

GOSPEL HIGHWAY

< www.ghmag.net >

Christ's Delight In His Church (Song 4:7-16)

by B. S. Poh

The book of The Song Of Solomon is a spiritual allegory in which the author uses his own person as a symbol, or type, of the coming Saviour. Solomon was aware that God was inspiring him to write Scripture, such that the love relationship between him and the Shulamite woman was used to portray deeper, loftier truths regarding the relationship between the Lord and His church. The Shulamite woman represents the church, considered corporately, or the individual believer as a member of the church. Occasionally, other members of the church are referred to in the imagery of “the daughters of Jerusalem”.

Chapter 4 of the book is about “The Love of Christ for His Church”. The chapter may be divided into two, the first part of which concerns “Christ’s Estimate of the Church”, covering verses 1-6. The church is seen passively, as the object of Christ’s love. She has been redeemed by the blood of Christ and is being transformed by the Holy Spirit according to the truths of Scripture, such that she is beautiful in thought, speech, loyalty, love, and consecration. The bride has been admired from the aspects of her looks, her character, and the inner disposition of her heart. The second part, covering verses 7 to 16, concerns “Christ’s Delight in His Church”. Here, we are going to see how the church is perceived actively. The Lord takes delight in the church not only because of what she is, but also because of how she lives. There are four sections to this message, each revolving around a key word, namely, *vision*, *devotion*, *consecration*, and *proclamation*.

I. Delight in sharing a lofty vision (vv 7-8)

In the first section, we have the Lord sharing with the church a lofty vision. The groom has expressed his love for the bride because of her beauty. The bride, in response to the groom’s delight in her, has expressed her resolve to keep herself close to him until he returns. We read in verse 6, “Until the day breaks and the shadow flees away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense.” We have seen that this expresses the church’s resolve to keep close communion with her Lord while on earth. This is expressed by the picture of going into the mountain where there is peace and tranquility, suited to meditation and prayer. As though in response, the groom invites the bride for a tour up in the mountains to capture a vision of her overall mission on earth. But before that, the groom reminds the bride of her adequacy - her readiness - to handle the work set before her.

The adequacy of the church

Verse 7 says, “You *are* all fair, my love, and *there is* no spot in you.” The groom has praised the bride for her beauty before, and he will continue to do so. Each time, however, the word “all” is never used except in this place. In Chapter 1, verse 15, we have, “Behold, you *are* fair, my love! Behold, you *are* fair!” In Chapter 4, verse 1, we have, “Behold, you *are* fair, my love! Behold, you *are* fair!” In Chapter 4, verse 10, we have, “How fair is your love, my sister, *my* spouse!” In none of these places is the word “all” used. However, in Chapter 4, verse 7, the word “all” is used. This is to show the completeness, or adequacy, of the bride and, therefore, of the church. There seems to be nothing lacking in the beauty of the bride. And there is nothing superfluous to spoil her beauty. An individual may have all the qualities of beauty such as good body proportions, symmetry in facial features, big eyes, beautifully shaped lips, etc., only to be spoilt by a nose that is flat. Or, she may have all the qualities of beauty only to be spoilt by a prominent patch of birth mark on her cheek. This is not the case, however, with the bride. She is complete in her beauty, with nothing lacking, and with nothing superfluous.

This is to convey the idea that the church - the bride of Christ - is perfect, endowed with all the necessary qualities and gifts to live well and to serve the Lord while on earth. This is not to say that she is already perfect qualitatively and morally, as she will be when in heaven. No, what we have here is a perfection or completeness that is suited to her needs on earth. A well-trained soldier is ready to go into the battlefield. A well-trained medical school graduate is fully qualified to function as a doctor. A well-trained son is ready to go away from home to earn a living without the parents worrying overmuch for him. The church is well-equipped by the Lord to survive in this hostile world. Indeed, she is ready not merely to survive, but to serve the Lord well. This is true because the Lord has died for her that she may have life. The Lord has cleansed her that she may stand righteous before God. The Lord has given her all the necessary gifts so that she is able to function as she ought to. If she is not functioning well, the fault does not lie with the Lord but with herself. It may be that she is not using all the resources the Lord has endowed her with, or she may be going her own way instead of abiding in the Lord and drawing strength from Him. It may be that she is relying on human wisdom instead of trusting in God's word.

In Galatians 5:22-23 we have these words, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." The word "fruit" is in the singular, yet nine qualities are listed. The list is not exhaustive, since we are told, "Against such there is no law". The expression, "against such" shows that there are other similar qualities that have not been listed here. The singular, "fruit", indicates that all the qualities - whether listed here or not - constitute a complete set given to the believer so that he can live a life that is pleasing to God. By living under the control of the Holy Spirit, the believer is enabled to show forth all the qualities that make him truly beautiful in God's sight. We know that all believers do not live a qualitatively perfect life on earth, but the spiritual resource is given to him to live in such a way that God treats him as perfect in Christ. This truth is expressed by the words, "*there is no spot in you*" in the Song of Solomon, Chapter 4, verse 7.

God looks upon the believer who walks in the Spirit as "without spot" because Jesus Christ has died for him and made him clean by His blood. The sinner who repents of his sin and trusts in Christ for salvation is treated as clean, and clothed with the righteousness of Christ. **Positionally**, he is regarded as perfect in Christ. **Practically**, he is being perfected daily as he strives to grow in holiness by the power of the Holy Spirit. The same can be said of the church, which is made up of believers considered corporately. The church, which is the bride of Christ, is regarded as righteous in God's sight. At the same time, she is being sanctified daily. This truth is taught in Ephesians 5:25-27, which says, "...Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish." We see, then, that the church is well-loved, well-endowed, and well-able to live for the Lord on earth.

A lofty vision

Having reminded the church of her adequacy, the Lord invites the church to have a lofty vision of her mission on earth. This is shown in verse 8, which says, "Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse, with me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards." The bride has just expressed her desire to keep close communion with the groom, in verse 6. In response to that, the groom draws near to invite her to have a stroll on the mountains - to look down upon the country from the tops of the well-known resorts of Mount Amana, Mount Senir and Mount Hermon. This is not only to view the beauty of the scenery, but also to have a broader and wider view of the country. From the vantage point of a mountain top, the bride will be able to see far. From the three different mountains, she would be able to get a better idea of the total landscape.

The spiritual lesson is that the church must have a lofty vision of her mission on earth. She should have a long-term perspective in order to strategize her short-term objectives. She should have a wider view of God's will in order to obey Him in the particulars of His commands. A student is able to study well if he understands the overall structure of the course he is taking. A traveller is able to plan his journey well if he knows his ultimate destination and the general outlay of the terrain he has to

traverse. As far as her sojourn on earth is concerned, the church has to grasp and grapple with three matters - her relationship with her Lord, her relationship with the world, and her service to the Lord in the world. These we would consider in the sections following. What we wish to note at this juncture is the need to continue growing in all these areas, and not to be content with what has been achieved already. There is such a thing as a “holy discontent” with our communion with God, with our growth in holiness, and with our service to God. For there to be constant growth in all these areas, there must be constant feeding upon the word of God. Doctrines must be studied. God’s will as it unfolds in history must be understood from the perspective of the Bible. The individual Christian who has a clear sense of destination will have a clear sense of direction. The same may be said of the local church. This is what the Lord invites us to have - a lofty vision of our mission on earth.

The fact that it is our life on earth that is referred to here is indicated by the reference to Lebanon. The groom invites the bride to come with him “from Lebanon”. When we studied Chapter 3, verse 9, we learned that Solomon’s carriage was made of the wood of Lebanon, which meant that the Son of God would come to the world to take upon Himself perfect human nature. So also, here, in Chapter 4, verse 8, the reference to Lebanon is to indicate life on earth. Furthermore, there are the references to “the lions’ dens” and “the mountains of the leopards” to show that life on earth has its dangers. The Lord is reminding us through these words that we are serving Him in a world that is hostile to Christians. There will be dangers, trials, and sufferings as we serve the Lord.

II. Delight in her devotion (vv 9-11)

Christ’s delight in the church

We do not have to wait for the time, or situation, to be right before we express our love for our Lord. Where there is genuine love, difficulties and trials are no barrier to the expression of love. The world may be hostile to the Christian faith, and the Christian life may be plagued with difficulties of various kinds, but the Christian will express his love for his Lord by the way he lives. We must not think the government of the country has to be more favourable to the church before we can serve the Lord, or that the circumstances of our life have to be more stable and peaceful before we show forth love for Him in practical ways. You may think that you can be a non-active member of the church for the moment, or a secret disciple of Christ, until such time as you are ready to show forth your faith publicly. If that is the case, you are badly mistaken. Nicodemus was a secret disciple until circumstances forced him to show his faith in Christ, but it was too late - in a sense. He waited till the Lord was crucified before coming forward to claim His body for burial. Wouldn’t it have been better if he had testified for Christ more boldly while the Lord was yet alive? In verses 9 to 11 of our present passage, we see the Lord coaxing us, His disciples, to greater devotion to Him.

He encourages us in our public and active devotion to Him by expressing how delighted He is with our love for Him. This is shown by the words of the groom in verse 9, “You have ravished my heart, my sister, *my spouse*; you have ravished my heart with one *look* of your eyes, with one link of your necklace.” In the allegory before us, Solomon is betrothed to the Shulamite woman and, according to Jewish custom, they are regarded legally as husband and wife, although they are not married yet. The love of the groom for his bride is intense, however. He, therefore, speaks of his heart being ravished by the mere sight of the bride. One glance from the bride stirs up such intense love for her; one glint of light upon her necklace causes him to surge with tender love for her. Such is the love of Christ for His church. We often think of Christ’s love for His church in a one sided way, in that Christ loves the church actively by laying down His life for her, while the church is thought of as passive towards Christ. That is true in the sense that believers are unable to contribute anything towards their own salvation, while Christ has done everything needful for their salvation. However, from another point of view, the church shows forth her love for the Lord in definite ways. “We love Him because He first loved us,” as 1 John 4:19 says. What are those ways - what are the ways by which the church shows forth her love for her Lord? That we will consider in a moment.

We wish to digress to consider the fact that the Lord loves the church while she is on earth. This is portrayed by the groom and the bride being betrothed but not yet living together as husband and wife. The groom visits the bride often, thinks of her often, and hears news of her often. The bride’s devotion to the groom stirs up the love that the groom has for her. We often hear it said that long-distance relationships will not work out. The idea is that for a love relationship to work, the two

persons in love must be constantly together. That idea is open to question, but we will not dwell on it here. Related to that is the fact that a couple in love are constantly together, to the extent that they do not have time for other people. I would say that a relationship like that is selfish because the couple is so engrossed with one another to the exclusion of others. They overlook the fact that there are lonely people who need attention, and there are hurting people who need to be ministered to. It will not do for Christian couples to be so engrossed in their love for one another to the extent of failing to notice, let alone minister to, the needs of others. Another situation that may be encountered is the jealous lover who feels unhappy whenever his or her loved one is seen talking to someone of the opposite sex, fearing that the loved one might be drawn away. Such kind of love is fragile and unstable, for there is no trust between them. Christian couples who find happiness in their mutual love for the Lord will love one another in an unselfish way. Their love for each other is strengthened by the mutual desire to please the Lord and to serve Him well. Hopefully, these thoughts will be of some help to young courting Christian couples.

The church's devotion to Christ

We come back to consider how the church shows forth her devotion to the Lord. There are three ways revealed in verses 10 to 11. Verse 10 says, "How fair is your love, my sister, *my* spouse! How much better than wine is your love, and the scent of your perfumes than all spices!" Perfumes and spices speak to us of the prayers of God's people. Mary Magdalene expressed her love for the Lord by anointing Him with perfume, the fragrance of which permeated the room. The church expresses her love for the Lord by constantly being in prayer, in praise, and in thanksgiving. In the Old Testament, incense was burnt on the altar located directly before the veil in the tabernacle to represent the prayers of the people to God. The incense was prepared by Baza'el, from spices specified by God, as mentioned in Exodus 37:29, "He also made the holy anointing oil and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the perfumer." In Psalm 141:2, David said, "Let my prayer be set before You *as* incense..." In Revelation 5:8, we are told, "Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." It is clear that the perfumes and spices mentioned in our present passage refer to the prayers of the church. The Lord, represented by the groom, takes delight in the prayers offered up by His people.

The second way the church shows forth her love for the Lord is by the proclamation of His word. We are told in verse 11, "Your lips, O *my* spouse, drip as the honeycomb; honey and milk *are* under your tongue;..." We have learned from verse 3 that the lips and mouth are a reference to the speech, i.e. the words that are uttered. Similarly, the lips and tongues in the present verse refer to the words that are uttered. The church makes it a point to preach God's word regularly, both to bring the gospel to sinners and teaching to the saints. David, in Psalm 119:103, refers to God's word in this way, "How sweet are Your words to my taste, *sweeter* than honey to my mouth!" The church that faithfully preaches God's word is well-loved by the Lord. The individual believer who delights in God's word is well-pleasing to the Lord. We show forth our delight in God's word by attending the meetings in church regularly, listening to the preached word attentively, and meditating upon God's word often. It is as we make God's word our own that we begin to be transformed accordingly, such that our speech is "seasoned with salt" and our lives show forth the fragrance of Christ. We are told in Colossians 4:6, "*Let* your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one." Our speech should be wholesome, kind, encouraging, and edifying to others. We do not want to be those who are avoided by others because we are so caustic, insensitive and critical. There are times when the truth we speak hurts, but it would be to the good of our hearer. When uttered in love, it will be appreciated by those who are sensible. The Lord takes delight in His people who speak His truth to the good and edification of others.

The third way the church evokes love in the Lord is by her way of life. Verse 11 continues by saying, "...and the fragrance of your garments *is* like the fragrance of Lebanon." We have noted that Lebanon points to life on earth. The forest of Lebanon had its own fragrance because of the trees and plants growing there. The garments are a reference to the way of life, including the behaviour and the actions. We must be clear, first, that our lives are regarded as righteous in God's sight only because Jesus Christ's righteousness is counted as ours through faith in Him. We are unable to cleanse ourselves of our sins except in the blood of the Lamb. In Revelation 7:9-10, we read of the saints in

heaven, ‘After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”’ The white robes refer to the righteousness of Christ imputed to the believers, whether in heaven or on earth. We are saved not by our good works and human efforts, but by what Christ had accomplished when He died on the cross. Those who are saved would want to live righteously, in obedience to God’s word, while they are on earth. In Revelation 3:4, we are told, “You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.” The believers who had not defiled their garments had not compromised their faith by doing wrong in God’s sight. In contrast, Revelation 3:18 shows that there were those in the church in Laodicea who needed white garments to cover the shame of their nakedness. They were living in sin and needed to come to Christ in repentance so as to be forgiven. They needed the righteousness of Christ to cover the shame of their sinful lives. Coming back to the Song of Solomon, to Chapter 4, verse 11, we find that the fragrance of the bride’s garments pleases the groom. This is to say that the Lord takes delight in the righteous life of the church. Believers who live in obedience to God’s word are well-pleasing to the Lord.

III. Delight in her consecration (vv 12-15)

Separation from the world

The Lord shows His delight for the church by sharing a lofty vision of His work on earth. He shows His delight in her devotion to Him. The Lord also shows His delight in her consecration to Him. This truth is conveyed to us by verse 12, “A garden enclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.” The bride is compared to a garden that is fenced, or walled up. The garden is in the world, but not of the world, just as the church is in the world, but not of the world. The fountain is active, and the spring is flowing with living waters - as we can see from verse 15. But they are kept enclosed in the garden. She does not parade her beauty to an ogling world. She is a real beauty, but not the type to participate in a beauty pageant. She makes every effort to keep herself from the influence of the world. Consecration to the Lord means keeping worldliness out of our lives. The Bible’s teaching is that the church should remain separate from the world, from sins, and from heresies. Worldly allurements must be resisted, sins in our lives must be put to death, and wrong teachings must be exposed and rejected. Too many churches today are lax in these areas. Worldly methods of worship are adopted, a liberal attitude towards the world is embraced, and no warning of the dangers of worldliness is sounded forth. The Bible, however, commands us in the words of 2 Corinthians 6:17, “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.” Many other similar passages can be quoted. There should be rightful separation from the world.

We make the qualification that the separation should be of the right kind because there have been those who practise separation of the wrong kind. In the past, there were those who withdrew to monasteries and nunneries, to spend time in prayer and meditation. Today, there are those who prefer a hermit’s life to being drawn away by the rat race of the day. These are extreme reactions which are not called for. The Son of God came to the world to interact with sinners and to die for them. The apostle Paul did not withdraw himself from the world when he was converted. Instead, he went around seeking out hearers to preach to them. We are to be the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. If we withdraw ourselves, how are we to exert a positive influence upon others? This is where I would cautiously warn you against sending your children to Christian schools. I know that many good Christian parents in western countries have done that out of concern for their children, who would otherwise be exposed to bad influences and wrong teachings in the public schools. But there are many reasons why we would not encourage that - reasons which we would not go into here. We would only raise one point relevant to our passage, namely that there is a rightful separation to be practised by God’s people without the principle being carried too far. Once that happens, we would have gone astray to the opposite extreme. We do not want to over-protect our children by shielding them from what are perceived to be bad influences. Instead, we should teach them the right principles so that they can be strong and be able to fend for themselves in the world.

Orderliness

Consecration to the Lord is not to be understood in a wholly negative, or defensive, sense. Not only

must there be separation from the world, but there must be orderliness in life, too. Look at the garden - everything is arranged in an orderly fashion. There are varieties of plants and fragrant herbs in the same garden, showing that these are cultivated plants and not wild ones that are found growing sporadically. The plants are mentioned in order in verses 13-14 - the fruit trees, the fragrant herbs, the spices: "Your plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits, fragrant henna with spikenard, spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices -". There is no indication of disorder. Every plant is in the right place, and every type of plant is in specifically designated rows or plots. They have been cultivated intelligently and with purpose. The orderliness of the garden speaks of the good order that should be found in a church. Orderliness in the life of a church is not to be looked upon as something optional. While we eschew worldly churches which have adopted business techniques into their administration, no church should be without order. Elders are to lead, and deacons are to help in the implementation of policies. Clear biblical policies are to be formulated to accomplish the two-pronged mission of winning souls to Christ and building up the faith of believers. All categories of people are to be reached with the gospel, with the aim of establishing faithful churches. God's work must be done in God's way - as is revealed in Scripture. The apostle Paul taught the Corinthian church, "Let all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40)." He wrote to the Colossian church, "For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your *good* order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ (Col. 2:5)."

This truth must be extended to the individual Christian life. A believer should be orderly in his thoughts, and systematic in the way he does things. This is reflected in the way you study, the tidiness of your room, and the manner you carry out an assignment. There are those who begin doing something with enthusiasm but never complete the job with satisfaction. We are used to hearing Chinese mothers scolding their children for being "tailless dogs", meaning that they sweep the floor but do not put away the broom and dustpan, they wash the dishes but do not dry them up, and so on. In the church, the members get upset over those who behave like "tailless dogs". This is when we must learn to be patient with one another, at the same time that the "tailless dogs" must learn to grow tails! Since we live and work together with other people, it is important that we learn to be considerate. Ultimately, we want to live orderly lives because that is pleasing to our Lord. Our God is a God of order.

Liveliness

The consecrated church is separate from the world and orderly. It is also lively. This truth is expressed in verse 15, "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." The eyes see the orderliness of the garden, the nose smells the fragrance of the plants, and the ears hear the soothing sound of the waters - from the fountain and in the streams. The garden is fed by waters flowing down from the mountains of Lebanon. Lebanon has been mentioned a number of times in the present passage - in verses 8 and 11 - and now in verse 15. As noted earlier, by comparison with Chapter 3, verse 9, this reminds us that we are considering life on earth. The bride is compared with a lively garden in which fresh waters flow. The streams would be clear, so that fishes are found aplenty in them. The wind would be blowing through it, as the next verse shows. We can imagine the birds hopping on the branches and flying happily through the garden. This speaks to us of a lively church that is filled with the Holy Spirit. There will be such warmth in the fellowship, and such love between the members. Any visitor will feel welcome, any bruised individual will feel comforted, and any tired soul will leave the place refreshed. Is our church like that? May it be so!

Then, applying this to the individual believer, are you a person with a bright disposition? Do you show forth the joy of salvation? Are people encouraged and helped in their interaction with you? Or are you a grumpy person who hardly ever smiles? Are you always moaning and complaining? Are you not contented with your lot? We need to be reminded of Philippians 4:4-7, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

IV. Delight in her proclamation (v16)

Proclaiming Christ

We come to the final verse of our passage, which is verse 16, “Awake, O north *wind*, and come, O south! Blow upon my garden, *that* its spices may flow out. Let my beloved come to his garden and eat its pleasant fruits.” The beauty of the verse cannot have escaped our eyes. In the first part of the chapter, namely verse 1 to 6, the church responds to Christ’s love for her passive characteristics in the words of the last verse, “Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense.” The church is saying, “Until this world is over, and Christ comes to take me to be with Him, I will live a holy life and keep a close walk with Him in the Spirit.” Now, in the second part of the chapter, the church responds to Christ’s delight in her active characteristics with the words of verse 16. The church is saying, “Until Christ comes again, I will proclaim the truth far and wide. I will proclaim the fragrance of His name to all nations.” The Lord loves us and, therefore, out of love for Him, we desire to make Him known as widely as we can so that others may come to honour Him and be saved. Love for Christ is a strange thing in that, instead of keeping Him to ourselves, we want others to share in our love for Him. Another way of putting it is that the church that loves her Lord would always keep the Great Commission in mind. The members of the church would be praying for souls to be saved, and engaging in bringing the gospel to others.

Pleasing Christ

The last part of the verse is to be noted, “Let my beloved come to his garden and eat its pleasant fruits.” This speaks of the motive for our activity. We are not doing everything for our own glory. We are not seeking to please anyone but Christ. We want to bear spiritual children for Christ because of our love for Him. He has loved His people and laid down His life for them. It is only right that He sees the fruit of His labour. We are reminded of Isaiah 53:11, “He shall see the labour of His soul, *and* be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.” Unless there is love for Christ, there will be no sustained desire to win souls for Him. There will be the fear of men in us such that we do not dare to witness to certain classes of people. There will be the fear of embarrassment when we meet with relatives and friends while distributing tracts. However, when the love *of Christ* is in us, we will witness to all and sundry. And if the love *for Christ* is also in us, we would not bother what our friends and relatives think of us. Our concern is to show forth our love for our Lord while we are able.

Conclusion

Let us summarise what we have learned. Christ takes delight in His church because of her active characteristics. These may be summarized under four key words - *vision, devotion, consecration, and proclamation*. Christ invites the church to have a lofty vision of the task set before her in the world. He takes delight in her devotion to Him. He takes delight also in her consecration to Him. The church responds with a deep desire to proclaim His name to the world. How we are overwhelmed by His love for us! We owe the Lord a debt of love which we are unable to repay. Let us show forth our love for the Lord without fanfare, and without reserve.

*When this passing world is done,
When has sunk the radiant sun,
When I stand with Christ on high,
Looking o'er life's history,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe.*

(Robert Murray M'Cheyne, 1813-43)

~~~~~