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His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.
Song of Solomon 5:16

One thing we need to pray against, that is, taking the name of the Lord Jesus into our lips without reverence. "He is to be had in reverence by all them that are about him." And if we know him, we shall reverence him as well as love and praise him, as Dr Watts says:

All over glorious is my Lord,
Must be beloved, and yet adored.

And to be able to keep that in our minds, he is not only to be beloved, but he is to be adored. He is to be worshipped. It is a good thing to be saved from taking the name of God, or of Jesus, on our lips in a thoughtless way. At the same time there is liberty where God the Spirit is, between the soul and the Lord Jesus. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." And that it is never irreverent.

Now I will try as the Lord helps me to speak a little further from, *His mouth is most sweet*. No words ever come from those holy lips but the words that were right in the sight of God. His lips were never soiled by sin. And when he spoke, he spoke what he knew, and only he could reveal the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him." Jesus is the Mediator between the Father and his people, and that medium never alters. When one of the disciples said to him, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," Jesus said,

"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. How sayest thou then, shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."

His mouth is most sweet. My friends, he speaks in love. The Lord Jesus always speaks in love to his people. When he reproves he always reproves in love, always with a right end in view. To those he loves everything is done in love, and every word, as he says, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." Therefore it is a very great mercy to have an ear to hear the Lord Jesus Christ. As his Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." And they are blessed people that do hear him. And his voice, as he said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." "I give unto them eternal life, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. My Father is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." The words he spake were so sweet. He spake like this: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." A good many years ago I was at a little place on the coast of Glamorganshire, there was a man sitting alone on the bench, and I went and sat by him. I found he was a Buddhist. I said I knew the writings of Buddha were a load for a camel. I said to him "If you show me anything from the writings of Buddha, I will show you something better—and far better." He did not accept the challenge. So I said, "I will turn it the other way. See if you can find anything in the writings of Buddha like this, and I quoted, "Come unto me all ye that labour" &c. Now the

Buddhist knows he is a sinner, but he does not know anything about a saviour, he has to work out his own salvation, and when he dies he goes to the judgment, and if his bad deeds outweigh his good deeds he has to go into a lower form of life, because they believe in the transformation of souls through re-incarnation and when they arrive at perfection they go into a sleep. That is the heaven of the Buddhist. But I was able to talk to that young man, and he said, "Well, I have never heard such things in my life." I said, "Well, they are in the Word of God, and that is true, because I know it."

You see, the Lord Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and I will give you rest." And he gives his people rest through what he has suffered, and in believing we enter into rest. "For we which have believed do enter into rest." All professors of religion except that which is of God think in greater or lesser measure that they must bring something. The child of God realises this:

Nothing but sin I thee can give,
Nothing but love shall I receive.

His mouth is most sweet. All the promises of God in the Word of God—and there are many of them—I could not tell you the number, but, "all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen." Yes—it will be so. Amen—it shall be done. They are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. If the Lord gives you a promise, that promise will be tried, but the promise will never be destroyed, it will live.

What Christ has said must be fulfilled;
On this firm rock, believers build;
His word must stand, his truth prevail,
And not one jot or tittle fail.

And we can echo the words of those who were sent to take Jesus, they said they could not arrest him. That was before his time. They said to them, "Why have ye not brought him?"

And they replied, "Never man spake like this Man." And it is very true, no man has ever spoken like the Lord Jesus Christ, and his word, you cannot trust it too much.

Trust him, he will not deceive us,
Though we hardly of him deem;
He will never, never leave us,
Nor will let us quite leave him.

Yea, he is altogether lovely. There was no blemish. There was no blemish in the body of Jesus Christ. There is no blemish in the spirit of Jesus Christ. There was no blemish in the words of Christ. There was no blemish in the work of Christ. You see, there is no blemish, *he is altogether lovely.* And if you see him rightly, you will see that perfection in him which you never see in anyone else, because there is no flaw, there is no shortcoming, there is no superficiality, nothing wanting in him. *He is altogether lovely*, so that you look at him, and however much you look at him you will see there is none like him. And you see him, if you look at him rightly, to thank God for him. You thank God for Jesus Christ when you see him, as the apostle said, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." And it is an unspeakable gift. And if it is a gift, my friends, and only God can give like God, because when God gives us anything he never sends in any bill. If he sends the rain, if he sends the sunshine, there is no charge. Nobody can give like God because he is rich. He has all the fulness of the Godhead, and however much he gives he is never impoverished. But he does give his people true riches, because you cannot spend it. You can thank him for it, and live on it. Sometimes I have said I want something I can live on, and it can never waste. And in his service, which is perfect freedom, "Them that honour me I will honour; and them that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. And that, in every respect—but he is only lovely to his people. Those who are ungodly do not know him. Everyone that knows him

wants to love him. Even if they know him they do want to love him, and want to love him more.

O that my soul could love and praise him more,
His beauties trace, his majesty adore;
Live near his heart, upon his bosom lean,
Obey his voice and all his will esteem.

He is the best friend that ever I had. He is the best friend that ever you had because *he is altogether lovely.* And if you have him you have everything that you need to take you to heaven.

In having him we all possess,
Wisdom, and strength, and righteousness:
And sanctity complete.

And God makes known his Son to his people. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." You can examine either of those blessings and you find they make you rich. It is wisdom to know him because he is wisdom itself. He is made unto us righteousness because he is righteousness itself. He is made unto us sanctification, he will separate you from the world, and separate you to himself. He is made unto us redemption because he is able to redeem, and will redeem you from all evil. And if you have him,

In having him we all possess,
Wisdom, and strength, and righteousness:
And sanctity complete.

He is altogether lovely. And yet the world sees nothing in him. I mean, people who are unregenerate. "He is despised, and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Because they see nothing to desire, for this same reason they do not feel their need of him. That is the people who do not desire him, they do not feel their need of him. But to the Lord's people he is the one thing needful beyond everything else.

Jesus is the one thing needful,
I without him perish must.

And if you have not got him you have not got anything to purpose. But he is precious to his people.

In every office he sustains,
In every victory he gains,
In every counsel of his will
He's precious to his people still.

But to us who are old, we feel this, and thank God for it, that,

As they draw near their journey's end,
How precious is their heavenly Friend;
And when in death they bow their head,
He's precious on a dying bed.

Now, my friends, I want to commend him to you. *This is my Beloved!* Whatever others may think about him, *this is my beloved!* And I believe I can say it. There is no one so near, so dear to me, as the Lord Jesus Christ. Nobody can save me, only him! No-one can keep me in a right way but him! And no-one can guide me but him; and no-one can screen me from all harm and danger but the Lord Jesus Christ. We have need of everything because we have nothing of our own.

Though I have nothing of my own,
My treasure is immense in thee.

My treasure is thy precious blood;
Fix there my heart, and for the rest,
Under thy forming hand, my God,
Give me that frame which thou thinkest best.

This is my Beloved. What I want, if the Lord will do it, is that he may be your beloved, so that we can be both joined in our esteem of him. But I know this,

His beauties we can never trace,
Till we shall see him face to face.

This is my Beloved more than anything else could be. He is that to me, because he is *my Beloved*, because I was given to him by the Father. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." It is myself; I am ashamed of myself, I am ashamed of myself before God. I am thankful for this: I do not live in sin through his grace, not in known sin. And that is a very great mercy, by the grace of God to be kept from living in sin, and to have that fulfilled in our experience, "for sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." But when you think that the Lord Jesus Christ received you, he received you from the hand of his Father, and promised, and undertook to do everything to make you blessed! He endured the curse of the law, and drank the cup of divine wrath instead of you. You see how greatly one is indebted to this One, who, we may say is *my Beloved*, because of what he has done.

What he endured no tongue can tell,
To save my soul from death and hell.

And he did it all out of love, and all he asks in return is love. "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

This is my Beloved, because he never changes. Though we change, he never alters. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever." Unchangeably the same! To think that he should bring you into union with him! That to me is very wonderful. That he should bring us into union with him.

Jesus, immutably the same,
Thou true and living vine,
Around thy all-supporting stem
My feeble arms I'd twine.

Because, as Jesus said, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me." "Abide in me, and I in you. ... He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. ... Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

This is my Beloved. Now, is he yours? You might say this, "That is just what I want to know." Well, if you want to know, he is yours—only you want him to tell you. This is what you want, you want him to tell you! "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Why you want union with him is because you have union with him. You see, the Spirit of God has given you a great blessing, because he has given you a similarity in your spirit to his Spirit. And in desire, and in need, you are one with him, and when he reveals his love to you, that you are one with him, that will cause you to rejoice in him. I remember once, many many years ago in 1905, I was in Coventry, and I had been through a very trying ordeal. The Lord brought me out of it and through it in a very gracious way. As I went into the bedroom at night, wearied out with labour, I saw this on the wall: "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." I lay all that night without any sleep, and praised and blessed him all night. I could say he was my Beloved. And I told him if I had a thousand tongues they would all be spent in his service. If I had a thousand tongues they should all praise him. When you speak from experience—theory is not experience—I know this, my friends, to have his love shed abroad in your heart is heaven begun on earth, and to feel you are one with him, "by eternal union one," and feel the wonder of it that it should be yours. That is what seems so full to me, the wonder of it, that it should be me.

Is it for me, my Saviour,
Thy glory and thy rest,
For me, so weak and sinful,
O why should I be blest?

He is my beloved because he can fill my soul. And nothing else can fill my soul, only him. And I sometimes say:

Enter the chamber of my breast,
Thyself prepare the room.

If thou should'st wait till thou canst meet
Reception worthy thee,
With sinners thou would'st never sit,
At least I'm sure with me.

But you see, it is not for what is in us, it is what is in him. It is for "his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together in Christ (by grace are ye saved)." *This is my Beloved.*

This is my Beloved, in afflictions and trials. And he makes your bed, as he has, I believe, mine. Many a time he has made my bed in afflictions, and I felt,

Our deepest afflictions, if he smiles but on thee,
Is like dew in the sunshine, like diamonds and gems.

Many years ago, at Cranbrook, I was very tried, I went out before breakfast into Angley Wood and poured out my soul unto God. As I was coming back the dew lay on the grass, and it seemed every blade of grass had dew on it, and the sun shone on the dew—it was like diamonds, and it came to me,

Our deepest afflictions, if he smiles but on thee,
Is like dew in the sunshine, like diamonds and gems.

And he smiled on my afflictions and I came home a happy man. Why? Because he had turned my sorrow into joy. I was a happy man, and I knew this, he would be sure to appear for me and bring me through. So he did! I have often thought of Mr Field Snr. He said, "You trust God, and he will bring you through. And so he will if you do not. He cannot deny himself." I thought, that is a bold statement. But it is very true, because, "If we believe not he abideth faithful. He cannot deny himself."

This is my Beloved. See him on the cross, you will see your Beloved there. You will see love there. You will see him there. I believe I have seen him there. At Rotherfield many years ago now, at the ordinance, this was given out:

Behold a scene of matchless grace,
'Tis Jesus in the sinner's place.
Heaven's brightest glory sunk in shame,
That rebels might adore his name.

And I saw him, I saw him. And the sight of it made it most difficult for me to attend to the ordinance, because I saw that this is *my* Beloved. I saw him under the wrath of God. And to see him there out of love for *you!* — "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." He is my beloved friend alone, because he is a friend that loveth at all times, and sticketh closer than a brother. And when you feel deserted, when you feel nobody understands you, yet you can go to him, and say, "O Lord, thou knowest." You have got him to go to whoever else fails you. As Mr Hart says:

My soul, thou hast, let what will ail,
A never failing friend.

Many times in my pathway I felt I had only the Lord Jesus Christ who understood me, and was with me. But he was with me, and brought me through. *This is my Beloved.*

On the bed of affliction you have him there coming to you. Let him make your bed in affliction, condescend to be your nurse, and from the affliction take the curse. None can do that but him. When you feel he is with you, you feel like this, as my dear mother said to me — she was very ill, and I went into her room, and I said, "Mother how do you feel?" She said,

"I can do all things, and can bear
All sufferings, if my Lord be there;
Sweet pleasures mingle with the pains,
While his left hand my head sustains."

You see, he is our Beloved in affliction, when nobody can reach you only him. And he is your Beloved in this way, that the world cannot take you away from him by allurements. He is your Beloved in a pathway of ease, so that you should not be taken up with ease. One said:

More the treacherous calm I dread,
Than tempests bursting o'er my head.

Whatever your case or state may be, he will never leave you, nor forsake you. *This is my Beloved.*

And we are nearer to him than anything else, or anyone else. His people are near to him, and he has done more for them than he has done for all the world beside. He may give unregenerate man much temporal prosperity, but he will not give them himself. But, you see, when he gives you himself, whatever your pathway may be,

As by the light of opening day,
The stars are all concealed,
So earthly pleasures fade away
When Jesus is revealed.

When you can look on everything in the world, when everything is prosperous circumstantially, you can say this:

Thanks to my God for meaner things,
But they are not my god.

A good man said to me many years ago, "Mr Rose, I have not had a pathway like yours, not so rugged as your pathway, but (he said) if the Lord was to speak to me, I could leave my easy circumstances as easily as you could leave your trying circumstances."

This is my Beloved, when I die to take the sting out of death. And nothing else could take the sting out of death except him that died, to enable you to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the

strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I sat by the bedside of a dear old person of ninety-three, and she said, "I do not fear to die, death has not any sting for me. The Lord Jesus took the sting out of death for me. I long to be with him."

My soul anticipates the day,
Would stretch her wings and soar away,
A song to raise, a palm to bear,
And now, the chief of sinners, there.

This is my Beloved, and this is my friend. Is he your friend?
That friend never changes.

An earthly brother drops his hold,
Is sometimes hot, and sometimes cold,
But Jesus is the same.

He never changes. *This is my Beloved.* He has the throne of my affections, and I do not want there to be any competition with him. I want him! I want to know he is my Beloved. I want to feel his love in my soul to enable me to love him in return. "We love him because he first loved us." Our love is kindled on the sacred fire of his eternal, dying love. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end." And he is the chief among ten thousand. It does not matter who you speak about, what child of God you speak about, he is the chiefest to them. There is no competitor to the Lord Jesus Christ, because there is none like him.

Which of all our friends to save us,
Could, or would, have shed his blood?
But our Jesus died to have us
Reconciled in him to God.
This was boundless love indeed;
Jesus is a friend in need!

He is the chiefest among ten thousand in heaven. In heaven he reigns. *His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely.* There is none can compare with the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. None can compare with him on earth, or above. They love that One who is there. They all cast their crowns at his feet, and will crown him Lord of all in heaven. "The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them." That is not deputed to anyone else in heaven. "The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them; and shall lead them unto living fountains of water. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." And then it will be never to depart, never to part with him. We say this, now:

More frequent let thy visits be,
Or longer let them last.
I can do nothing without thee,
Make haste, O God, make haste.

But,

There we shall see his face,
And never, never sin;
But from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in.

"His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." And I can say this to those who desire to know him: whoever tries to describe the Lord Jesus, they cannot do it fully. Like an old man said to John Kershaw when he began to preach, "My lad, thee hast done thy best, but hast not half done it." It is very true that anything less than the divine compass or any description of the Lord Jesus, it falls short. And it must fall short.

Words are but air, and tongues but clay;
It needs a compass all divine.

But those who are favoured to be there in heaven, then they will

Drink full drafts of heavenly bliss,
And pluck new life from heavenly trees.

May the Lord bless us. May the Lord favour us. May Jesus
be formed in us, the hope of glory.

The Lord add his blessing. Amen.