

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] I'm feeling so much to need, the Lord's gracious help. I venture in directing your thoughts this morning to Solomon's song, the first chapter, reading verse 7. Solomon's song, the first chapter, reading verse 7.

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon?

For why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

Solomon's song, the first chapter, verse 7. It is perhaps more especially the first clause in this seventh verse that is with me to speak from this morning.

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth.

[1 : 38] And I must say at once that the love that is spoken of in this verse is not natural love. It is spiritual love.

There is a complete difference between natural love and spiritual love.

One is indeed natural in its whole content. I am aware that if we possess the love of Christ in our souls, it will so affect our natural love.

It will move us in the right direction. That is, of course, to Christ himself. But natural love will die with us.

It is indeed one of God's wondrous gifts to mankind upon the earth. What a wonderful thing natural love is. What a wonderful thing is the effect of natural love.

[2 : 57] And what it will help people to do in their lives. We think of a mother's love to her children. And what a love that is.

And what a mother will do for her children. We think of a father's love to his children. And it is, in some ways, of course, a different love.

But it is still needed and necessary in true family life. Our love to one another. Children's love to parents.

Parents' love to their children. And our love to those we come into contact with. And so we must seek to make this very clear.

That the love that is spoken of in this verse here is the love of poor sinners to the Lord Jesus.

[4 : 14] And of course, if we love him, then he has first loved us. We would never love the Lord Jesus, apart from the sacred fact that he has first loved us.

And therefore, with loving kindness, have I drawn thee to love. How may we then know whether we really love the Lord?

Well, this is the subject. The love of Christ to sinners, and the love of sinners to Christ. And I'm sure there are those here who are often really concerned about this.

And it's taken up in the hymn of John Newton's, where he speaks of this in the exercise of a psalm. It is a point I long to know.

After it causes anxious thought, do I love the Lord or no? Am I his or am I not? Well, is that a question with you on this Lord's Day morning?

[5 : 39] As to whether we really love the Lord? It is an expression that is often used by men and women. We certainly know that.

But I must warn you at once that it is comparatively easy to say that we love the Lord. But we shall only rightly say this if we know something of his love to us.

The Lord help us then by the Holy Spirit to seek to meditate in this. Part of verse 7.

And here we have, of course, as depicted in Solomon's song, the Bride of Christ is speaking. One of his beloved people.

And I wonder how many of us here at this very moment are taking up these very words in our hearts.

[6 : 45] You may have been thinking and speaking like this in your heart before you came to chapel. Do I love the Lord? Am I his or am I not?

Well, I feel to need great help in this sacred subject that I may rightly divide the word of truth. So we take this word then up before us.

Tell me. Here is a person who is literally saying to their Lord, Tell me.

Tell me, Lord. Tell me. O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock, to rest at noon.

For why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? First then, this great question of whether we do love the Lord.

[7 : 57] And I must begin by trying, as it were, to speak of a complete opposite to this. And that complete opposite is found in the first epistle of John.

And in the second chapter, we have these very searching words of truth. Love not the world.

Neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

Now, some certain questions here. If we really love the Lord, we shall not love the world.

[9 : 15] I need help to make these truths clear to you. Of course, there are things that we do love in the world.

I've mentioned some of them. Parents, children, loved ones, people. But let us not be confused in this.

If we really love the Lord, we shall, under the influence of that love, the love of Christ, we shall not love the world.

Neither the things that are in the world. Well, how do you feel about this? This question of love. Do we love the world?

And the things of it? See, those who truly love the Lord Jesus from their hearts, by the sacred teaching of the Holy Ghost, they are made aware of this truth.

[10 : 27] The truth that Jesus himself pleaded before his Holy Father in John chapter 17. And what did Jesus say there?

He said this, Concerning those that love him, those that he loves, I pray not that thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil.

They are not of the world as I am not of the world. Now, do not misunderstand me. We need much grace in our lives to live, move, speak, and act in a right way.

And we shall, if the love of Christ constrains us, we shall love our enemies and those that may despitefully use us. And that we shall know something of the love of Christ to sinners, even in this, those that may treat us ill, may persecute us, may even hate us.

And yet, if we know something of the love of Christ in our hearts, we shall say amen to one of the dying cries of the Lord Jesus on the cross.

[11 : 46] And it was this, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. See, if we do not possess the love of Christ in our hearts, we are just like that.

We are in that same position as our Saviour. Well, how do you feel about the question then of the world and the things of it?

Do you love them? Are they your life? Is there nothing else in your life but the love of the world and the things of it?

See, if that is our case this Lord's Day morning, that is certainly where we are. But I can tell you something that I hope will make this clear, that if we just love the world and the things of it and nothing else beside, we shall not know what it is to long, to plead within our hearts that we may know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge.

If we do not have the love of Christ in our hearts, we shall not have any desire to love him. All his people, all his ways, all his word.

[13 : 05] You see, it must be given to us. The love of Christ must be given by God himself and it's brought about in this way.

Again, the words of Jesus. What did he say? To the disciples who said about his preaching, this is a hard saying, who can hear it? But what did Jesus tell them?

He speaks to them of this love. He tells them that the only way in which they can love him is if he first loved them.

And so we read in another place, the love of Christ constraineth us. And if you do possess this love, then you will not be able to love the world and the things of it.

Just to use a simple illustration here which may help one or another, just think of this, when you perhaps, to use an illustration, you might go down into the Arndale Centre.

[14 : 17] And those of you that do, you'll know how busy it is, you'll know something of what goes on there. But as you go around the shops perhaps, or as you go about your daily duties in different ways, do you feel in your heart that this is just not your atmosphere, although you need to be there of necessity, but it's not your own personal atmosphere.

In other words, you're not really happy in the crowd. You do not despise them. And if we are moved by the love of Christ, we shall pray for them.

And of course, another way in which we might look at this, those of you that go out in your lives as you do every day to work, and you have those perhaps that you work with, now you do not despise them.

But do you find that you cannot really join in their conversation? You may, of course, you need to in some ways, but what I mean is in the general run of conversation, do you find there's something in your heart that is just not at home in it?

You need to tolerate it, and if grace is given, you may need to reprove things that are said. And another thought even in this is, as I think of Lot, he chose the way of the plain, he went in the way that was pleasing to him, but where did it end?

[15 : 54] It ended in Sodom, and all that that meant. But what do we read about Lot? He was a righteous man, he was righteous in Jesus Christ, he wasn't righteous in himself.

But this is what we read about Lot, is it a description of your own feelings, sometimes especially, regarding just Lot, he was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.

Some of us here today are not strangers to this kind of thing. And if you mix with people in your work or wherever it is, you'll often find that there's this filthy conversation, there's, oh, I've known some of it in my own life, and sometimes you may meet with people and that's all they seem to be able to speak about, things that are vile.

And, oh, friends, if the love of Christ is in our hearts, we shall not be at home in this. Lot's righteous soul was vexed with, from day to day, with the filthy conversation of the wicked.

And what the conversation must have been in those guilty cities, the Lord only knows, but let me make it clear, that those very same sins are everywhere in England today.

[17 : 19] Now, if then this word that's with me tell me, oh, thou whom my soul loveth, do you find then that you're not at home in the world?

Do you find that you're not at home in the things of the world? Let me go a step further here. Think of all that the Lord may have given to you.

Many of you here, you have your own home. And what a gift that is. And if you've been exercised about where you live, you'll understand what the Apostle Paul said on Mars Hill concerning our home, the bounds of our habitation are fixed.

And if you are favoured with your own home, and it is a great favour, there are plenty of people today who do not have one. There are many poor, particularly young people that are living in the streets and living as they put it under cardboard.

And we are favoured with a home, we are favoured with so many blessings. And if we are brought to trace all this back to the very source of it, what is the source?

[18 : 38] It's the love of Christ made known to us even in this respect. But then if we think of the possessions that we have, many of us today have our motor cars.

We have our possessions in different ways. things. We have things that we value in a right way, but these are not our God.

And how does the Lord make his people aware of this? You see, the Lord puts his hand on things in our lives. He'll put in your daily calling somewhere, and these things go on in the lives of those who love the Lord.

And you see, it's all really to make us sick of self and fond of him. And the Lord will so deal with us in our lives, he will take away our love to the things of the world.

Oh, the Lord will do this for you. And there are those here that understand something of what I'm saying. How often we find the Lord puts his hand on things in our lives, and it's to take away our love for them.

[19 : 52] This is not your rest, it is polluted. You see, he's continually saying this to those that he loves. Come out from among them, come away from all this. This world's polluted through sin, your own heart is polluted, but come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

And you'll find no rest but in Jesus Christ. And that because he loves you, he's made his love known to you, and you loved him in return.

Oh, this is the way we felt we must attempt to speak from it. And dear friends, I sat down in a chair at quarter to nine this morning, and I had to say, Lord, I've nothing to go to chapel with.

I know some of you understand this, that God's servants, they need his word given every time they're to preach, they dare not take it, they have to wait upon their God for it.

And I said, Lord, I cannot go to chapel without my word. And it was in that moment, as it were, this word came, tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon, for why should I be as one that turneth aside from the flocks of thy companions.

[21 : 21] And then another thought which is a complete opposite to the love of Christ, is this. Do we love ourselves? You see, man by nature, because of the Adam fall, and because we have all inherited this, and because we are born in sin and shaped in iniquity, man by nature is full of self-love.

I do not know how any of you feel, but if the Lord has shown you something of what is in your poor heart, you will understand this thought. There's that within us, and we are very selfish creatures.

By nature, we are full of self-love. And there was a verse of a hymn that came to me in this thought, regarding this question of self-love.

And also, if we have been brought to love the Lord, you will certainly not love yourself. And you will say with the hymn writer, myself I cannot save, myself I cannot keep, but strength in thee I fain would have, whose eyelids never sleep.

Now, I wonder how many of us have been brought to low their selves in the sight of God. I go a step further in this.

[23 : 01] And I trust I'm honest before my God when I tell you that my greatest enemy is myself. myself.

And that is where the Lord will bring you. Well, there was this verse that came to me and I feel that perhaps it will, or I hope it will be a description.

And I thought when I read this, Lord, I wonder how many of the dear people at chapel will understand this. I hate my sins. I loathe myself.

O Lord, the sinner cries. O quell my lusts, nor let me fall. He prays with lifted eyes.

Now, I'm going to read this verse again. And I hope that every one of you here, that you may be brought by the Holy Spirit to think about this and to see whether this describes you.

[24 : 06] Because if it does describe you, it is because the love of Christ has been put in your heart. This is a complete opposite to our natural feelings.

I hate my sins. I loathe myself. O Lord, the sinner cries.

O quell my lusts, nor let me fall. He prays with lifted eyes. Tell me, O thou whom my soul lovest.

Now, if we have been brought then to really love the Lord, God, it is because of his dying love to us, his everlasting love to us, made known in our very souls by the Holy Spirit's teaching.

And so we just come to this, and I'm soon going to close this morning, but I come to this. could we sincerely say on this Lord's Day morning that we love the Lord?

[25 : 33] And I hope this may help you. The opening words, I believe it is, of Psalm 116. Now, if you may respond and say, well, I want to love the Lord, I long to love the Lord, I want to know that he loves me, I want to know, really know that I love him.

Well, let me put it to you in the words of Holy Writ. And this is where the psalmist came to. I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice, and my supplications, therefore will I call upon him while I live.

now can you come in there? I love the Lord because he has heard my voice. You see, if the love of Christ has been put in our hearts, we must go to him.

We shall be so dealt with that we have nowhere else to go. And so we must flee to Jesus, we must go to him, the fountain of love, and we must go to him with all our need and with all our sins.

And so, do you understand this? I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. I wonder how many of us here have had answers to prayer.

[27 : 02] Answers to prayer. Answers to prayer regarding our everyday life. Answers to prayer in the path of affliction and trial.

Answers to prayer concerning the question of our never-dying souls. And so, can you at least, let me put it this way, can you at least join with the psalmist this Lord's Day morning and say, I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.

Therefore, will I call upon him while I live. have you received answers to prayer? The greater our need as we pray, the greater will be our thanksgiving to receive answers.

And I'm going just to speak to the little ones and the children first of all in this thought. I wonder how many of the dear children here have had answers to prayer.

You will know if you have. Have you had answers to prayer? And if you've had, perhaps you've had marked answers to prayer sometimes.

[28 : 25] I hope you have. But hasn't this drawn love out of your heart to the Lord that you prayed to? And every one of us here in our lives, those of us that have been brought, and if you have it's because the loving kindness of God has drawn you to Jesus at the throne of grace, and you had to pray.

Now, you've received answers. I wonder how many of us have received an answer. I just put it in the singular. Have you received an answer to prayer this week?

Have you received answers to prayer this week? That's not going back very far, is it? Have you received answers to prayer? What has it done for you?

Oh, has it made us fill our heart as love has been drawn out of our heart to the one who's heard and answered prayer? No, it's because the love of Christ has constrained you.

You see, really, love is the root, the sacred root of every blessing. The Lord bless his word. Amen.

[29 : 41] Amen. Conclude our service by singing hymn 968.

Hark my soul, it is the Lord, tis thy Saviour, hear his word. Jesus speaks and speaks to thee.

Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me? 968. Hark my soul, it is the Lord, tis thy Saviour, hear his word.

Jesus speaks and speaks to thee. Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?

Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me? Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?

[31 : 37] Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me? Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me? Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?

Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me? Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[33 : 59] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. in our Sunday school to help our superintendent and our teachers there. Lord, they so need help and may their own hearts be warmed with thy word as they seek to teach thy word.

[35 : 27] And Lord, thou knowest our own personal need this afternoon at Black Boys. Lord, do mercifully grant that needed strength and help.

And then, Lord, do grant much prayer for the evening service. If we are indeed permitted to meet together then, Lord, gather with us, fill the house with thy sacred presence.

Oh, that there might be those that will go home this day and be able to say, I love the Lord. I love the Lord.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God with the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.