Let this hour have woven apart, for goodness is here.

And then Jesus, we beg some, his heaven come with him.

And from his deliverance, he is your child re-eam.

Let's turn to reading God's Word. Turn to the Song of Solomon, chapter 2. Song of Solomon, chapter 2, that's on page 525 of the Church Bibles.

Song of Solomon, chapter 2, on page 525. We're carrying on our theme of the King and His Bride that we started last night.

[18 : 54] Song of Solomon, chapter 2, let's hear together God's Word. I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. As a lily among brambles, so is my love among the young women.

As an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Sustain me with raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am sick with love. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me.

I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the does of the field. But do not stir up or awaken love until it pleases. The voice of my beloved, behold, he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.

My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, there he stands, behind our wall, gazing through the windows, looking through the lattice.

[20 : 05] My beloved speaks and says to me, Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away. For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land.

The fig tree ripens its figs, and the vines of them blossom. They give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away.

O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the crannies of the cliff, let me see your face. Let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.

Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom. My beloved is mine, and I am his.

He grazes among the lilies, until the day breathes and the shadows flee. Turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on cleft mountains.

[21 : 13] Amen. Good praise to God for his holy and his perfect word. Let's again sing, this time from Sing Psalms. Sing Psalms, Psalm 150a.

Psalm 150a. That's on page 195. Page 195. The first version of Psalm 150.

Psalm 150 on page 195. Praise God in his holy temple. Praise the Lord in heaven's high. Praise him for his act of power.

Praise him for his majesty. Psalm 150. The whole psalm to God's praise. Praise God in his holy temple.

Praise God in his holy temple. Praise God in heaven's high. Praise him for his acts of power.

[22 : 21] Praise him for his majesty. Praise him for his majesty.

Praise God in his holy shepherds Praise him for his ■■■ guidance. Praise him for his majesty.

Praise the Lord in heaven's high. Praise God in heaven's high. Praise Him with Prakash of sin, Lord, with the sin, Lord, praise Thy heart.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, praise the Lord.

Let's turn back for a short time to the reading we had there in the Song of Solomon. Song of Solomon chapter 2, a verse we all know and love, I'm sure so well, verse 4.

[23 : 44] That famous verse of this chapter, Song of Solomon chapter 2, verse 4. As the bride speaks, she remembers what took place and she says, He brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love.

We won't preach again last night's sermon, don't worry, but just remind ourselves. Last night we started in Psalm 45 and we saw that Psalm shows us the groom and the bride, or the king and his bride, as they prepared themselves for the wedding and the wedding feast.

And we saw last night the glory of the king and the power of the king and the reign and kingdom of the king. Then we also saw the bride.

The bride being the church, brothers and sisters, it's us. And we're reminded that even though we ourselves may not consider ourselves all that glorious or all that beautiful, we're reminded last night in God's word that according to our saviour, he declares us as not just being his, not just being saved, but he declares us as being beautiful.

And the image there was us wrapped in gold, embroidered in silk and gold, and then being wrapped or embraced into his presence with a smell of aloes and myrrh and cassia.

[25 : 13] And we saw that last night. So last night we ended in Psalm 45 with the king and his bride. Well here we're carrying on now. Now we are, as it were, about to be seated at the banquet, about to be seated at the table.

And here we have our verse here. As we're being seated at the table, as we're being placed down at the table, we are thinking to ourselves as a church.

We're reminding ourselves, we're thinking back to ourselves, he brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Very simply, and very shortly today, going through just phrase by phrase, word by word, this verse for us.

Shortly, not because of lack of content, but quite the opposite. Sometimes, the less we say, the better. Sometimes it's better to let God's word speak and rest in our hearts.

He brought me. He brought me. It's a phrase for us, but actually in Hebrew it's just one word. It's one single word in the Hebrew. He brought me.

[26 : 28] It's one single word. It's one fluid motion. Brothers and sisters, when he brought us to himself, for many of us, it wasn't one single fluid motion, was it?

Perhaps it started years ago in Sunday school, or years ago in church, as a young child, as grandparents or parents read the word to you and sang with you, as you perhaps attended church growing up, and slowly but surely you heard the word.

And perhaps for many of you, it was the case you then abandoned that for 10 years, or 20 years, or 50 years, or more. Was the Lord not dealing with you in that time?

Of course he was. Right from the start, we saw this with the baptism service for baby Finn. We're reminded that before time itself, the Lord has set his love on his people.

His love for you did not begin the moment you were saved, or a moment before you were saved. His love for you and me, it began before creation, before this universe, before time and space.

[27 : 36] It began in eternity past, as he set his love on you and said, one day I will send my son, and out of love for you, my son will come, will live, will die, be raised again, ascend to my right hand, because I love you, because he loves you.

Because the Godhead loves you, dear Christian, he brought you to himself. Now it's one fluid motion here, he brought me to a banqueting house, it's one simple movement, it's just simply walking through a door, as it were.

But in our experience, it takes time. It takes time. And for some of us, perhaps, we were saved early on in our lives, very quickly perhaps. And at times, that's difficult, isn't it?

Those of us who haven't got a definite date, or time of salvation, those of us who were saved young, or those of us who were gradually, quietly brought in, perhaps we struggle with lack of assurance.

We can't pin down exactly when we were saved. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. There's others here, I know, and you can give almost a date, a year, a month, a day, a time, when we were saved.

[28 : 50] And together, we're here today, at the banqueting house. However he did it, and note how personal it is, he met every single one of us, in his own way, making full use of, who we were, and where we were, and approaching us, even at times, according to our personalities.

And he met us, on the journey, and he changed us, he transformed us, and he brought us, in. Brothers and sisters, as you sit at the table today, he brought you here, and you know that.

Just remind us, he brought you here. And you might think, well, I don't deserve to be here. Well, you and I, we're probably right, in saying that. But that's not the point.

The point is, he brought you here. He brings us, to the place, of love. Before time, before we were born, before creation, he brought us in.

Also, it's a gentle leading. There's care, there's concern, in this phrase. He brought me. The image here, is the king, leading his bride, by the hand, gently towards, this place of joy, this place of peace.

[30 : 10] He's not dragging her in. There's no unwillingness here. This is the best of husbands, to his brand new wife, gently leading her by the hand, and taking her in.

We said last night, this is a marriage, book, this whole book is, concerning the marriage, of a king and his bride. Humanly speaking, of course, we apply it, widely, to our saviour, and us, and we've seen that before, in various sermons, of the evidence of that.

But think to ourselves, humanly speaking, when a bride, and her husband, walk in, to the reception, together, to sit down, at the table, it's done together, it's a moment of joy, the anticipation, especially if you've been waiting, a long time for them, to finish the photographs first, the anticipation, as they come in, and sit on the top table.

The joy, you can see on their faces, and the joy, of the invited guests. Brothers and sisters, we're not the invited guests today, we are the bride. The joy is ours, he has brought us in.

It is his delight, that we are here today. It is his joy, that we are here today. We said last night, we perhaps don't think of ourselves, as beautiful.

[31 : 29] We don't think of ourselves, as being worthy, of his noticing. Brothers and sisters, he didn't just notice us, he set his love on us. He called us beautiful.

He called us his, and he has declared, from before time itself, and proved in his life, and death, and resurrection, and is constant guiding us, right now. He proves to us, that we are his, and he is ours.

He proves to us, right now, that he has brought us, this far. Where's he brought us? He's brought us, to the banqueting house. Literally, the house of wine.

He brought us, to the house of wine. In terms of the king's court, this is exactly, as you might imagine it, this is a place of feasting. It's where the king, would have his, his big banquets, his big feasts.

Interestingly, mostly, in this day, and in his time, this is quite usually, an open air event. It would be, a building of sorts. There might be walls on it, but they'd be very loosely constructed.

[32 : 37] It's a hot country. If you're eating, and feasting, and having a good time together, you want plenty of air to come in. So imagine this. There's a table spread, but it's not within four walls.

If you're outside, and you're seeing before you, the full beauty, of your king's kingdom. Your new husband's kingdom. It's all spread before you, and you're seeing all the richness, all the beauty of it.

And here you are, sitting together. And this is a feast that he has prepared for you. Brothers and sisters, we know ourselves.

There is nothing we have done today. There is nothing we have done to take ourselves here. This is a feast that he himself has purchased for us.

The feast of simple bits of bread, and a bit of wine. As I said before, last night and last week, the elements themselves are just elements.

[33 : 35] It is just bread. It is just wine. They are normal symbols. What they symbolise is not normal. What they symbolise is extraordinary.

What they symbolise is beautiful. They symbolise the fact that this very moment, as we sit together, and enjoy this simple feast together, we're being reminded, it is him who prepared this feast before us.

All we're about to see in this banqueting house, it is him who laid on this feast. He paid for this feast. Not with money. He paid for this feast with his very life.

As he found himself there in the upper room, with his friends around him. As he reminded them that this is my body, broken for you.

This is my blood, spilt, shed. We come today remembering the same Saviour, who says the same thing to us. Because I loved you so much, from before time, in time, and for all time, I was willing to come, to die, to have my body broken, in the most horrific way for you.

[34 : 54] To have my blood spilt, in the most horrific way for you. Therefore, it's been paid for you. You can sit without any guilt, any worry, any shame.

Take, eat, and enjoy. Yes, it's a solemn time for us, in many ways. We're remembering the brutal, physically brutal, and spiritually beyond understanding, death of our Saviour.

At the same time, it's a time of joy. It's a time of joy. This is the Lord's Supper. In the upper room, we see both solemnity, confusion, and joy.

As they share this meal, with their friend. As they share this meal, with their Rabbi, with their Saviour. We see, they don't quite know, what's happening, what's about to happen.

But soon, it'll all be made clear to them. But for a while together, they sit, and they share fellowship. They sit, and they eat. Brothers and sisters, He has paid, it for you.

[36 : 03] You're not an invited guest. You are the guest of honour today. And He has sat you where you are. And He has said to you, I love you. And I love you so much, I have purchased this infinitely, eternally expensive meal, for you, with my blood.

Now we know this, but let's just not lose track of what we're doing. Perhaps we can get too caught up in the process, of days like today, but we'll lose the simple beauty of it.

The simple beauty is, His banner over you, is love. Why? Because He's invited you to sit beside Him. To sit beside you.

His banner over us today, then, is love. This, in one sense, it's a military image. This, is a sense of a, a banner of victory.

That's exact wording there. Especially in Hebrew, the exact wording is the same wording, you'd have, as a king, as a warrior comes home, you'd have a banner behind Him, which would show His, His title, or His house's title, or other symbols, that showed, He is victorious.

[37 : 21] He rides home, victorious, saying, He has won the battle, saying, It is His. The victory is His. In one sense, we are here today, and His banner over us, is love.

It's one of victory. Brothers and sisters, there was once a day, you had no intention of sitting here. You had no care, to be near this place. You perhaps sat behind, or you didn't come near church, especially at communion weekends, or at all.

There was once a day, you had no care for a Savior. Perhaps once a day, you hated the Savior. You were scared of Him. But now you sit here, as signs of His victory.

He has won in your heart. He has won in your life. And you're here, as symbols of His power. You are here, as evidence, that He can take those, who are once so against Him, once so lost in sin in the world, and He can win you for Himself.

We're living witnesses. We're living witnesses. But also, of course, this is a banner of celebration. This is the sign above that says, this is the King, this is the King, and His bride.

[38 : 34] He is proud, to declare, His love, for us. We said this last night, we at times, we are quite uncomfortable, perhaps, using such loving language, when it comes to our faith, when it comes to our relationship, with our Savior.

He has no shame. He has no worry, in describing us, in the most loving, possible terms. I mean, even the chapter we read, and we'll see again later on, the words, the terms, the imagery He uses, to describe His church, they are words and images, that are just overflowing, with beauty, and love.

He is proud, to call you, His own, precious people. Why? Because He has purchased you. Why? Because He loves you. Because He loves you.

How much, does He, love us? Remember, we read last night, in John 19, a different banner, a different sign.

It wasn't one, that showed love, was it? It was one, that was there placed, because of mockery, really. The King, of the Jews.

[39 : 53] That banner, which showed, that this is a man, who's about to be killed, brutally. And the banner, he was, glad to bear, that banner, of mockery, above him, it was there, because he, right now, desire, to place above you, above us, this banner, of love.

How much, does He love us? How much, does He love us? How much, does the Son, love, you?

How much, does the husband, the King, love, his bride? He loves her, enough, to die for her. He loves her, enough, to live, and to die, for her.

How long, has He loved you, brothers and sisters? Before time, in time, and then, for all time. He will always be His, He will always be yours.

How does He show that love? By coming, down, into His own creation, by, facing, the humility, of God, being enrobed, in human flesh, of becoming like us, in all ways, apart from sin, of walking, and eating, and drinking, and breathing, dust, of this world, of living a life, of mockery, a life, of shame, of seeing, His earthly friends, abandon Him, of seeing, the destruction, of sin, in this world, He endured, all of that, on His way, to the cross.

[41 : 34] On the cross, we know physically, what He endured, emotionally, what He endured, but spiritually, He became, we know, we're told, we're reminded, that, solemn verse, that He what?

He became sin, on that cross, for us. Why? Why? So we become what? His righteousness.

We be covered, and cloaked, and robed, in His beauty, in His perfection. That is how much, He loves you, His bride. And right now, as fully God, and fully man, He remains in that state, in glory, awaiting the day, He receives, all of His church home.

So that together, we look forward, to that final, true, wedding feast, in glory. Just a closing thought, to summarize well for us, in Ephesians 5, verse 25.

I'll read a few verses, just for us. Speaking of course, of what marriage is, Ephesians 5, 25. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ, loved the church, and gave Himself, up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her, by the washing of water, with the word, so that He might present, the church to Himself, in splendor, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, that she might be holy, and without blemish.

[43 : 19] Church, how much, does Christ, love you? As Christ, loved the church, and gave Himself, up for her.

Brothers and sisters, His banner over us, is love. And I know, at the table, we are minded at times, and rightfully so, to think of our own, unworthiness, and to ponder, how, we perhaps, even shouldn't even be here, at times.

And the evil one, he loves, a communion season. The evil one, loves, a communion season, where he can attack, and be raped. And brothers and sisters, you may be aware of this, I'm sure yourselves, at times.

The fiery darts, of the enemy. The spiritual attack, spiritual oppression, the darkness, of the enemy. Why? Because here, we are publicly, and with elements, we are showing, not our love for Him, but His love for us.

And because, He loved us first, we then show, our love for Him, by coming and sitting, eating and drinking, and spending, this time together.

[44 : 38] His banner over us, is one of love. There is now, what? No more condemnation. There is no more guilt. There is no more shame. And yes, you will eat and drink today, and yes, by tomorrow, and by the end of this week, will have, I am sure, gone against His plans again, gone against His holiness, would have been in sin again, we know that ourselves.

But yet, He calls us to sit, and to eat, and to drink. Why? Because He loves us. Because His banner over us, is one of love. Brothers and sisters, take, and eat, and know that this is a feast, prepared for you, by the one who knew you, before you knew Him, who loved you, before you loved Him, and has done all the work for you, for we can sit, and eat, and drink, and know, that His banner over us, is one of eternal, love.

And bow our heads now, a word of prayer. Lord, we thank you for the gift of your word, once more. Thank you, Lord, for the promise, and the hope we find in it. You're a God, who cares for us, and you're a God, who in your love, has sent your Son, our King, and for those of us today, who know and who love Him, our groom, who calls us, His bride, who took us, to this house of feasting, and who through His sacrifice, through His endurance, of misery, and death, has placed over us, this banner of love.

Lord, that would be a reality for us today. We pray just now, especially for brothers and sisters, not at the table. Lord, that you would use this chance, once more, to bring them to a place, where they can come, and admit openly, that the banner over them, is also a banner of love.

Still our minds, and still our hearts, and prepare us, for this feast. Ask all these things, in and through, and for Christ's name, and for His sake. Amen.

[46 : 48] I've now sing, again, in Scottish Psalter, from Psalm 117, that small, but beautiful psalm.

Scottish Psalter, Psalm 117, Psalm 117, on page 397, will give you praise unto the Lord, O nations that be, likewise ye people all, accord his name, to magnify.

Psalm 117, to God's praise. Psalm 117, Psalm 117, O nations that be, worthy Lord, over voice, And now His loving kindnesses His good and juice forevermore

Then our Lord be blessed We come down to the part that is historically called the fencing of the table.

It's often discussed how perhaps useful that term is, but it's good for us to remember that there are those who are invited to the table and those who as of yet are not invited to the table.

[49 : 05] Just very briefly, we can look ahead down to verse 16 of the chapter we had there, chapter 2 and verse 16. We read the beautiful words as the bride thinks about her beloved.

My beloved is mine and I am his. My beloved is mine and I am his. We won't leave the point because the point is clear to us and is obvious, I hope, to us.

Who should not be at the table? Well, quite clearly, it's those who cannot say these words. If you can't say today that my beloved is mine and I am his, then you have no right.

But also, not just no right, but also no reason to be at the table. The table is for those who love the Lord. And if you don't love Him, then why would you want to sit with Him and feast and dine with Him?

It doesn't make sense. But the opposite is also true. Who should be at the table. It's those who cannot just say these words, but those who believe these words and who mean these words.

[50 : 29] Who right now can say, with small faith, with wavering faith at times, at times it feels with almost tiny, minuscule faith, but you can say at times through tears, through stress, through strain, through worry, through agony, you can still say, whatever else is happening, my beloved is mine and I am his.

My beloved is mine and I am his. You might doubt your worthiness. You might doubt your usefulness to Him, your service to Him.

You might doubt everything else. But if you can say, I know Him, I love Him, that He is mine.

When your place is at the table, I cannot labor the point and I am mindful of not doing that. It's a hard thing to be able to say, my beloved is mine and I am His and still not be able to show that.

If this is you, if you can say, my beloved is mine and I am His, then really your place is here.

[51 : 52] I've used first a few rows to eat and to drink with brothers and sisters and with your Saviour, with your King, with your friend offering this feast to you.

As we sit at the table, there's some words of encouragement from these same verses. Verse 14, as the King speaks to his bride, he says to us, O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, and the crannies of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet and your face is lovely.

He calls us out of the world, he calls us together around him, he calls us to be seen and to be heard. There is no place to be on our own, we need one another and we need to join together to lift up our voices in song and worship, to as it were, lift up our faces towards him and say, you are mine and I am yours.

You are my beloved, I am your bride and I love you because you first loved me. Let's now sing once more.

As we sing, the elements will be prepared at the table there. Psalm 118 in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 118 from verse 15 down until the elements are ready.

[53 : 28] Psalm 118 verse 15 is on page 398. Page 398. In dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and health the Lord's right hand doth ever valiantly.

The right hand of the mighty Lord exalted is on high. The right hand of the mighty Lord doth ever valiantly. Psalm 118 verse 15 to God's praise.

God's praise.

In the Lamb's light, and the earth among Him.

In the white anduted Christ at all. In the dead, and the dead, The updates of that All things are dealt I am speaking I am now And I see Lord That my M subst ■■■ I shall know that I live, I shall the works of God is found.

[55 : 40] Vchan Thou shalt Joshua'y hats, Lord, thou shalt not union bear over.

O shall ye open up to thee, The large comforced by the peace of man.

Click there, Hartley, and my head. Wais to Her besteht, And I will bless you.

So the part we call the warrant. Simply, why are we doing this? What's our scriptural backing for doing all of this? The words we have in 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

Let's read a few of these verses for us. For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you. For the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread.

[57 : 12] And given thanks, he broke it and said, This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way also, he took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We'll follow the same pattern. I'll give thanks until we engage any further. Lord, we thank you as your word reminds us. Lord, we thank you as your word. That very same night our Saviour was betrayed.

He took the time to spend that last meal with the disciples, with his friends. And that meal, as he knew what was ahead of him, He dined with these friends of his, Reminding them and showing them and preparing them for what was to come.

And this day, these few thousand years later and few thousand miles away, We are here doing the exact same thing. We remember the death of our Saviour.

[58 : 32] Remember the love he showed to us in that death. We remember his perfect act of obedience. In every single way, he fulfilled all the requirements To be the spotless, blameless Lamb of God.

For this day as we eat and drink. We eat and drink remembering, yes. But also we eat and drink as a victory sign.

As that victory banner over us. Reminds us and shows us and shows the world that we are his. Lord, help us to understand what we are doing today.

That is not bare remembrance. But through this simple act of eating and drinking, These simple elements. Through reading and singing and proclamation of the word.

We also receive that real spiritual nourishment. It was good for us to be here today as brothers and sisters. Bless then this time to us. Bless these simple elements to us.

[59 : 32] It's all these things in and through. And for his precious name's sake. Amen. As we read. But on the night when he was betrayed, He took bread.

Giving thanks, He broke it. And He said, This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, in the same manner, He took the cup.

And He said, This is the blood, the cup of new covenant. Do this as often as you drink it. In remembrance of me.

I mean, I mean, I see. That's well. But what is China? I didn't know. Inblic taste. Love. Maybe.

Gad. Thank you.

[60 : 58] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[63 : 28] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[65 : 58] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[68 : 28] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[70 : 58] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.