

When one young man was recently married, he wrote and recorded the song that he and his wife would dance to on their wedding night. I told him, "You set the bar pretty high." I imagine that many wives are now saying to themselves, "My husband would never do that for me!" You probably wouldn't like the results anyway, so don't fret it. Imagine that - being so inspired by someone that you would write songs about that person and sing them to that person. But it happens even outside of marriage. I recall seeing videos of children singing a song to President Obama years ago. It was mocked by some Republicans. We don't see that too often in today's society. Those in leadership positions are more often mocked and ridiculed rather than admired and sung to. But that's what the Psalmist talks about in today's text.

**1 My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king;
my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.**

**2 You are the most excellent of men and your lips have been anointed with grace,
since God has blessed you forever.**

Think about the thousands of hymns that have been written, all out of admiration and love for the King - our Lord Jesus Christ. Johann Sebastian Bach wrote some of the most beautiful music ever written out of love for his Savior Jesus Christ. Handel's Messiah is a beautiful piece of art that sings portions of the Bible that describe the incarnation. These were all written out of admiration for our King. Today we sing "Crown Him with Many Crowns!" The words and music are magnificent, all written out of admiration for our King.

What inspires such songs? The Psalm says, **your lips have been anointed with grace.** Isn't it striking that when the temple guards were sent to arrest Jesus, they just couldn't do it. Why not? Because no one ever spoke like he did! We read how He spoke with the adulterous woman at the well and led her to repent of her sins, it is simply amazing! The more you read the Word of God and take time to contemplate the beauty of God's grace through His wonderful words, the more you will be stirred to write and to sing. Listen to Jesus words as if He were personally speaking with you, as if you were the only person in the world, and let the Holy Spirit do His work. This is what the Word is meant to do - to stir the heart.

Oh that we would crave to listen to His grace anointed lips! I think of my daughter who recently went to a concert. She had to wait outside two hours in the cold, then another hour with her coat off, just to go and watch a band that she loved to listen to. I'm sure she probably joyfully sang some of the songs word for word at the top of her lungs. How much more ought we to come before our God and want to listen to Him. The Psalmist was stirred to write a song and sing to the King. What else did he sing about?

3 Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one; clothe yourself with splendor and majesty.

**4 In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice;
let your right hand achieve awesome deeds.**

5 Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king's enemies; let the nations fall beneath your feet.

6 Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

**8 All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; from palaces adorned with ivory
the music of the strings makes you glad.**

Could there be a more majestically masculine picture than this? Our King is a warrior who fights battles. He rides forth in majesty, for the cause of truth and justice. He shoots arrows at the enemies as they fall at His feet.

Some of these pictures from this Psalm remind me of the Lord of the Rings where Legolas is riding along with Aragorn, who has claims to the throne. Legolas is a master at shooting arrows and Aragorn is a courageous fighter who uses a sword. They must accompany the Hobbit on the way to the mountain at the heart of the enemy's camp to destroy the ring. They slay orcs and goblins on the way. There are pictures of Jesus, sinners, and salvation in these different characters. Tolkien was a Christian, and he wanted us to see Christian themes throughout the movies.

This power is something that our society seems to be belittling. We seem to have a thing against masculine men. He's too aggressive. He's too mean. He's a war monger. We associate such masculine leaders with people like Hitler or President Trump. I recently saw a play at Sem called Beauty and the Beast. In the play Gaston was a masculine man adored by the women. But in reality he was laughed at and mocked for his stupidity and relying on his muscles. We make fun of such things today when men try to portray themselves as masculine and strong. It's thought of as toxic.

We may not realize it, but this overflows in how we see our God portrayed as well. We've been presented with a more pretty God as of late. One that doesn't get mad at anyone. One that is really laid back and just accepts you as you are. He is more of a pretty prince than a conquering King.

We tend to forget how aggressive evil is. The Bible shows us that Satan is aggressive and he is angry. He is relentlessly looking for someone to devour. Death is no respecter of persons. It will strike the young and the old. Sickness can be very aggressive. The sinful nature can be very consuming and crave lots of wicked things. Think about what we need then. We don't need a gentle God to pamper sin and death and the devil. We needed God to be aggressive and have a zeal to conquer it. If God were passive, we would be damned. So the Psalmist praises an aggressive and strong King. That is the picture of our King Jesus Christ, who came to make war on our enemies.

The reason Jesus took on flesh was because He couldn't just accept the world as it was. He had to come and right the wrong of sin and death. This would take work. It would take a fight. It would take aggression. The pathway to the cross was a battle for Jesus. He had to fight against His own countrymen who falsely accused Him of lies and abused the law and turned it into a self righteous system of work righteousness. He had to fight against His own disciples who don't want Him to die. He had to fight against sickness, demon possession, and death. Think of Jesus forcefully telling the demon possessed, "**Quiet! Come out of him!**" Jesus had to fight even against Himself, in a sense, as the Father damned the Son for the sins of the world. The only way the battle could be won is through suffering and death and resurrection. Our mighty one is Jesus Christ. He didn't come to compromise with sin. He came to conquer it. When it comes to our enemies, He needs to be ruthless, and Jesus is just that! Thank God!

But we shouldn't just get the picture of an angry warrior God either. He is also anointed with an **oil of joy**. You think of Hitler who was constantly railing and yelling about someone or something he didn't like. He was getting people riled about all sorts of things and just driven by hatred. But I can't think of any videos where the guy was actually happy about much of anything. Politicians can stir our hearts to anger and divisiveness by scapegoating and stereotyping all sorts of people. They are all full of anger, and they seem to be driven by it. We have to be careful that we aren't consumed with it too. Jesus is different. This King, our Jesus, has been anointed with love and joy. He loves righteousness. He loves making people righteous, that's what He died to do. He came here to save us. This is what makes Him happy, not damning people but saving people through faith in Him. His driving force is love, a driven and compassionate love that wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

And that's not all that enamores the Psalmist about the King! He smells good too! **All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia.** We might laugh about that, but smell is important as well. Smells can make you uncomfortable and vomit, or smells can make you hungry, relax you and put you at ease. Think of the smells that come along with Thanksgiving, with the smell of meats lingering through the house. This King would smell good! He wants to be hungered! He wants to be desired! I think of Jesus on the way to the cross, he had been anointed with a bottle of expensive perfume. He would have smelled awesome. His Father also would have been impressed with the smell of His sacrifice from the cross. Finally, a perfect and eternal sacrifice of the ultimate Lamb of God.

Think about this King on this Christ the King Sunday. He's a powerful King, a conquering King, and He smells good too! So our worship can reflect that too! Worship also has joy involved in it too. We rejoice in the forgiveness of our sins. We rejoice in the promise of the resurrection. We sing songs like, "Now Thank We All our God!," not because we are sad, but because we are joyful. We too are placed in the midst of a battle, and we also need to be willing to fight against the enemies of the soul as well. In the midst of sin and death, we still have reason to rejoice in the forgiveness of our sins and the promise of salvation.

Some leaders lead a very lonely life. Who would want to be a politician? Constantly under attack! They need an incredible support system. This King could stand alone. He did through the cross. But this King is not alone! He is not hated by all the people. Listen to the final verses . . .

9 Daughters of kings are among your honored women; at your right hand is the royal bride in gold of Ophir.

10 Listen, daughter, and pay careful attention: Forget your people and your father's house.

11 Let the king be enthralled by your beauty; honor him, for he is your lord.

12 The city of Tyre will come with a gift, people of wealth will seek your favor.

13 All glorious is the princess within her chamber; her gown is interwoven with gold.

**14 In embroidered garments she is led to the king; her virgin companions follow her—
those brought to be with her.**

15 Led in with joy and gladness, they enter the palace of the king.

16 Your sons will take the place of your fathers; you will make them princes throughout the land.

17 I will perpetuate your memory through all generations; therefore the nations will praise you forever and ever.

There is a certain dedication that is needed to follow this King at times. **Listen, daughter, and pay careful attention: Forget your people and your father's house.** The King has enemies, many of them. The King wants your attention and devotion, more than anyone else. It isn't easy to follow Him. Jesus called it a very narrow way.

Yet the Psalmist shows that the King is not alone! He has won the love of a bride, a beautiful bride by His side, and He loves her dearly! He is enthralled with her beauty! Think of Prince Harry who was recently married, and how the press was all enamored with his bride Megan Markle from America. She seemed to be the main focus, both of hatred and scorn and also admiration. People seem to be willing to pick her apart for a thousand reasons. She has become the object of a lot of rumor and attention. What about this bride in the Psalm? This bride in the Psalm is dressed in the most precious gold. She is described as **“all glorious within her chamber.”** Again, it reminds me of the play that I recently watched. The final act of the play has the beauty come out in a golden covered dress. I was told that when she came out for the children's play, all of the little girls in the audience gasped at how beautiful she was in her dress. This is how the bride looks!

It's interesting to note that the most beautiful thing that is mentioned about the bride in this psalm is the dress. She has a golden dress with embroidered garments. If something is embroidered it is elaborately stitched with details. Clothing helps to hide our blemishes and make us look better than we really are. So it is no surprise that this bride needs a beautiful dress. She doesn't come out naked. She can't, because she is filthy with sin. But when she puts on that gown, she looks like a whole new woman. She is representative of the church, those who believe in Jesus and are baptized. Isaiah talked about what a beautiful robe we wear through faith in Christ. I chose this text for my wedding sermon. Isaiah wrote in chapter 61,

**I delight greatly in the Lord;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.**

The unbelieving world likes to pick apart how ugly we are and hypocritical. We have such obvious sins, and yet we dare to call ourselves Christians! How could we think that we are special or loved by God? But this most powerful King Jesus has given His bride something to make her look beautiful in His sight. He has covered her in His righteousness and holiness. How does He feel about her, the church? **Let the king be enthralled by your beauty; honor him, for he is your lord.** When a husband pays attention to his wife, when he compliments her and calls her beautiful, it makes her feel like the most wonderful woman in the world. Think too of a child, who just loves to be praised by his parent. “Oh, what a great job you did!” The child loves to hear his parents praise, he purposely does things just so that the parent will see and notice.

What an amazing thing to think about. The King notices you. He notices me. He sees us in our wedding dress, the baptismal righteousness of Jesus, and He is enamored with us. We look at our sins and say, “How could you love anything about me? I mess up in so many ways! I'm a sinner from head to toe! I'm so ugly! You never should have married me!” But this King, by grace, says, “Stop saying that! I see you as my beautiful bride. You are perfect in every way. You look radiant and glorious! I have forgiven you. I have covered your

sins. I have made you holy. You are mine.” He sees you. He loves you. He is enamored with you! Why? Because of what He did for you and how He dresses you. He notices everything about you. Wow! What an amazing thing!

When I went to a recent wedding the bride took the microphone and yelled out, “We’re married! Can you believe it?” She was so excited about being married! I wish to God more of us felt that way about marriage. I wish that we felt that way too about being married to Jesus through faith! What an honor! Jesus, the mighty and beautiful King, chose to be with us! With us! What an honor! What a joy!

So today is Christ the King Sunday. We take a day to celebrate Christ our King. We sing the finest of songs to Him. We give Him honor. He is our King! That’s why we tend to have liturgies that are formal and regal. We are coming into the presence of our holy God who loves us and has died for us! We want to give you a sense of the strength and majesty of our King. We come before Him on bended knee. We remember who conquered sin, death and the devil. We praise the One who conquered our hearts. We sing songs to the One who is taking us to heaven. What a beautiful King He is: Christ the King. Amen.