

Articles and Sermons :: The Reclining Jesus - Oliver Peng**The Reclining Jesus - Oliver Peng, on: 2010/11/3 9:30**

The Church of The Reclining Jesus

“And it came about that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax-gatherers and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him” (Mk. 2:15).

Unlike Luke who is meticulous and detail-oriented, Mark comes straight to the point much of the time in his presentation of Jesus as the Gospel.

In chapter one, Mark paints a picture of a very busy Savior with multitudes of people pressing in from all sides wherever Jesus goes. Great throngs of people with all types of needs, requests, sicknesses and demon-possession gather around Him. In chapter two, even the ill-intentioned Pharisees come to Him with their reasoning and accusations.

Out of all these encounters with the needy people and people of various agendas, one thing becomes clear: they all want something from Jesus; either they want healings, deliverance and blessings, or they want confrontations. They all want something from Him.

We have to lift our voices and give Him a big “Thank You!” for all the healings, deliverance and blessings that He has bestowed upon all of us needy and ignorant ones. Were it not for His mercy and grace in patiently tending to our relentless requests, desperate cries for help, and sometimes ill-intended slanders, none of us would be where we are today.

Without a doubt, a great deal of fanfare has been generated by all the healings and deliverance.... News about Jesus’ miraculous power spread like wildfire. More people with special needs come to Him....

Mark records that “Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere” (Mk 1:45). In 3:20, Mark remarks that because of the crowd, Jesus and entourage could not even eat a meal!

Under such tremendous weight and burden to care for the needy people, Jesus shows nothing but grace and mercy. He continues to bless, heal and deliver.... Praise the Lord!

Chapter two opens with yet another dramatic demonstration of man’s desperate need: four friends of a paralytic go the extra mile in hoisting him up on the roof, digging a hole and lowering him to Jesus’ feet. This is without a doubt a culmination of man’s desperate need for healing. And as usual, the Savior stands ready to save and to heal.

Interestingly tucked away in the middle of chapter two is an almost obscure instance of Jesus reclining at table feasting with Matthew and his despised cluster of fellow-tax collectors and sinners.

What is so unusual about Jesus reclining at table with a group of sinners and tax-collectors?

Plenty.

For one thing, this group of simple folks does not show to be desperately wanting something from Jesus as in all the other instances. Don’t they have needs? Sure they do! But they are not here because they want something from Him. They are here because He is here. They don’t want a “thing” from Him. They don’t want a “blessing” from Him. They just want Him.

Dear saints, this has got to be one of the all-time great eye-openers in the Bible, if we would just pause a moment and ponder a bit. Lowly and humble men and women finally find something in Him to be desirable and not something He does to be desirable. This is a great revelation.

When children are young, they only appreciate their parents for their provisions, presents and allowances. When I was little, I'd get excited whenever dad bought us toys. All I could see and appreciate were the toys. When I grew older I began to appreciate him for who he was, not just what he did.

A.B. Simpson wrote a wonderful hymn, "Himself," and verse one goes,

"Once it was the blessing, now it is the Lord;
Once it was the feeling, now it is His Word;
Once His gifts I wanted, now the Giver own;
Once I sought for healing, now Himself alone."

If you read through the rest of the hymn, there can be no doubt that Simpson has gone through all the scenarios that any zealous Christian would in the course of serving and pleasing God. It is a very common experience for a believer to ask for blessings, seek feelings, covet gifts, crave for powers, plan for gospel campaigns, request healings, etc, etc.... But in the end, Simpson found the secret - Himself.

And what a discovery it was!

All the labor, toil, ministry...pale in comparison to Himself alone.

Nothing can be quite as uplifting and liberating as coming to Him for who He is without any agenda, hidden motives or preconceived notions.

Nothing pleases Him like a group of folks who just desire Him, whether He does anything for them or not.

And nothing saddens Him more than seeing His children for years living in the "once it was," but never advancing to the "now it is."

When the Lord finds a group of simple and unpretentious folks who instead of clamoring for blessing, feeling, gifts, ministries and healing, make a feast for Him, He reclines. Now that's probably one of the most significant pictures of the church - a reclining Jesus feasting with a group of lowly and simple people.

Much to our regret, today's churches make their own statements about their accomplishments and toot their own horns. Many claim to have done great works for the Lord. Many claim to have been faithful to the Lord. Many claim to have endured persecutions and sufferings for the Lord. Some claim to have discovered certain doctrines of the local ground of the church. Some claim to have returned to the unique New Testament pattern of meeting from house to house, and the list goes on and on....

What makes a church a church is not in what she can do for the Lord, but whether He is there reclining. And feasting.

The Song of Songs is an intriguing interplay between the beloved and his beautiful bride. In typology, this is a most amazing interplay between the Beloved Christ and His beautiful Bride, the Church.

Throughout this song, the bride shows her longing and desires and needs for him. Likewise, the beloved also shows his longing, desires and needs for her. It slowly becomes evident that as the bride grows and matures, she is less concerned with what he does for her and more focused for what he is. As she grows, he praises her more and more not for what she does, but for what she is on the inside. His needs and desires for her become fully met and satisfied in her matured state.

This should be the normal experience of the Church. Only the increasing and maturing portions of Christ in the Church can offer pleasure and satisfaction to our Beloved Bridegroom.

It's not about building a perfect wineskin; it's not about building according to an authentic blueprint. It's about Him...Himself being the wineskin, Himself being the blueprint, and the builder, and the building.

Finally, here in Matthew's home, the Lord is no longer busy working. He is resting, reclining, feasting. And the simple folks are just enjoying His presence, offering their praise and worship, carrying on fellowship. Very simple, isn't it, this business about the church?

May the Lord find Lamb-like simplicity in us. May the Lord find rest and recline among His people. May we offer Him our portions of Christ as His feast.

One more line from A.B. Simpson's hymn:

"Once it was my working, His it hence shall be;
Once I tried to use Him, now He uses me."

Saints, it is not your work or my work; it is Him doing His work in, through, and out of you and me. This is true rest.

Come to the table, there is a place for you. Amen.

Oliver Peng
8/23/07

Re: The Reclining Jesus - Olier Peng - posted by bakary (), on: 2010/11/4 6:47

Oh to ever rest IN HIM, waiting HIM as our director. Brother True the flashing light , is shining , INDEED THE DAWNING OF A NEW DAY. I am bless.

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 13:48

This really resonantes with me.

Quote:
-----Throughout this song, the bride shows her longing and desires and needs for him. Likewise, the beloved also shows his longing, desires and needs for her. It slowly becomes evident that as the bride grows and matures, she is less concerned with what he does for her and more focused for what he is. As she grows, he praises her more and more not for what she does, but for what she is on the inside. His needs and desires for her become fully met and satisfied in her matured state.

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SOS 2:4 He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

SOS 2:10 My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

SOS 2:16 My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

Consider the lilies of the valley, they toil not. Jesus who is THE Lily of the valley, hangs out with those that TOIL NOT.

A lily, is the tallest of flowers and yet hangs its head down. This is a beautiful picture of the greatness of the Son of God matched only by the greatness of His humility.

He is our example. Oh, to be a Lily! No toil, no spin, beautiful fragrance.

Re: - posted by StarofGOD (), on: 2010/11/4 14:33

This may go a little off topic. But something I have always wondered. I've heard Zac Poonen say that the Lily of the Valley is not actually Jesus in this verse. Has anyone else every heard this? In the NLT and the NIV it does say the woman is saying verse 2:1 which would be the church.

Sounds prideful or boastful in a way to say the church is the Lily of the Valley. But in a way it does not...As the Lord perceives perhaps to Him, the church is His Lily in the valley, His Rose of Sharon.

Just always found it interesting. Thanks. Any thoughts?

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 15:25

It just depends on what version of the Bible you use.

In my Bible and my heart, He is the Lily of the Valleys and the Bright and MorningStar. No reason for me to elaborate anymore, because you are right, it is off topic.

Plenty of websites already on this topic.

Re: - posted by StarofGOD (), on: 2010/11/4 15:30

It does not mean that he is wrong. I was sincerely seeking to know shall I start another thread to suit you?

Why should I be wrote off?

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 15:50

Not sure if it is important to find out who is right unless you really need to. You can continue if you like, you don't have to suit me.

What is the Lord telling you about that verse?

Re: - posted by StarofGOD (), on: 2010/11/4 18:07

:) Praise you pilgrim.

well depends on who is saying it, Jesus or the "church?"

If it's the church, to me it is saying she recognizes that she is the lily in the valley to Jesus, in the midst of the rocks the dirt and whatever else could be in that valley, she is beautiful to Him!

I really don't think the Lily of the Valley is Jesus, verse 2 says I, meaning that whoever is speaking is calling themselves t

he Lily of the Valley,....then in verse 2, he is comparing His love for the daughters as also the lily among the thorns. Why would he call Himself the Lily of the valley then go and compare His love for the daughters to the Lily too? doesn't make sense..

by the way...Sorry to have taken over your thread..

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 19:03

No need to praise me, Star.

Then, to you the Lily is the church.

To me, it is Christ that speaks these words, because it is not becoming for the spouse to commend herself;

Solomon said, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips," Proverbs 27:2.

The Lord Jesus elegantly expresses his own excellency, by comparing himself unto a Rose, the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valleys.

To me, we are lilies in the valley, also.

Song of Solomon 6:2 My beloved (Jesus) is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies (that would be us).

We are told by Jesus, that the lilies of the field do not toil, so we should not toil, either and as the Lily is tall yet hangs her head (flower) in humility, so should we. As our Saviour is humble, His children are, too.

Jesus is our forerunner in ALL things, without exception. We are never anything unless He was that "thing" first.

To me He is the Chief Lily, if you will, and we are little lilies.

Here are more reasons why I think it refers to Jesus.

The New Testament refers to Jesus as the Bridegroom and the Church as His Bride. This tells us right here that God is using the "lover" analogy to describe the relationship that He wants with us and that He also wants us to have with His Son.

Women love roses (we are the Bride) and I believe instead of Jesus giving us roses (that would detract from Him), He is the actual Rose (of Sharon). - Jesus is perfect love just as the rose is the most perfect of all flowers in its looks, beauty and smell.

A lily is a sweet and a fragrant flower. Jesus has a sweetness in His ministry especially when He gave "himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:2).

A lily is white and very beautiful; exceeding all other flowers for whiteness. White is a picture of purity (Revelation 3:4). The bride of the Lamb will be clothed in white (Revelation 19:8). Jesus Christ, the one "who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21), who "did no sin" (1 Peter 2:22), who was tempted "yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15), and who "in him is no sin" (1 John 3:5), is a beautiful white lily. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Hebrews 7:26).

A lily is very fruitful. One root may put forth fifty bulbs. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, He brings forth much fruit (John 12:24). It is by bearing much fruit that He glorified the Father (John 15:8).

A lily, is the tallest of flowers and yet hangs its head down. This is a beautiful picture of the greatness of the Son of God matched only by the greatness of His humility. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:6-8).

The lily has many medicinal qualities. Supposedly, it could be used to restore a lost voice, help faintness, was good for the liver, and helped dropsy. The Lord Jesus Christ is the great physician and is fully capable of curing all diseases and maladies of the soul.

"I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys."Â

He is expressing His own excellencies, to draw, allure, and enamour the souls of those that love, and long after Him:

How beautifully and fitly He is compared to a Rose and a Lily. The object of our affection is not the Bride but the Bridegroom.

Re: - posted by StarofGOD (), on: 2010/11/4 19:40

a couple websites that say the same thing...the 2nd is kind of hard to read

http://www.acts17-11.com/dialogs_lily.html

<http://www.anointedhandsministries.com/lilyofthevalley.htm>

Lily is feminine?

Hosea 14:4-7 refers to a lily as being Israel.

the lilies in Matthew are referring to US not Jesus..

anyways not trying to argue...but it is interesting. One of Zac's thing is that he tries to unmask our "traditions" what we always think and believe to be right..because we've always been taught that way, so we just swallow, believing that it is correct. This would be an example. Just because of that one song! :)

No where in the Bible is Jesus referred to as a Lily

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 19:49

I like Zac and have met him and have been blessed by many of his teachings and will not speak badly of him. I don't agree with everything he says but that is normal as he like we, are mere men.

What did you think about the article that this thread is all about?

God bless you.

I'll check those websites out.

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 19:54

This is

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 20:59

Quote:

-----Lily is feminine?

I am not arguing either, but I did not think a flower was male or female.

A Lily or Rose is being used here as typology not as gender. The typology works well and makes a lot of sense since you brought up the word "sense".

Again, I see Him as THE Lily and THE Rose, and we who are conformed to His image have the opportunity to be a lily and rose to each other and to Him.

You say the Lily is Israel.

Read the following verses and tell me who they say Israel is.

Matthew 2:14-15

(14) When he arose, he took THE YOUNG CHILD and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

(15) And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying , OUT OF EGYPT HAVE I CALLED MY SON.

Hosea 11:1

(1) WHEN ISRAEL WAS A CHILD, then I loved him, and CALLED MY SON OUT OF EGYPT.

Exodus 4:22

(22) And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, ISRAEL IS MY SON, EVEN MY FIRSTBORN:

John 3:16

(16) For God so loved the world, that HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

So, you see, it is not just with our "senses" that we read God's Word but with the Holy Spirit. God's Word makes no sense to our senses.

Re: - posted by MyVeryHeart (), on: 2010/11/4 21:16

Sgs 2:2 " Like a lily among the thorns, So is my darling among the maidens."

Personally this points me to the cross. My lord wore a crown of thorns because he picked up his cross. We are to pick up our cross and follow him. We are to deny self. Thorns are also compared to the "riches and pleasures" of life. These choke the word. We are to deny ourselves the pleasures and riches of life which we see all around us. Jesus is the Lily for he is the Christ. We are lilies for we are Christians, and as such let us pick up our cross daily and follow Him.

Re: , on: 2010/11/4 21:25

Amen, MyVeryHeart, we cannot be dogmatic about "types" in the Word. "types" often have dual meanings between Jesus and His Bride. We will miss many of the riches of His Word. Let the Holy Spirit speak.

1Jn 4:17b ...because as he is, so are we in this world.

Some more examples:

He is the Lamb of God, and we are lambs of God.

He is the Israel of God and we are the Israel of God.

He was the Branch out of dry ground and we are branches in the vine.

Re: - posted by StarofGOD (), on: 2010/11/5 16:53

pilgrim777 wrote...

Quote:

-----What did you think about the article that this thread is all about?

I liked this article. Brought out some amazing truths that I have also observed. One of my favorite verses...

Revelation 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will SUP with him, and he with me

sup in the Greek means to dine with or to have a meal with. And I know some think it is actually food. But I like to think He is speaking of the word of God. That if we are willing to open the door, He will sup with us, teach us, dine with us over the spiritual meat or milk of the Word (some times real food is involved I'm sure). I've seen many a Christian men do this, and it often reminds me of this same principle of Jesus reclining that was explained in this article.

Re: , on: 2010/11/5 17:38

John 14:23

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

By receiving His Word, we receive Him and make Him welcome in our hearts. Our hearts become His abode and He reclines with us and sups (fellowship, relationship), with us.