



Song of Songs



PROGRESSION OF HOLY PASSION

DAILY DEVOTIONAL BY

PATRICK WALTON



CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW

Growing in passion for Jesus is mostly about understanding Jesus' passion for us. In my reading of the Bible and in my opinion there is no other book like the Song of Songs when it comes to line upon line truths about growing in Passion for Jesus. This book is unlike any other book in the Bible because it doesn't tell us about how to grow ministries, how to acquire wealth or how to heal the sick directly. But for eight chapters and verse after verse it tells us of what God feels for us and what happens when that love touches our hearts in a real, experiential way.

Many people in the Church talk about loving God and about one day growing in passion for Him, but few actually set out on the journey to actually do it. This eight chapter Song walks us through in narrative form the journey of this young maiden as she becomes the thriving bride that the king seen in her from the beginning. Themes like, God loving us in our weakness, that God really sees you and is watching you, that God delights in you while your maturing and that God not only loves you but He also likes you, fill this eight Chapter love Song. If you have ever wondered about Jesus' feelings towards you, if He has a plan for you and if your heart can really enjoy God, then this series is for you.

This devotional is written for you to read one chapter a day for 18 weeks. My challenge to you is that you would take 18 weeks to get acquainted with the Song of Songs from the Old Testament and ask the Holy Spirit to unlock His Word and awaken your heart. This is written with your spiritual life in mind. My prayer is that your heart would be awakened to the beauty, majesty and worth of Christ. But I also pray you find yourself lost in the tension of the two commandments, loving God and loving people through the journey of the bride.



**PATRICK
WALTON**



CHAPTER 1

Day 1

Song of Songs 1:1-2 *The Song of Songs which is Solomon's. Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth (Word, Bible, Scriptures, Voice).*

(The bride speaking) Father, let Jesus come near me and touch my heart with His love. You are a better lover than any other I have ever known. How long will you speak to us through the prophets and the Torah, I long for God Himself to come and kiss me, to speak to me with the pleasant and gracious words from His mouth. Speak to me! I am hungry for you to come to me because of Your passion for me. Lord, speak to me.

Supporting Scriptures

Job 24:1 *I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.*

Matthew 5:6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled.*

Deuteronomy 6:16 *Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*

Commentary

It's fitting that the first devotional that you are reading is about hunger. Through this entire journey that the bride is going to go on, she will have many ups and downs, many disappointments and many moments of divine joy, but all of these will only take place because of her hunger for God to move in her life. We can be in the right spiritual community, listening to good Biblical preaching, serving in the Church, but if we don't have hunger we will come up empty every time, no matter how hard we try. The bride is going to go through much pain, many trials and promotion that will come through the Lord Himself, but all that she is experiencing and is going to experience is because of her hunger for God.

She is asking that God come to her and speak to her. It's right that we translate the word used in **Song of Songs 1:2** from *mouth* to *Word*. We don't want to get into the false reality that we are kissing God on His lips, or that Jesus kisses us on our lips. The bride is appealing to the One who has power over her life. Her appeal is that He would come and kiss her. There was a statement that saints made during the years of the Old Testament where they would ask God how long He would speak to them from Prophets and Kings? This of course was being said in such a way that they were saying, we love that you talk to us through these other men, but we long to hear directly from You!

I have come to understand that many people in the body of Christ go hungry each week because they don't express hunger to the Lord. I believe that if we don't express hunger, God will allow us to go hungry, even though everything that we need is directly before us, even living within us through the Holy Spirit. What does your hunger for God and for the kingdom look like? Are you reaching for more of God in your heart or are you satisfied where you're at? My encouragement to you would be that as you journey through this series that you ask God to awaken a fresh hunger in you for Him. He is more than willing to give it, but you must ask for it. He doesn't do it for us, but He will both help awaken it and satisfy it; we just have to ask. Tell Him that you are hungry for Him to visit you, change and empower you.



CHAPTER 1

Day 2

Song of Songs 1:3 *Because of the fragrance of Your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth; therefore the virgins love You.*

(The bride speaking) Jesus, come close to me. When you come close Your fragrance heals my heart. Let the fragrance of Your sacrifice for me touch my heart deeply. When You are close to me I can make sense of why others have loved you so passionately. It makes sense to me why others love you so much. When You walk into the room there is a fragrance that actually steals my breath away. Jesus, I love You and I see why others have pledged themselves to You as well.

Supporting Scriptures

2 Corinthians 2:14-15 *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved among those who are perishing.*

Romans 12:1 *I beg you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

Jeremiah 8:22 *Is there no balm in Gilead?*

Commentary

Many of us have never taken time to think about the fragrance of Christ and the fragrance of Jesus' love for us and others. There is a fragrance to every person alive today. Sometimes when people pass by you can afterwards smell their fragrance; from some it's a pleasing one but from others it's disgusting. The fragrance of Christ is a smell that is mixed with the bitter and sweet reality of Jesus life. The bitter fragrance of Christ is the reality that He was only thirty-three when He died, just a young Man who had lived a sinless life. But the sweet fragrance of Christ is the other side of His death, which is His resurrection.

Though Jesus died, He also rose from the tomb conquering death, hell and the grave and this is sweet to those who have accepted it. The bride has just asked Him to speak to her in the previous passage and here she is now being pictured as already receiving from Him in a personal way.

What I love so much about this passage is that when He comes near her, to speak to her, she begins to understand why the Church has loved Him so much. When we are not in Christ and we look on to those who are in Christ and those who give a portion of their lives to the Church, their commitment to God and the Church doesn't make sense to us. But when we see Him for ourselves, when we hear His words and smell the sacrifice of His life, we too are caught up in love for Him and we understand why the others have given their lives to Him also.

From a distance, much of what Christians do doesn't make sense to those who are watching. That's why Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 1:18** that *the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but for us who are being saved it's the power of God*. The Bible flat says that for those who aren't in Christ, the Cross is foolishness. It doesn't make sense, but when it touches you it all makes sense. Spiritual disciplines make sense. Prayer makes sense. Fasting makes sense. Bible reading, serving, giving time and money and listening to others in authority all makes sense.

My question to you today is, has the fragrance of Christ touched you in a personal way? Have you tasted and seen that the Lord is good to you? Does the love that others pour out on Jesus make sense to you, or is it still a mystery? Don't let this moment slip by you right now. Take time and tell Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit that you want to see why others throughout history have loved Him so much.



CHAPTER 1

Day 3

Song of Songs 1:4a

Draw me away!

(The bride speaking) O Jesus, would You draw me away into Your presence! After I have seen what I have seen, I must be drawn away. I understand that it takes You to love You, so draw me away. I read in Your Word that You often drew people into Your presence, into a place that man can't go on His own, so I implore You, draw me away with You! The only way for me to be where You are is for You to come and escort me by the Holy Spirit. Jesus, call my name and I promise I will come.

Supporting Scriptures

James 4:8 *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.*

Revelation 4:1 *After these things I looked and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.*

Commentary

I heard a phrase some years ago that said It takes God to love God. This phrase deeply touched me and I carried it around with me for several years, thinking about it often. But it wasn't until recently when I was finishing *The Knowledge of the Holy*, by A.W. Tozer, that this phrase leapt off the page and touched both my mind and my heart. What Tozer was saying is that *It takes the infinite to know the infinite*. As soon as I read that phrase I was reminded of the statement *It takes God to love God*.

I understood this to be a true statement. Paul in **1st Corinthians 2:9-15** clarifies this very reality. What Paul says is that nobody can know God but God. That would be terrible if he stopped there, but he doesn't. He goes on to say that we have received The Holy Spirit who searches out the mind of God and makes it known to us. So though nobody can know God but God, we have been given God, who knows God and makes God known to us. It takes God to know God or it takes God to love God. This reality helps me understand that I can't and don't love God on my own. I must have God to love God. I can't, on my own go where God is, but through the Holy Spirit I can not only hear God, not only touch and be touched by God but I can actually go where He is.

But all this is predicated on an invitation from God. Look at the slow progression of this Song so far. She asked God to speak to her His Word. His Word touches her and she says loving You is better than anything else. Then she smells the Fragrance of Christ's life and the love of others towards Christ makes total sense to her. Then she is about to burst when it comes to verse four. She says *draw me away!* When you see God, when you feel God and when you smell God you can only live at a distance for so long. Something rises up in us just like it does in the bride, and we also cry out *Draw me away!*

Thank God for the truth of **Revelation 4** which tells us there is a door standing open in heaven. And not just a door standing open, but that door also has an invitation for us to come up. We don't have to wonder if God has called us, or drawn us, because He already has. We just have to respond. We say to Him, O draw me away. Right now begin to ask God to draw you away into the secret place of communion with Him. Tell Him that you will respond when He calls your name. Tell Him *I won't delay when you call my name, I will rise up and come away with You*. Give Him time; allow Him to draw you away. Maybe your day is busy and you have lots to do, don't let this moment pass away and be swept away. Respond to Him right now!



CHAPTER 1

Day 4

Song of Songs 1:4b

We will run after You.

(The bride speaking) Now that You have drawn me away with You in intimacy, I can run with others in ministry. I love the first and second commandment working together in my life and in the life of the Church. I want to run after You in the company of community. I thank You that You haven't called me to do ministry on my own, but always in the place of community. I sat with You and now I'm ready to join in with the others and run together!

Supporting Scriptures

Acts 4:42 *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.*

Luke 10:1 *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.*

Commentary

Within these two devotionals we can clearly see the first and second commandments are working hand in hand in the way that Jesus intends them to work. We first see the bride saying that she was to be drawn away and then she follows it by saying that she wants to run with others. In my personal opinion the Church either loves God so well that no ministry to a non-Christian culture takes place. Or the Church loves the people of their culture so much that it loses its love for Jesus and it's passion for Him. The bride rightly states that we must first be drawn away in the place of intimacy before we are able to run with others in ministry. It seems that many would like to run in ministry prior to sitting with Jesus in the place of intimacy.

One thing that I have learned, or that I am learning, is that these two commandments never war against each other, but actually complement one another. What I mean by that is, we shouldn't be striving to do either the first commandment or the second commandment. We should actually be striving to do the first commandment in first place and see the fruit of the second commandment flowing out of its rightful place, in second place. See the bride actually does a very Biblical thing and that's the law of divine order. The law of divine order is that you don't have to force the scriptures to say something that they don't already say. You don't need to massage the Bible to get something out of it that's not there.

The bride states the first commandment first and the second commandment second. She makes it clear that the first commandment is not only first in mention, but it's also first in importance. For without the first functioning in a powerful way in our lives we will fail to do the second for the long term. These two passages *Draw me away* and *We will run with others* are what I call the twofold vision of the bride. She is making the declaration that not only is this important, but that this is actually all she wants in life from God and others. We know this not by this passage alone, but by understanding the Song as a whole. When we see the whole Song, we see that she will be tested in this area, she will see the fruit of both of these commandments and she will instruct others to do these very same things. This leads me to you.

Where is life at for you right now? How well would you say that you are aiming for the first commandment to be first and the second commandment second? Notice that I used the word aiming? I say aiming, because that really what we are doing. We aren't talking about attaining, but aiming. If you aim for something, include diligence into what you are doing, you will eventually attain it. My challenge to you right now is to evaluate your life to see if you're really aiming to make these two commandments not only a priority, but also in the order of importance.



CHAPTER 1

Day 5

Song of Songs 1:4c

The King brought me into His chambers. We will be glad and rejoice in you. We will remember Your love more than wine.

(The bride speaking) O Mighty King, Mighty Romantic, You really hear me. You are listening to me. I feel so small in comparison to who You are. I feel I have so little to offer You, yet You listen to me and respond to my prayers. I love You more than all the things You give to me. I love You so much more than sin, more than compromise and a double life. It's You that I love. And no wonder why the Church loves You! It's right that they love You, look at who You are and how you handle such weak lovers.

Supporting Scriptures

Genesis 15:1 *After these things the Word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your exceedingly great reward.*

Luke 17:17 *So Jesus answered and said, were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?*

Commentary

New life in Christ is amazing. There is nothing like it, nothing. As we are living for Christ all of us have seen how difficult it is to destroy our flesh, or the part of us that's more like Adam and less like Christ, even though Christ is living in us. In the process of becoming made new, all of us struggle with feeling like we matter to God. This is part of the curse we have received through Adam. We struggle to see that God listens to us, that God is in love with us and that He really wants to best for us. What's so powerful about this passage is that within the same verse that the bride calls out for Him to draw her away, He answers her. It's not a verse later, not a chapter later or even later in life, but actually as she is asking for Him to draw her away, He answers her by taking her into His presence, or what the Bible calls *His chamber*.

It's very important we remember that we weren't looking for God, He was looking for us. It wasn't God that sinned and was separated, it was you and me. I was the one that Jesus left the ninety nine for. I was the lost coin that Jesus turned the house upside down so that He could find it. I matter to God! And not only do I matter, but He also listens to me. The entire theme of this Song is that we really do matter to God. Our weak love, our weak yes to follow Him and our broken trust in His leadership over our lives matters to Him. It's not that He just tolerates us, but He actually enjoys us to the point that He has pledged Himself to us, forever. I love that when the bride comes out His chamber she says we will rejoice in You more than wine.

As stated already from **Song of Songs 1:2**, His love is better than wine. The wine of God represents the good things that come from His hand. I have heard many say that we don't seek God's hand, only His heart. This isn't a truism. The reality is we seek both. We must have His hand to do what He's asked us to do. But we seek His face as the priority of our lives and the fruit of that is He gives us His hand to help us. When God pulls Abraham out from His tent, God is saying to Abraham Don't fix your eyes on the sons and daughters that I have yet to give you, because surely My word to you Abraham will come to pass. But more importantly than that, understand first and foremost, *I am your great reward*.

My challenge to you is the same one that God gave to Abraham, lift up your eyes. Don't set them on things that might or might not come in your lifetime, but on that which is constant, Jesus Christ. Set your gaze on Him, talk to Him, and ask Him to take you into His chamber to encounter the heart of the great Bridegroom God! You will never be the same. Never!

Day 6



CHAPTER 1

Song of Songs 1:5-6 *I am dark but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon. Do not look upon me, because I am dark, because the sun has tanned me.*

(The bride speaking) Time in Your presence has given unparalleled clarity into what I look like before You and others. I see that I am both dark and lovely to You. I can see the stain of sin from my first father Adam, but I can also see the new life I have through Christ. It's not one or the other, but both. I am both, lovely and dark. I don't only see my light before You and in Your presence, but I also see my darkness. Truly life in this age has tanned me, but my new life in Christ has changed everything internally.

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 5:8-10 *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! For he (Simon) and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.*

Revelation 1:16 *He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell as a dead man...*

Commentary

The passage that you just read was one of the first passages from the Song of Songs to deeply impact me at the heart level. I remember where I was in the New Life sanctuary when this thought about being dark but lovely started to touch me deep within. It so touched me to see that I was both dark and lovely at the same time. It is very easy for Christians and Christian circles to focus mainly on the reality that we are very dark. Dark preaching is very condemning, judgmental and often what might have been called *hellfire and brimstone* preaching.

This style of preaching continually reinforces the thought that we are separated from God in Adam. Although I don't totally agree with how the darkness of the human heart has been preached in the Church, I agree with the concept and the truth of the matter. As humans we are dark and distant, separated from Christ in Adam and even in the new birth we still carry the darkness of sin and the stain of Adam's decision to rebel against God. But if we stop and only talk about humanity's darkness then we will raise up hopeless people and hopeless Christians. Praise God that the bride didn't stop there and that her encounter was a true encounter with the Living God. Listen, if you leave the Lord's presence and only see your new life in Him you haven't truly encountered His presence. And if you leave His presence only seeing how far you have fallen and how far you have to go in Him you haven't truly encountered His presence. But if you leave His presence and see how far you have fallen, but also, at the same time, with equal strength how much you are loved, how ravished Jesus is over you, I would say that you truly encountered the Living God. Anything short will leave people with a false reality of who God is.

See, God is both loving and just. He's not just a Bridegroom, but also a Judge. It's not an either or, but rather a *both and*. I so love that as the bride leaves His presence, directly after her encounter with Him, she sees both her sin nature and her new life in Christ. The Church either preaches really heavy on us being dark, and not light. Or we preach really heavy on us being light and not dark. But for the Church to rightly declare the full counsel of God we must tell people that He is loving and just.

When you look into the mirror what do you see about yourself? Do you see someone who is only light, or someone who is only dark? I would assume that you see yourself mostly as being dark, separated from

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CHAPTER 1

Christ and someone who struggles to love God. What if that wasn't true? What if God sees your darkness, but also sees you as a brand new creation in Him and as someone who really loves Him, even though you struggle with sin? What would that do to your relationship with Him? The reason I ask, beloved, is because it's truth! He doesn't see only your darkness, but also your light. Listen to me, you have captured the attention of heaven and He's ravished over you. Don't fight Him, accept it, enjoy it, speak it, sing it and fight over it. It's truth and this is your destiny.



CHAPTER 1

Song of Songs 1:6b

My mother's sons were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept.

(The bride speaking) O Church, I hope that you can see that my passion for Jesus and that my new life in Him makes me more than a worker; I am lover who longs to love. I have become so busy helping out with everyone else's things that I have lost my own. In overseeing things for others, I have lost my own in the process. I understand the balance of the two commandments, and even the priority of them but the volume of labor that is needed has overtaken me and before I knew it lost my way. My own heart before the Lord is now neglected even though I am serving others and helping others, I have lost my own.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 25:2-4 *Now five of them were wise, and five foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*

Acts 20:28 *Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the Church of God...*

Commentary

The situation of the bride right here is a situation that is common to everyone who has stepped out to serve God in the midst of the Church. What's so powerful and so encouraging about the bride is that she represents a life of sincere love for Christ and others. In that we can often find our own lives in the process of looking at her life. In a paraphrase: *what's happened to her right now is that her new passion for Jesus has caused those around her to put her to work.*

Unfortunately when those in leadership positions have never been taught to love Jesus as their primary calling we more often than not, raise up other leaders who end up working for Jesus instead of loving Jesus and allowing our work with Him to flow out of intimate relationship with Him. And in turn we are raising up a workforce who sometimes loves, rather than a bride who works because she is loved and loves. Now the salvation of most leaders who are more workers than lovers isn't what's in question. What's in questions is the longevity of those leaders in the place of ministry. If we are only doing ministry for the sake of doing ministry we will end up in the same place as the bride, in no time, and in fact this where many of God's leaders are today. They are in a place of burnout, frustration and are left with a needy ministry and a dull heart. Most of these leaders long to have a heart fully alive and serve the ministry from that reality, but because they haven't been taught themselves they don't know how to get there. And so, like the bride, we do what we know how to do and that is to work. But the bummer is we also end up in the same place that the bride ended up, with a busy life and a barren heart, a neglected personal vineyard.

When we start saying yes to everything without the right priority of loving God and working with Him and not for Him we too end up like the bride. Just like you and I, the bride doesn't want to be where she's at, but because the state of the Church leadership was the way it was, they were unable to help her, so they just put her to work. The reason this is important is because a lover will far outwork a worker. A worker isn't going to make the grade over the years of neglect and difficulty, but a lover is working for a reward that doesn't come from man or leadership, but from Jesus Himself so they hang in there over time, not just for a little while. To ensure that you last throughout the ages in serving God, you must make the priority of loving Him first and serving with Him second.



CHAPTER 1

Song of Songs 1:7 *Tell me, O You whom I love, where You feed Your flock, where you make it rest at noon. For why should I be as one who veils herself by the flock of Your companions.*

(The bride speaking) Jesus, I really love You. I have never met someone like You! You are totally other than everything else that I have touched and come into contact with. But I originally signed up to love You and now I am finding myself outside of intimate relationship with You, serving You from a distance and this isn't what I wanted. I have shame, guilt and condemnation, and I know You have an answer for me and I am asking You to speak to me. Help me, give me guidance, because I really love you.

Supporting Scriptures

John 10:11 *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*

Luke 15:4 *What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?*

Commentary

For many of us we come to Christ because we are at a place of hardship, pain and personal difficulty. And when we meet Christ our lives are so turned upside down by the love of God. It's His love that so captivates our hearts, our lives and our decisions. But often when we are within the Church we can run into leaders who, as we stated yesterday, have been taught to *work* more than we *love*, and it is within this culture that we are raised. Well, soon we are almost faced with the equal difficulties as when we first met Christ, but the only difference is Jesus is living within us.

We are at a place where we are serving God, working for God, doing things for Jesus and others, but we are living at a distance from the intimacy that we once had with Him. The bride is in just this kind of place. She is covered with shame and guilt and condemnation because she is serving Him at a distance not up close and personal with Him like she once was. The bride does an awesome thing at this point though. Instead of becoming bitter, cold and quitting, she calls out to Him whom her soul loves. Look at the words she uses. She says *O You whom I love*. She is doing the right thing in her place of need, she's going back to her first love and calling out to Him whom she loves.

We must never forget that beyond a Boss, Jesus is a Husband, a Man with intense love for those that say *yes* to Him, even those who have said *no* to Him. She is calling out to the Good Shepherd and asking Him for help in her situation. You must come to the Good Shepherd and get your help from Him. Apart from Christ nothing else makes sense. Nothing else will work and nothing else will give you rest and deep internal satisfaction. Return to your first love, the One who loved you and gave Himself for you. Don't serve Jesus from a distance when you have been invited up close and personal. If you feel like the bride today, do what she did; call out to Him whom your soul loves! He loves you and has crossed the darkest depths to have you as His own; He loves you and will listen to you. Speak to Him.



CHAPTER 1

Song of Songs 1:8 *If you do not know O fairest among women, follow in the footsteps of the flock, and feed your little goats beside the shepherds' tents.*

(God speaking) It's in this place of questions that I do not mind telling you again both about yourself and Me. I love you My beloved! You shine among the daughters of the earth. You are the fairest among all the rest that stand around you. You have so captured My heart and I have no problem telling you again and again and again about how much I love you and how I feel about you. You never have to live at a distance, because I have come near you, forever! It's important that you hear both how I feel about you and what I need you to do.

Supporting Scriptures

Hebrews 13:17 *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give an account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable.*

John 15:9 *As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.*

Commentary

What's taking place in the life of the bride and in the relationship between her and the Bridegroom is really profound and it's actually making clear something that will stay true throughout the entire song. What it's making clear is the way He first addresses her, before telling her either what He wants her to do or what He is inviting her to do. See, the bride right now is at a place of shame and guilt because she's living at a distance from Him. He hasn't spoken to her yet, until this passage, to clear up all of her shame from being overworked and misplacing the commandments. And what He first says to her before He gives her instruction is what I am zeroing in on right now. The reason this is going to be so powerful for you is because you're going to see how God treats those who say yes to Him. Before Jesus gives her any instruction He first tells her that He loves her and that she is fairest among women.

This is the start of a patterning that will carry through the entire song. Before He speaks to her He always, every single time, tells her that she's beautiful or lovely to Him, and then He shares other information with her. Many of us see a God with a big stick ready to punish us for the big and small things of life. Remember, the bride is at a really big place of shame and guilt for being overworked and losing her intimacy with Him, but He doesn't rebuke her for that. In fact, He's beyond tender to her; He tells her, *if you don't already know how I feel about you, I will tell you again*. I think what He is saying is, I will tell you again and again and again, or as many times as you need to hear it. If this simple phrase, these nine words, really touched your heart it would cause you to live totally different before God and others.

How often do you shy away from coming to Him with how you're feeling, what you did wrong, the mistakes you made or simply just telling Him how you're really feeling, because you don't know what He's going to say to you? Do you see the power of seeing a God who's ravished over you, totally, madly in love with you and ready to help you whenever you ask? What changes do you need to make today in order to receive love from Your Heavenly Father who is eager to pour it out, but is waiting for you to talk to Him? Remember, you can't do this on your own. It will take the life of the Holy Spirit who lives in you so talk to Him and ask for help changing your image of God.

Day 10



CHAPTER 1

Song of Songs 1:9-11 *I have compared you, My love to My filly among Pharaoh's chariots. Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with chains of gold. We will make you ornaments of gold with studs of silver.*

(God speaking) I think you are beautiful, right when I saw you approaching Me, even when you were afar off. I saw you and loved you. Even though you don't feel it, be sure my love, My opinion matters the most, and I say to you that I love You. I long to be with you. You possess strength and nobility that you don't even know is in you. I have given you gifts in your redemption that you don't even know are there. It's obvious to all who look at you.

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 15:20 *And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.*

Ephesians 5:27 *...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.*

Commentary

To the unlearned ear this phrase that Jesus has spoken over the bride might take you back a little bit. We don't speak this way in our day and age, but what Solomon was saying to the bride has such profound implications when we look at the language and backdrop from which he was speaking. It is stated in **1 Kings 10:26** that Solomon had in his possession 1,400 Chariots and 12,000 horsemen. You might not think that's any big thing. But let's break it down just a little bit and look at it. Could you imagine what size building you need to store 1,400 chariots? And on top of that, 12,000 horsemen? Even if half of those horsemen had horses, what would a building that big look like, housing 6,000 horses and having them all cared for. And remember, Solomon was not only the wisest man to ever have lived, but also one of the richest, so these wouldn't be some sloppy horse stalls but high class stalls and training grounds. You might be saying, *Wow, that's really cool, but how does any of this apply to me or even to the bride that Jesus is describing?*

Well, what's happening is Solomon (Jesus) is making a huge statement to the stately appearance of the bride. Horses have something that separates them from every other animal. There is a status of strength, nobility and clout that comes with a well-trained horse. It's amazing to think about all that strength in a horse's legs and how it can be harnessed and used for good, not just its looks or unbroken strength. God is speaking to the bride and remember she hasn't done anything yet, only ask Him for help in her place of brokenness. And lastly it's so important that we always remember that what God does in us is about Him, never us. We can't clean ourselves up before Him, only He can clean us up and make us new in Him. We can't fix ourselves, only Jesus can, so that means anything we possess in this age didn't originate in us, but in Him! Remember that this Song is your story, so what Jesus speaks over the bride, is the same thing He is speaking over you!



CHAPTER 1

Song of Songs 1:12-14 *While the King is at His table, My spikenard sends forth its fragrance. A bundle of Myrrh is my Beloved to me that lies all night between my breasts. My Beloved is to me a cluster of henna blooms, in the vineyards of En Gedi.*

(The bride speaking) In the place of worship I see You as You are and my worship pours forth without effort. As I look at You seated on Your Throne, I begin to think about who I am, and what You endured for the sake of love to have me as Your own. This was the joy that was set before You, that You endured the Cross and despised the shame of being rejected by all those near You. You went to great length to make me Your own possession. Draw me closer to Your throne and open my eyes more and more.

Supporting Scriptures

Mark 14:3 *And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.*

Ephesians 1:17-18 *...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened...*

Mark 10:46-52 --Read it on your own.

Commentary

When we read this portion of the Song of Songs I hope that you are connecting it with what took place when Mary broke her flask at Jesus' feet in **Mark 14:3**. I often think about Mary's encounter with the Lord in this portion of scripture, as she takes something so costly and devotes it entirely to Jesus Christ. Scholars say that what Mary broke was a year's worth of wages. As Mary breaks this flask of really costly oil many that are around both Mary and Jesus at the time become very indignant at her and start to trouble her for the extravagant devotion she poured out on Jesus. What's so troubling about the frustration of those around her is that one of the people is Judas and some of the others are Christ's disciples. I have to think that Mary received some revelation of who was standing before her. Mary saw something about Jesus in His glory that caused this wild, passionate act of wholehearted devotion to arise within her. When she saw who it was that was seated before her, she couldn't help but pour out love and devotion on Him.

So it would go to say that the others around Him who troubled Mary didn't see what Mary saw. See, when you see Jesus for who He really is, you can't help but pour your devotion on Him. Mary wasn't only seeing who He was but also who she was. The bride in the Song is at the same place. She sees Jesus for who He is and it causes worship to ascend to Him effortlessly. But she also sees herself and the price that He paid to redeem her and what it cost Jesus to have her. Myrrh is a costly spice that is used as an embalming fluid. She sees Jesus not as a little bit of sacrifice, but as a bundle of Myrrh. She goes on to say that it weighs heavy upon her breasts, or her chest.

Where is your heart located? In your chest. She isn't speaking about her physical breasts, but rather her heart, or her chest where this locket is located. If you're reading this and don't feel like you see Jesus for who He really is, or you don't see yourself for who you really are before Him, don't stop there, but rather let it be a starting point to deeper truths. Do just like blind Bartimaeus who cried out to Jesus to open up his eyes. Pray the prayer that Paul gave us in **Ephesians 1:17-18** where he asks for God to give us a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge. And lastly, ask the Holy Spirit to open up your eyes like He did for Mary. And tell Him, if you let me see what Mary saw, I will worship like Mary worshipped. I will respond like Mary responded.



CHAPTER 1

Many of you are struggling with your worship to Jesus because you don't see anything in Him that causes you to give over and above. Ask for revelation, wait for it and when it comes, respond with extravagant devotion to Him.



CHAPTER 1

Song of Songs 1:15-17 *Behold, you are fair my love. Behold, you are fair. You have dove's eyes. Behold, You are handsome, My beloved! Yes, pleasant! Also our bed is green. The beams of our houses are cedar, and our rafters of fir.*

(God speaking/the bride speaking) As I look at you, in the beginning of this journey of love, which you have no idea where it's going to go, I can't help but see what's alive inside of you. You have a single vision for Me and Me alone. I know you don't feel this right now, because there is much weakness in you and things you're still struggling with, but I'm not defining you based on your present circumstance, but by the cry of your heart. You say, but this can't be so, I am so far from You, and I am busy with so many other things. But it is so, because I know the power of My love and mixed with the cry of your heart, you won't be able to stay connected to the lesser things. You will abandon all things in light of My great love.

Therefore I can say to you that you are fair. Listen again, behold, you are fair. Don't fight it. I am the Lover and you are the beloved. Receive My love for you. Don't fight my love, because I am talking to you based on the cry of your heart.

Supporting Scripture

Psalms 37:4 *Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.*

Matthew 6:6 *But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut the door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father will reward you openly.*

Commentary

What is taking place in this portion of the Song is what I call *the divine interchange of love*. Jesus starts out speaking to her about His feelings for her and how He sees her. This of course causes great love to arise within her and from that reality she speaks back to Him with love and passion. This progression doesn't diminish in this Song one little bit, but only increases until it shines like the full light of day. When you are in the dark of night you must continue walking for in due time you will see the light of day. This is true in the natural world, and also in the spiritual world. Though things be dark and we feel distant from the Bridegroom, we must not stop there, because as He speaks to us and breaks the silence, it forces us to speak back to Him with a response of love for Him.

The Groom and the bride are going back and forth right here, each one speaking after the other and declaring the great love that they have for each other. He first tells her that He loves her and He sees her as faithful, and this causes her to respond with passion for Him and she expresses the joy of being in relationship with Him. Look at some of the words that she uses to describe her relationship with Him. I love that she first says Yes, pleasant! Now that might not seem like that much to you, but I can see volumes of truth in that statement. Could it be that God is pleasant? Could it be that God is actually enjoyable to be with? Could it be that I could actually enjoy being with God and praying to Him and worshipping Him? Could it be that I don't have to pay a price to obtain the glory of God, but I could enjoy my way into it? I believe that this is exactly what she is saying. The Psalmist says to *Delight yourself in the Lord*. That phrase gives me so much hope. As I read that Psalm I say, *God, You're delightful. I can delight to be in you, because before I can delight myself in you, I have to understand that Christianity and delight can be in the same sentence.*

This is good news beloved. And lastly, the bride says *Also our bed is green*. Again there is a dictionary of truth loaded into these few words. I love that the place where I encounter God, the place of intimacy in the secret place when I close the door behind me and go to meet with Him isn't a decaying and lifeless

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CHAPTER 1

place. Here the bride describes the place of encounter with Jesus as something that is fresh and flourishing, not dead and decaying. It's green, it's fresh and has the feeling that it's eternal, meaning that it will never perish, but only increase in its freshness.

Take time today to delight yourself in God. Work with the Holy Spirit to shift the way that you think about God so that you can enjoy Him, so that you can delight yourself in Him! He is the *glad heart happy God*, who is ravished over your weak *yes*. He sees your struggle, your temptations, but has chosen you as His eternal companion. Enjoy it! Buy a matching hat and scarf and wear it!



CHAPTER 2

Day 1

Song of Songs 2:1-2 *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley. Like a lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.*

(The bride speaking) As I am with you, my heart becomes alive and I see myself growing like a flower in the midst of the summer sun. Just moments ago I was wondering where You were, but now I see you speaking over me, declaring who I am to You in the midst of a fallen world. You love everyone, but You only enjoy the redeemed. My love matters to You in the midst of the crowd going opposite You.

Supporting Scripture

1 Peter 2:4-5 *Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

Revelation 1:5 *...and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father...*

Commentary

God has seen something in us that nobody else has seen, and it's when we hear that voice speaking over us, that we become alive and start to understand our unique beauty. The Bible says *for God so loved the world that He gave...* It's important for us to understand that God loves everyone either in Christ or outside of Christ. But He only enjoys the redeemed, or those who have said *yes* to Him and are following Him. You must understand that with the nearly seven billion people on the earth only a handful of them have said *yes* to Jesus. If you have said *yes*, you stand among the minority who love Jesus not the majority. We live in a fallen world and things won't get completely better until Jesus returns, no matter how much the Church works to seek and save the lost.

Things are going to increase in a positive way and they will continue to decrease in a negative way. This is a fallen age that the Bible often refers to as a wilderness and it is what the bride is saying here in the passage. She is saying, my love which is weak is real, nonetheless, and it matters to You in this fallen age because more have said *no* to You than those who have said *yes*. I am like a lily among thorns. I am like something sweet and beautiful in the midst of so much darkness. Paul said that where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. This is a huge moment in the Song of Songs and in fact the Groom is going to refer to this exact moment at the end of the Song as a special time for the bride, as she's being awakened to her beauty before God. Many of us have a hard time talking about our beauty before God and in Christ. We can talk about the beauty of Christ and the beauty of God but when it comes to our own beauty it's almost a sin to even mention something about it. Beloved, do you realize that if you fail to see your beauty in Christ you will live an unclean and dirty life.

Those who see themselves as dirty will live dirty. But when you see yourself as clean and made new and beautiful in the Gospel you will thrive before Christ and others as you take your place in the Kingdom. If this is new to you today, I encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit what He thinks about you. Take this passage and speak it back to the Lord and tell Him that you are His favorite one, that you are His lily among thorns and ask Him to pound this reality into your heart so that it's more than head knowledge but becomes heart experience.



CHAPTER 2

Day 2

Song of Songs 2:3a *Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my beloved among the sons.*

(**The bride speaking**) Jesus! Oh, how I love the way that You speak to me. You are so tender in the way that you come near me. No wonder You stand out as something refreshing like an apple tree among all the other trees of this life. You speak to me about Your great love for Me and how I am different than all the others You have created, but You tell it to me in such a way that you don't degrade all those that haven't said yes to You. You love them, in the same way You love me. You stand alone in the forest.

Supporting Scriptures

Revelation 19:11 *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.*

Matthew 17:1-13 --Read the story on your own

Commentary

The beauty of God is beyond what we are able to describe. There is a truth about God when it comes to His attributes and it says this *You can know God truly, but you can never know God fully*. If you take a moment and grapple with that statement, you will lose the mental wrestling match with great frustration. It's not a frustration of anger, but a frustration that is created from our limited mental capacity to grasp the person of God. God is so much bigger than, so much loftier than, and so much higher than, and so far beyond all other things that it frustrates our minds. This is why John in the Revelation has nearly zero ability to describe what he sees in the encounter with any definitive words. Instead he says things like this, *He was like, it looked like, it was similar to, and it sounded like* and many other words that were not crystal clear. The reason for this is because John was using his earthly experience to describe something that was totally out of this world. The same thing is taking place with the bride in this portion of scripture. She is seeing Him as being like an apple tree among the trees of the woods.

If you look at the original language you can see that in the verse prior, the bride is spoken of as a lily. That word lily is a feminine word. And here, when she says that He is like an apple tree, that word for *tree* is a masculine word. This is the profound picture of the entire Bible. God is pictured as the One who first loved us and we are always pictured as those that love Him in response to His love towards us. The bride is seeing His beauty as being something totally other than anything else she has come in contact with. So much so she describes Him like apples to oranges, or an apple tree to the trees of the woods. Though there are many trees in the forest, only an apple tree can satisfy the deep internal longing our hearts. It's the sweet fruit of God in the midst of other things that are beautiful. How many beautiful things have you given yourself to, only to find that though they are beautiful they don't touch your inner life, only your outer life? Even something as silly as a television, nowadays has great appeal to the eyes, but it's never able to do for us what Jesus can do.

You think about anything we give ourselves to, looking for it to touch that secret place of our hearts, only to come up short every time. Beloved, He is an apple tree among the many trees of the woods. When you see your beauty before Him and you see His beauty before you, your heart will become awakened and you will end up speaking like John the Revelator, saying things like *He is sort of like this, kind of like that, He looks like, He sounds like* also using unclear words.



CHAPTER 2

Day3

Song of Songs 2:3b *I sat down in His shade with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste.*

(The bride speaking) Jesus, my soul is tired, I am weary of running and I long to sit down. I have found that it's only under Your shade that I find rest for my soul. I have planted many trees in my life to try to create shade for me, but each of them has failed. It's only under Your cross that I can find shade for my life. It's there that I stop striving, fighting and pushing people around to make room for myself. I can rest! O the rest of faith in Christ under His shade tree. Thank You for the shade that Your death has created for me. I won't take it for granted!

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 11:28 *Come to Me, all you who are weary and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Psalms 131:2 *Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with his mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.*

Commentary

Looking back over my life I can see the many trees I have planted in my own strength, looking for the shade of God. I can remember seeing these trees really clearly while a youth pastor came to my house to visit with me. Chris, being a great friend to my destiny, said to me *Patrick, you are trying to find yourself in weight lifting, sports, drugs, girls and work.* Those words leveled me like a ton of bricks. Chris was right, and although I wouldn't give my life to Jesus for another four years, he was a prophet from God who wrote words on my heart that I couldn't shake for most of my years running from God. Chris was pointing out the many trees that I was planting in my life, looking so hard for the shade of God. My soul was tired, my life was affected and I was in need of shade. It wouldn't click for me until I finally cut down my idolatrous trees and clung only to tree of Jesus Christ, the Cross.

When I first touched the Cross of Christ I cried for nearly forty minutes giving my life to Jesus. It was then that I heard the voice of the Holy Spirit for the first time saying to me *Patrick, you will never be alone again. It's going to be Me and you forever.* Those words rocked my world and my new life with Christ was just getting started. It was in Christ that I found rest for my soul, my soul that was so tired of running and doing its own thing. Those trees in my past brought me some temporary joy, but never was I able to sit down, rest and enjoy any shade from those trees. Don't you love that the bride first sits down, before she says that it's delightful?

We must first sit down under the cross in the place of worship before we see the great delight in it. Many people wait until they are inspired to sit before God, but it doesn't mostly work like that. It mostly works that we sit down and, as we do, we have great delight in it. It's not just delightful, but it is great delight. What are you shading your life with right now? What are you using to shade you from the heat of the day? Things other than Christ and Him crucified? If so, break your agreement with those things and cling only to the Cross. Reach for the Cross like a man drowning in the ocean who has only a small piece of wood to hold onto. I promise you, you will find great delight in letting go of lesser shades and holding on the old wooden Cross.



CHAPTER 2

Day 4

Song of Songs 2:4 *He brought Me into His banqueting house (the house of wine) and His banner over me was love.*

(The bride speaking) Oh my God! Sitting, quieting myself before You and gazing on the Cross has moved my heart from duty into delight and before I was even aware, you took me into the house of wine. My sitting before You and enjoying the *rest* of Calvary, brought me into a place of encounter with the glad heart happy God who took me into His house of wine. I love how in a moment's notice, I can be sitting before You and You break in and take me somewhere in You. I thought You were stoic and reserved, but in Your house of wine I am seeing a God who rejoices over His creation like a crazed Groom shouting because of His wife. You are happy, and what's this banner flying over my head. It says *You love me*. You are flying a banner over me that declares your love for me? You could have chosen to fly anything over me, and you chose love. Who are You? A banner of love is an understatement.

Supporting Scriptures

Hebrews 1:9 *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of joy more than all of your companions.*

Ephesians 5:18 *And do not be drunk with wine which is in dissipation; but be filled with the Holy Spirit...*

Commentary

So often we are in such a hurry when it comes to being with God. We are with Him, but we are actually somewhere else, with all the thoughts that we are thinking. We don't often sit in His presence, just simply to be with Him. It's stunning how just sitting in the presence of God can do so much to the human heart when it's yielded to Him.

You see, what I love about the bride is that she notices He is flying a banner over her head that says *love*. Now it might not have said those exact words, but whatever she saw caused her to be loved and feel loved from God. You realize that God in His uncreated genius could have created any banner He wanted to fly over us? Anything. Nothing would have been too hard, too complex or too meaningless. But He has chosen to fly the banner of love over our heads, and to that we rejoice.

Take time today to enjoy the rejoicing heart of the Bridegroom God who is happy about you and flies the banner of love over you. Tell Him that you are sorry for seeing Him as a Master, and not as a Husband who is passionate about you. Tell Him today, that you receive His great love for you, even though you don't understand it, even though it doesn't make sense, even though you don't feel worthy. Tell Him that you receive it. If you will freely give it to me, who am I to reject it? I receive it right now. Here I am, Your favorite one! Fly that banner of love over me! I am worth rejoicing over.



CHAPTER 2

Day 5

Song of Songs 2:5-7 *Sustain me with cakes of raisins; refresh me with apples for I am lovesick. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me. I charge you O daughters of Jerusalem, by the Gazelles or by the does of the field, do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.*

(The bride speaking) Oh, in this place of divine romance I am glued. I don't want to leave. The fruit of Your Spirit is making me a happy person on the inside. I never dreamed that life could be this good. I always thought I would have to bear this shame and guilt from my past, but when I touch You, it all dissipates and my heart soars in You. I am overcome with lovesickness. I am slain by the words of Your mouth and the tender way You come near me. Don't stop moving upon my heart in the secret place. Continue to pursue me, and never relent until I am fully Yours. Come near Me Jesus!

Supporting Scriptures

Psalm 42:1-2 *As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*

Psalm 63:1 *O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for you; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.*

Commentary

Lovesickness is something that has come upon many of the saints of old. It's that deep internal ache for more. It's that longing for something more, to go deeper, to run harder, to see more and to obtain what you can in the grace of God. Many of us fill that passion and hunger with things other than Christ, and some, because of a lack of understanding, ask for that ache to be quenched with something other than Christ.

That ache is a gift from God. We don't love Him on our own. It takes the moving of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts to create longing for Jesus. Many of us have felt that internal longing for more of the Holy Spirit and more of the Kingdom of God, but because we don't really know how to satisfy that internal longing, we don't. If we knew how to satisfy it, I believe that many would. But because we don't, we won't.

It seems that many of the Christians that I talk with don't really speak about the ache of love inside. They don't talk about a longing to go and pray, read the Bible, worship, be in the presence of the Lord and in Christian community. Today's Church life doesn't really want that as much as they want Church growth, leadership and the many practicals that are needed to help fund and grow the ministry. We aren't looking to do *either or*, but rather both, just in a right order. I say first things first.

Don't write off that longing and don't fill it with something other than Christ. Talk to Him right now. Tell Him to satisfy that ache with more of Him. Tell Him that you want to be sick with love, overcome with passion to read more, to pray more, to fast more and to give more time to Him, not less. We aren't looking for how little we can give and still be in relationship with Him. We want to see how far He will let us go and how abandoned He will let us be. Ask for that ache to increase, and realize that not everyone feels that ache. It's a gift.



CHAPTER 2

Day 6

Song of Songs 2:8-9 *The voice of my Beloved! Behold, He comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold He stands behind our wall; He is looking through the windows, gazing through the lattice.*

(The bride speaking) God, as I am in the midst of worshipping You, sitting underneath the Cross in Your shade, eating from the depth of Your house of wine and the rejoicing of Your heart, I am becoming filled with lovesickness, Your voice is breaking into the secret place in a way that's new to me. Who are You? I thought You were just the God of the secret place, but now you are shouting into the secret place as the God who is more like a King than a Bridegroom. You are skipping upon the hills without effort, and leaping across the mountains. Who are You? What are You Doing? I am confused. I have so been enjoying the place of intimacy and now I am seeing You in a different light. Your voice is loud, like the sound of many waters crashing upon the beach. You seem boundless in the way that You are moving as if nobody can hold You down, not even death itself.

Supporting Scriptures

Colossians 2:15 *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

Revelation 1:18 *I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forever more. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of death.*

Psalms 29:3-8 *The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is over many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars, yes the Lord splinters the cedars, yes the Lord splinters the cedars of Lebanon....the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.*

Commentary

God is a romantic, but that's not the only thing that He is. He is also a King who possesses all power. He is pictured here as skipping over the hills and leaping over the mountains. Hills and mountains are pictured in the Song of Songs as the hard places of life, ministry and our public life. He is coming to her as the One who is bound by nothing. It's important that we understand that the devil is created and he doesn't possess all power like the Trinity. Anything outside the Trinity isn't compared with the Trinity.

This was a great disruption to her as she had been enjoying Him in the secret place of intimacy. Now He is leaping over huge things and skipping over the small things. God often disrupts our lives to move us from where we're at, to where He wants us to be. I know it to be true in my own life that when the Lord is finished with me at one place, or one thing, and He is ready to move me to the next thing, or the next place, that His voice comes to me in a disruptive way. It's not that He's rude or harsh, but rather that He is challenging the comfort zone of where I am at because He has more for me. It's not that His voice is disruptive, but it's that it surprises me and often it catches us off guard, so to speak.

We know that His voice to her is disruptive because of the verbiage that's used. First she uses an exclamation point after His voice. Then she says that He says to her behold. That word behold, is a

Song of Songs



CHAPTER 2

jarring word. It's a word that says take note, listen up, hear what I am about to say. It's got authority to it and force: it's pointed not vague. It's His voice that we love to hear, but often times it disrupts where we are at.

What areas in your life is God coming to you and wanting to conquer? How is His voice breaking into the secret place of intimacy as the commanding Leader of the Army of the Hosts of Heaven? Listen to Him today, and take a good look at those things that He is talking to you about in your personal life. Maybe it's stepping out and doing something new. Maybe it's taking a new direction with your life and family. Maybe it's a job. Whatever it is, don't stay in the secret place and be frightened by His voice, but look up and see Who this is that is coming to you. The same hopeless Romantic is also the King above all Kings. One and the same. Trust Him.



CHAPTER 2

Day 7

Song of Songs 2:10

My Beloved said to me, rise up My love, My fair one and come away.

(God speaking) My beloved, how I love you so much. I know that what I am saying to you is challenging you, it's disruptive, but you must remember that I love you more than you will ever know, and I don't only want you to be here in the secret place, but also with Me on mountains. And even before I get to My request of you, I want you to know that I love you. I like you. I enjoy you. Not only when you mature, but through the entire process. As a Father rejoices over his growing child, so I also rejoice over you! So, come away with Me. Come My beloved.

Supporting Scriptures

John 6:44 *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.*

Matthew 14:28-29 *And Peter answered Him and said, Lord if it is You, command me to come to you on the water. So He said, come. And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.*

Commentary

It's important that we see the pattern that is starting to develop within the Song of Songs, even as early as Chapter One. What I am about to tell you is *gold*, and if you take notes this is something you should write down. Every time that God has something to say to the young bride, He first tells her that He likes her, He loves her and that she looks good to Him in the grace of God. The reason this is gold for you, is because if you're anything like me you struggle with seeing a God who loves you, enjoys you and isn't mad at you.

The bride is experiencing the love of a tender, but firm Father. We must not look at Jesus as a peaceful hippy who is out for world unity and happy time for all humans. Jesus Himself said that He didn't come to bring peace, but a sword. Now saying all that, it's important that we don't only see Him as being firm, but also very tender. He's knows that we are but dust. He created my frame, lived as I lived and struggled as I struggled. He's not disconnected from my life and it's from that vantage point that He speaks to me.

You must see that He is first telling her how He feels about her and how He views her in the grace of God. This isn't us standing in our own strengths, but rather standing before Him in the blood of His death and through that lens we are perfect in His sight. God speaks tenderly to us to motivate us to move on with Him, to come away to be where He is.

What is it that God is asking you to do? Do you see Him speaking to you in tenderness or in frustration? Do you see Him as being disappointed in you, or a God who understands your weakness and treats you as a real lover, who struggles with sin? Tell Him to speak to you about your life and how He feels about you in order that you can arise to the place where He's called you to be.



CHAPTER 2

Day 8

Song of Songs 2:11-13 *My beloved spoke, and said to me, rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Rise up, My love, My fair one and come away!*

(The bride speaking) You're speaking to me in a way that I have never heard come from You before. In the past You had spoken so tenderly to me, but now You are commanding me. I am worried about many things, I have many things in my life that will hinder me from going away with You. That's why I am calling out to You. **(God speaking)** Remember when you lost My presence and I showed you how to find me again? That's where I am, appealing to you. I have been there in the past. The winter has come and gone and I am still near you. I am safe. Look at Me, I am leaping over the mountains and the hills, and we have a history together. I am safe. Please, I will tell you again, I love you. I like you. I enjoy you and I want You with me on mountains. **(The bride speaking)** But last time I went there I became so busy serving the other vineyards that I neglected my own. I had become so busy working that I lost sight of my own heart and our intimacy. **(God speaking)** And now I have it. We are enjoying our time together. But last time you did it without Me, and now I am wanting you to do it with Me, together. Come away my love, come away with Me!

Supporting Scripture

Luke 5:4-5 *When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch. But Simon answered and said to Him, Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the nets.*

Commentary

Just like He appeared to the young maiden, so He also appears to us. He comes when we least expect it and breaks into our world with His thunderous voice calling out to us to go with Him to be where He is. The reason He came leaping and skipping over all the high things in life was to show her that He possessed all power, so that she would answer Him with a *yes* to go with Him.

Jesus placed her in the chamber of devotion and intimacy, and then breaks in and calls her out. Just when things get to a nice place in God, He often calls out to us to come up higher. Come to another level. Overcome something within us that's holding us back.

I encourage you to keep a list of all the times that God works on your behalf and of all the times that God speaks to you. The reason for this is because there are times when He will call out to us and we get scared. But when we go back and look at our list we can see that God has been with us all along. He has never left us. And that's why He says to her, the winter is over and the time of singing has come. He was saying, the time when it's dark and lifeless, we have made it through, and now it's summer time, and I didn't leave you then, surely I won't leave you now.

We can trust the faithfulness of God in our future only when we know His faithfulness in our past. It's the past that God is calling to the memory of the bride in order to take her to this new place with Him. He is appealing to her memory of His safe leadership in the past so that she understands that He's the God who changes not! You must come to know the faithfulness of God in your past, so that you can ascend that mountain with Him and enter not only into past faithfulness but also future faithfulness.

Reflect on all the times that God has come through for you, and trust that He will keep you in this new thing. Don't hold back. Trust Him. He's a perfect Shepherd who oversees our lives so well!



CHAPTER 2

Day 9

Song of Songs 2:14 *O My dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let Me see your face, let Me hear your voice; for Your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.*

(God speaking) Please remember My love, when I am calling out to you to come away with Me, you are My dove. Your single vision for Me moves My heart and overcomes Me. Would you join Me in the steep places of the cliffs, in the caves that are formed from strong weather, in the wounds of My side. Just as I hid Moses in the cleft of the Rock, so I also want you to join Me in My sufferings. I will say it again, and make it clear; I love your face and I love your voice. I want to see you, and I want to hear you. Don't you ever think for a moment that I don't love your face and enjoy listening to your voice. Your voice moves My heart and your face is so lovely to Me. Don't shrink back into the secret place of comfort, because I am calling you up with Me. I will never leave you where you are, I will always call out to you to come away with me. Rise up my love, my fair one and come away with Me.

Supporting Scriptures

Exodus 33:20-23 *But He said, You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live. And the Lord said, here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.*

John 19:34 *But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

Colossians 1:24 *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the Church...*

Commentary

God often calls out to us to come away with Him to places that are difficult. We are even called out by God to go into places that we have come out from that were painful, which causes great fear to arise. The young maiden was in just that place.

She had served in the body of Christ before and had become burnt out. She was enjoying being with God because she had become so busy one time before that she lost Him, and she didn't want to do that again. Just as God did with the maiden, He also does with us.

He was calling out to her, so that she would come and serve with Him, in partnership with Him, in the difficult places of life. Jesus' ministry was not a bed of roses. He was doing public, full time ministry for only 3 years, and those years were times of rejection, disappointment, pain, abandonment, struggles and constant conflict with the powers of darkness. The place of public ministry is a place of difficulty. But it's in this place of ministry that God has called out to us and promised to be with us, for the good and for the bad.

He tells us we are His dove, that He loves our voice, loves our face and wants us with Him where He is. Oh, how often our fear keeps us from truly enjoying the bliss of being where He is. Maybe God is calling you today to go to some places that you have been before that were painful, and you have closed that door. Is He knocking, asking for entrance? Only you know that. And only you can respond. I know from personal experience that when He knocks and I say *no*, things only compound, and the weight of His hand increases, just as it does for the young maiden in the Song, as we will see at the end of Chapter Two and the start of Chapter Three. I encourage you to talk to Him and ask Him for help to open that door, to rise up and go away with Him where He is and where He is calling you.



CHAPTER 2

Day 10

Song of Songs 2:15 *Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.*

(The bride speaking) God, I see now that there are some areas in my life that You are calling me out of, but I am afraid to go. I hear the knock, I hear Your voice and I am struggling to respond. I want to, but I am struggling. Would you come and catch for me the little areas in my life that I struggle to get a grip on. The things I struggle with don't seem to be large sin issues, but rather these smaller and much craftier sins and areas that hinder my grapes from growing into a full vineyard. I can't catch them on my own, but I need Your help, Your power, Your direction and your tenderness. Things are just starting to grow in my life and the fruit that's on my vine is tender, but these little foxes are stopping them from growing. Help!

Supporting Scriptures

Psalms 139:23 *Search me, O God, and know me heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Psalms 51:10-11 *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew in me a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.*

Psalms 24:3 *Who can ascend the hill of the Lord and who can stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart.*

Commentary

Some of us struggle with what I would call large sin issues, and those need to be dealt with. But most of us struggle with other, smaller sin issues that really hinder us from going on with God. You might even call them character issues, behavior issues and personal flaws.

See, the thing about the fox is that they aren't like a lion that comes out in the daytime and is, loud and visible. Foxes are sleek, sly and sneaky. They come in dark of night; they aren't big and loud, but fast and stealthy. The young maiden confesses that her grapes are tender, or just budding. We must address these little areas of our lives that are holding us back from going where God is calling, and doing what God is asking us to do.

What I love about the young maiden here is that she understands that she can't catch the foxes and appeals to Him who is able. The same thing is true with us. We can't, on our own, stop sinning and many of the things we can't even see on our own; it takes the Holy Spirit. It takes God to become delivered from ourselves. A humanistic Gospel says that you can deliver yourself, you can help yourself and there is power within you to help you. That's only true if we are saying that power that in us is the Holy Spirit. She is struggling with some little areas, but she is also calling out to Him who can help her.

Psalms 139:23 became one of the first verses I committed to memory. I did this because I felt I had several areas in my life that needed to be addressed. I realized also that I couldn't fix myself; I had spent many years doing the damage and I couldn't stop the damage, nor fix it on my own. So when I came to Christ, I was so encouraged that life could look different than it had when it first began. God is able to change me, but I must ask for help.

Right now take time to talk to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to point out anything in you that offends Him and holds you back from going and doing what He has called you into. It takes God to become free from the things that bind us. Ask Him right now to lose you and catch those little foxes!



CHAPTER 2

Day 11

Song of Songs 2:16 *My Beloved is mine, and I am His. He feeds His flock among the lilies.*

(The bride speaking) God, it's here in my brokenness that I am still able to say that You belong to me and I belong to You. I love that even though I am struggling with saying *yes* to You, to ascend the mountain and respond to Your call to me, that I have not lost my passion for You and my understanding that nothing can separate us. It's among those that say *yes* to You where You feed your beloved ones. You feed them among the others who have said *yes* to You. This is why we attend Church, this is why we live in small groups and share our lives with the household of faith, because that's where You feed Your flock. God I love You, even in the midst of my struggle to say *yes* to You.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 28:20 *...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you, even to the end of the age.*

Commentary

What a powerful reality that all of us should be reaching for. The young maiden is in a hard place. God is calling her to do something difficult and she is reluctant to go. She sees her sin and weakness as she calls out to God to catch the little areas of her life and in this place of turmoil, she is still able to hold onto the reality that she belongs to Him and He belongs to her.

The storyline of the Song of Songs is important to understand, because it helps us to put into context not just what she is saying, but also where she is in the Song. As I have already mentioned the bride is at a place of real brokenness. And it's here, even in her brokenness, that she responds to Him that she still belongs to Him and He belongs to her. How challenging this reality can be in our own personal lives. This is what was taking place in **Revelation 3** when Jesus was speaking to the Church of Laodicea. They were in total brokenness, but He said to them, if they would open up and let Him in, that He would come and sit with them. Jesus isn't frightened by our weakness, but we must come before Him and not run from Him.

So quickly we can lose this understanding when we are in a place like she is. We also want to reach for this understanding so that we can stand strong and go where He goes and say what He says. Confess right now just what she said. Say to God, I am Your beloved and You are mine. If you are anything like me, that took some time before I could say that with confidence, but over time it becomes stronger. Declare it again right now. Tell Him. You are mine! I am Yours! Even though I am struggling with things, I am Yours and You are mine!



CHAPTER 2

Day 12

Song of Songs 2:17 *Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, turn away my Beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag upon the mountains of Bether.*

(The bride speaking) I hear You calling out to me, and part of me wants to move on with You. Some of me wants to move with You, but another part of me is not willing to let go of where I am at with You right now. I hear You calling me, but I am going to have to stay here. God, I will sit here in the chamber of encounter, instead of the mountains where You are calling me until the shadow areas of my life are cleared up and the day breaks over me. I will be right here, but don't let me hold You back. Go ahead, skip, leap and jump as You were, I am going to stay here on the mountains of separation. I am too afraid to lose what I have attained and this is something that I know. Where You are calling me is a great unknown! Go my Beloved. Move on; I am staying.

Supporting Scriptures

1st Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you except that which is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

Luke 12:48 *But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.*

Commentary

The Bible talks a great deal about fear and the power fear can have upon one's life. The reality of it is, if we have fear about something, that fear can cause us to miss our full reward that Christ has for us at the end of our race. Hebrews tells us that we are not to cast our confidence away, because it holds a great eternal reward. It will take confidence in both yourself and in God mostly, for you to receive a reward when you work to fulfill your ministry assignment. If fear grips your heart, you can be held back in such a way that it will actually hinder you from where God has called you out to be.

The young maiden failed to understand that what God was calling out to her to do, He would have also equipped her to maintain. We often, like her, forget that if God is calling out to us to do something He will help us to do it. If the call is there, then the grace to respond is also there. Peter couldn't have walked on water until Jesus called Him. When Jesus called Peter, He walked and stayed above because Jesus' call sustained Him.

Something that we also often forget is that it is safer to be on the mountains with Jesus if He is there, than to stay in the chamber if He is gone. Though she was enjoying Him in the chamber He was calling her to the mountains. She thought it would be better to stay where she was, instead of going with Him, which would prove to be bad logic, as God is going to move on and take His manifest presence off her heart.

What has your response to Jesus' call to ascend the mountains been? Have you, like her, said, *Go, move on without me, I am staying here?* If you have said *no*, apologize to Him and ask for strength to get up and move after Him so that you can be where He is. Tell Him the truth. I am afraid to go where You're calling me, but I want to be with You at whatever cost. Help me follow You!



CHAPTER 3

Day 1

Song of Songs 3:1

By night on my bed I sought the One I love, I sought Him but I did not find Him.

(The bride speaking) Oh no! What have I done? I don't feel Him anymore. It's been night after night and I have been in the chamber seeking the One I love but I can't find Him anywhere. He called out to me to come away with Him, and I said *no*. I told Him to go ahead and do what was in His heart and He really did it. I had no idea that my heart had been awakened in love like it is. My heart is alive in Him and now that I can't feel Him near I am going crazy. I don't care about ministry right now, I don't care about my future, fortune or fame, I just want Him.

Supporting Scripture

Psalm 32:4 *For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer.*

Hebrews 5:8 *Though Jesus was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.*

Hebrews 12:7-11 *...if you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten...Now no chastening seems to be joyful in the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Commentary

Sometimes we think that when God calls out to us and we say no, that things will stay the way they have always been. We think, *surely He won't withdraw His presence from our hearts and lives*, but it's exactly what He does. For all of our life and time on earth the Lord will continually be working out of us what He has worked into us. He will always be calling out the gift of God and the nature of Christ that He has placed within us.

This is what God is doing in the young maiden. He loves her too much to leave her immature, so when He called out to her and she said *no*, He moved on, fully knowing that it would cause her to seek Him all the more. He had won her on the front end with His presence and He fully knew that, moments after He moved on, it would cause her to arise and go looking for Him.

Something that this portion of scripture teaches us is that it's safer to be with God on the mountains than to stay in the chamber if He's not there. The safest place to be with God is wherever He is. Many of you struggle with 100% obedience. You can say *yes* to God on some things, but other things it's nearly impossible to say *yes* to Him. Remember how He came to her, just prior to Chapter Three in Chapter Two? He came as the conquering stag and the leaping gazelle. It was the picture of the boundless Christ, the King above all Kings who has triumphed over all things.

Where are you at with the Lord right now? What is your level of seeking and obeying what He is asking you and saying to you? Would you say that you are striving to live in 100% obedience to His requests upon your heart and life? If not, talk to Him about it. He is safe and trustworthy. This is the Second Person of the Trinity who left His Father's house to become a Man that He might win you. He is safe! Trust Him.



CHAPTER 3

Day 2

Song of Songs 3:2 *I will rise now, I said, and go about the city; in the streets and in the squares I will seek the One I love. I sought Him but I didn't find Him.*

(**The bride speaking**) I can't stay here anymore. I can't just keep looking for Him in the place that we have enjoyed in times past. I must rise up and go after Him. Whatever the cost, whatever the price, I want Him and Him alone. I am willing to go into the city and the public squares to find Him. Whatever I have to do, I am now willing to do it. I can't live another day without feeling His presence. I can't go another second without seeing Him. Oh my Love, where are You? I am sorry for not responding to You and Your tender call to rise up and go away. It's because I said *no* that I'm sitting here, and I will do anything now. I am moving. Please see the movement of my heart towards You and meet me. I can't take much more of this separation. Though I am seeking, I am not finding You. Where are You?

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 7:7-11 *Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened...*

Luke 18:6-8 *Then the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?*

Commentary

Something that I love about this picture of the young maiden is even though Jesus was on the mountain tops and was calling her there she said no, but she was still seeking Him even on her bed. And as soon as He moved His presence off her heart, she was distraught and had to be near Him again. Even though He was in the mountains, she gets up off her bed and starts moving towards Him.

There's an old saying that you can't move a parked car, but you can steer one that already rolling. Even though He called her to mountains, she goes into the streets and the city. It's not where she's at as much as the fact that she rose up and went after Him. I love that she just starts moving, even though it's in the wrong direction.

She is at the place of desperation and she is willing to do whatever it takes, go wherever she must. She has to have His presence back in her life. Sometimes I don't know where to start in my relationship with Jesus, but I know that a few things work every time when it comes to finding Him; reading the Bible, praying, fasting and being around other believers.

We often forget the passage in **James 4** where he tells us that if we draw near to God, that God is drawing near to us. We take one step towards God and He takes ten. Beloved, the chasm between you and God is great and it can only be spanned by Him. So we must not think that it's us who really finds God, but rather God is finding us. The bride is searching for Him, and if He didn't want to be found by her, she would never see Him again. But that's not how God is. He longs, more than we will ever know, for us to find Him. So while we are searching for Him, He is moving closer to us at the same time.

What steps are you taking today to move closer to Jesus? We understand that it's not about works, but we position ourselves before Him so that His burning heart can touch our cold hearts. Are you moving closer to Him through the Bible, through prayer, through fasting and through community with others? Stop some of the



CHAPTER 3

other things in your life and make time for Him today. Right now, stop and tell Him that you are desperate for more of Him.

Day 3

Song of Songs 3:3-4a *The watchmen who went about the city found me. I said have you seen the One I love? Scarcely had I passed them by when I found the One I love.*

(The bride speaking) Jesus, I am crying out to you here in the city and to anyone who will listen. Hey Church leaders, you watchmen over there, have you seen the One I love? Did you see what way He went? Have you heard anything from Him? What's He doing, where's He going? I love this One more than I love my own life. I am so hungry for Him and I am here now in the streets in the city searching for Him. I do not know where He is but I am looking. After I passed by the watchmen, I saw Him. Running to embrace Him, I found the One I love. My heart came alive as I embraced the One I love! This is Him, Him whom I love.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 6:33 *Seek first the Kingdom Of God and all these others things will be added unto you.*

Matthew 22:37-40 *Jesus said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like it; you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

Commentary

There are times, when we lose His presence upon our hearts, that we have to humble ourselves and ask others who know Him if they have seen Him. The young maiden is seeking the One whom she loves. Four times in four verses she says that He is the One she loves. Her seeking is not for the God of anointed ministry, or the God of supernatural power, but the One whom her soul loves. She's not looking for a large crowd, or a big stage to stand upon, she's looking for the One she loves.

Often times when I review who I am seeking, I come up short answering clearly that I am only looking for Jesus. I am often found seeking ministry, Church growth, blessing on my family, and wisdom about the future. These things are all okay, and God wants us to seek after them, He commands us to in many places, but beyond all that, He is wanting those who seek Him to find the God of burning passion for fallen humanity.

There is a misspoken phrase going around in the body of Christ today that says *Jesus, we aren't seeking Your hand, were seeking Your face*. Now this sounds really great and noble, but at the end of the day, we are looking for both His face *and* His hand. We are more interested in the person of God than what God can do for us; but we do need His hand to finish the task of taking the gospel to the nations. Now, after saying all that, the Lord spoke to me one time and said, *Many people love My hand, but they don't love my face*. That phrase from the heart of God rocked me and sent me on a crash course of looking for the Person of God, not just what God can give me. This is where the bride is. When we have been touched by the love of God and we lose His presence, it's not the things we are trying to get back; it's that feeling of love and passion that we feel from Him.

What does your seeking look like right now? What would you say is your number one passion in seeking God right now? Can you say that you are looking for Him and Him alone? Talk to Him about it. Tell Him of your



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passion to seek Him and Him alone! He will help, for He longs to do this more than you know. But you must ask Him, seek Him and talk to others about Him!

Day 4

Song of Songs 3:4b-5 *I held him and would not let him go, Until I had brought him to the house of my mother, and into the chamber of her who conceived me. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or by the does of the field, do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.*

(The bride speaking) I am not letting You go now that I have found You. I long to live in close proximity to You always. I never want to be parted from You again, as we were just a few moments ago. That was terrible. **(God speaking)** My child, I love you more than you know. I purposely withdrew My presence from your heart because I knew that you couldn't live without Me. I knew that though you wouldn't come with Me to the mountains, I still needed to get you moving and I wouldn't violate your freewill, so I withdrew My manifest presence from your heart and it motivated you to rise up and seek Me. **(The bride speaking)** I thought You were on the mountains where You were calling me. **(God speaking)** I was, and still will be, but I knew you would rise up, so I came down here to meet you. I wouldn't let you go forever, without feeling My presence and being near Me. I disciplined you to motivate you, and now we are joined together. **(The bride speaking)** You are brilliant in Your leadership over my life. Thank You Jesus!

Supporting Scriptures

Psalms 103:14 *For God knows our frame; He remembers that we are but dust.*

Luke 24:28-29 *Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to stay with them.*

Commentary

When the young maiden finds Him He allows her to take Him into the house of her mother, or the one who bore her. She is talking about the spiritual house of birth called the local Church. Jesus, being found by this young maiden who is seeking Him in the streets, when He had called her to the mountains, is a beautiful thing. God allows her to take Him where she wants to take Him, not where He had asked her to go. God is so gracious that He is willing for a moment to go with her. He knows that in just a moment He is going to have this young lady joined together with Him,

How tender this Man is. Of all the things He could have said to her. He could have rebuked her for not going to the mountains and how she messed up His schedule. But He does none of that. He embraces her and allows her to take Him back into the chamber that He was calling her out of. This will only be a nice story to you, if you don't internalize it right now and find yourself in this story.

I mean look at the passage again in **Luke 24:28-29** the Bible clearly says that Jesus was wanting to go on further, but because they asked Him to stay, He did. What? God was persuaded by men? This is stunning. The uncreated God, who became a Man, was talked into staying somewhere that He hadn't intended to stay. Look at the pull that humans have over the heart of God. This pull isn't that we talk Him into doing what we want Him to do, but rather that He is willing to be with us when we ask Him. He is the tender Shepherd.

The Holy Spirit inspired this passage for you, for right now. God is not mad at you, He's not disappointed and He hasn't lost faith in you. He is rejoicing that you responded to His discipline rightly and you got moving towards Him. Are you where you are supposed to be? No. But who is? Nobody. We are all reaching for Him right where we are at. Don't shrink back in shame, but rise up in faith and embrace the God of burning passion.



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He is a flame of fire, burning for you right now! Tell Him you love Him. Tell Him you belong to Him! Thank Him for embracing you right where you're at!

Day 5

Song of Songs 3:6a *Who is this coming up from the wilderness...?*

(The bride speaking) Jesus, once again, I am seeing you in a different way. I saw You as the Bridegroom who loves me, and as the King who leaps and skips over mountains and hills, but now You are being pictured as a Warrior, as a Warrior King who has overcome the Cross in power and ascended from this fallen earth. Who are You? I keep getting to know You in one way and then You turn again and I see a different side of You. I am seeing you coming up from this wilderness called earth, in power. Nothing is able to hold You back, not chains, not death and not violence. You have overcome all things earthly and demonic. Who is this One coming up from the wilderness?

Supporting Scriptures

Colossians 1:9-10 *For this reason we also since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...*

John 16:33 *These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you will have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer I have overcome the world.*

Commentary

It is easy for us to get used to seeing Jesus in just one facet and to ignore the many others that He possesses. Jesus is like a diamond with many perfect, flawless facets. The more you spin the diamond and inspect it, the more of Him that you see. Here the bride no sooner embraced this tender Romantic, than He turns to be seen as One who is coming up from the wilderness.

The wilderness represents life here on earth. This is a wilderness over all. Things are dark, fallen, crooked and awaiting re-creation from Jesus, but He has overcome all things and nothing stands in His way. It's important that we fall in love with the complete Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Many of us have a hard time reconciling the Jesus of Christmas (baby Jesus in the manger) with the Jesus in the book of Revelation, (The King of all Kings slaying His enemies) but He is the same Person. There is no contradiction between the manger and the white horse of His return.

If we don't see Jesus in His many facets we will become offended at Him when He comes to us in a different way. I am not talking about a different Jesus, but rather a different face of the same Jesus. For instance, in Revelation we see Him as Bridegroom, as King, as Priest, as Prophet and as Judge. Those are all the same Jesus, just different parts of His personality.

Here the bride is seeing the great conquering King who has ascended from the wilderness of this fallen age. He is victorious and will never again take a beating like He did on the Cross. She sees Him as the One who overcame life in this fallen age. We will see, later on, in the Song that the bride also comes up from this wilderness in strength. Here's a sneak peek into that thought; you can only ascend from the wilderness if you look to Jesus who has already ascended. Jesus' ascension, gives strength for her ascension.



CHAPTER 3

What facet are you most familiar with? What facet are you most uncomfortable with? Ask Him to open your eyes like Paul, praying in **Colossians 1:9**. We must receive revelation of Him in order to rightly understand all that He is.

Day 6

Song of Songs 3:6b ...*Like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the merchants' powders.*

(The bride speaking) Jesus, I see you clothed in the smoke, the power of the Holy Spirit. You are so strong. In Your ascension up from this wilderness You smell like the sacrifice of God. I can smell the pain of Your sacrifice in the myrrh, and the worth of the worship through the frankincense. This is the resurrected Son of God who has overcome the devil and this fallen age. All the merchants of the earth have clothed you in their worship. You are beautiful and stunning. I am gaining strength while I look upon the resurrection of Your life. You're not weak, and powerless, but strong and mighty!

Supporting Scriptures

2 Corinthians 13:4 *For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you...*

1 Corinthians 1:18 *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

Commentary

Because Jesus ascended this fallen world, it also means that if we join ourselves to Him that we, too, will overcome this fallen age. When we look at the pillars of smoke that surround Him and uphold Him, we can make of this that it's the Holy Spirit. When the Bible speaks of smoke, or the cloud of God, it's mostly speaking about the Holy Spirit. Jesus was leaning upon the Holy Spirit as He was overcoming the wilderness and coming up from the place that looks so hard. This is why we see Jesus, in Luke 4, going into the wilderness filled with the Holy Spirit. But when He came out, the Bible says He came out in the *power* of the Holy Spirit.

What's powerful for us about this is that it's the same thing. The only way we overcome our sin, our fallen nature, and this fallen world we live in, is through the Holy Spirit. We must do the same thing that Jesus did. We lean into the Holy Spirit and trust Him for our deliverance. We have to trust the Holy Spirit to help us to overcome, just as Jesus trusted Holy Spirit to raise Him up.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the most neglected Person of the Trinity. We talk about the Father and the Son, but we know very little about the Holy Spirit. I mean Jesus was only on earth for 33 years and the Holy Spirit has been here for 2,000+ and we still know so little about Him. This doesn't mean that we don't search Jesus out; in fact the Bible says that the Holy Spirit has been given to us for that express purpose, revealing Jesus to the human heart. We must grow into a vibrant relationship with the Holy Spirit, this pillar of smoke, who will also help us ascend this fallen age.

What does your life with the Holy Spirit look like right now? Would you say that you are close to the Holy Spirit? I heard it said one time that you will never *walk* in the Holy Spirit any more than you *talk* to



CHAPTER 3

the Spirit who lives in you. It might sound strange to think about talking to the Spirit who lives in you, but this is how you overcome. Right now begin a conversation with the Holy Spirit that will last the rest of your life. Talk to Him. Speak to Him. Listen to Him. Love Him. Sing to Him. Wait on Him.

Day 7

Song of Songs 3:7-8 *Behold, it is Solomon's couch, with sixty valiant men around it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war. Every man has his sword on his thigh because of the fear in the night.*

(The bride speaking) Not only did I see You coming up from the wilderness but now I see a chariot that seems to be coming for me. What is this; this couch, this thing to transport me on? What are you doing? I am just a farm girl; surely I haven't won the heart of the great King! And who are these that are carrying it and marching with it? This is the royal procession that comes to get the bride, in whom the King has delighted. These men of war are all trained; they are all experts in what they do. They aren't hired men; they are the valiant of Israel. And it seems as if each of them has their sword upon their thigh in case they need it in a moment's notice. This royal procession is for me, and these men are to make sure that I am protected in my journey from here to the eternal city. This is more than enough protection. I am so honored and overcome with emotion.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 10:29-31 *Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

Ephesians 3:20 *Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that you ask or think according to the power that works within you...*

Commentary

Solomon had sent for the young maiden to come away to the palace with him, from where she was. This is the royal procession he had sent to pick her up. That word *couch* is the word *palanquin* which means a platform, carried by men, that is used to transport people upon.

When the King sent for the young maiden to come with him, he sent sixty of Israel's valiant who were all experts of war. Often times, if a king had something really special that he was transporting, he wouldn't use just any hired servants, but ones that were citizens by birth of his city. The reason for this is often times when a king would use just any hired servants, if somebody would pay them more, they would surrender their package to the highest price. These men are the valiant of Israel, meaning they have complete loyalty to the King and will ensure that the young maiden makes it to him. Their swords are on their thigh which speaks of their ready passion to fight at a moment's notice. They are not sleeping on the job.

The picture that God is painting for you and me in this passage is that He is well able to protect you as you journey toward the eternal city. The passage Paul shared with us from Ephesians is that not only is the Holy Spirit able and willing, but He can do far beyond anything we have ever thought or even imagined. I hate that I so under value the size and ability of the Holy Spirit. Instead of seeing Him as the God who was hovering over the earth in **Genesis 1**; I see Him as a bird that is powerless. He came in the form of a dove for Jesus, but this God is not a bird, He is the all-powerful, all knowing, all present, uncreated God that the Heavens are unable to contain. You must ask for Him to help expand your mind concerning Him so that you can encounter Him as He really is.



CHAPTER 3

God is going to keep you, not by your power, but by the power of the Holy Spirit who fights for those that belong to Christ. Rest in the protection of God, that He is overseeing your journey, no matter what's going on within you or around you today. Trust Him and His oversight!

Day 8

Song of Songs 3:9-10 *Of the wood of Lebanon, Solomon the King made Himself a Palanquin, He made its pillars of silver, it's support of gold, it's seat of purple, it's interior paved with love by the daughters of Jerusalem.*

(The bride speaking) This Chariot that You have sent for me to ride upon is made of wood. It reminds me of the Cross that You traveled upon that held you between heaven and earth and ensured my safety in this age until I see You face to face. My beloved, You Yourself, became involved with the making of this Chariot of wood that I will travel upon. You, Yourself, made this. You rolled up Your sleeves and put this together, You got personally involved in its design. What a wonderful Craftsmen You are, My Beloved. I feel so safe and so loved when I look upon this chariot that You created. You're such a personal God! The pillars that hold up this chariot speak of redemption and the support of it is like the solid gold that will pass through the fire of Your gaze! You made this for me! You really love me!

Supporting Scriptures

Colossians 1:13 *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love...*

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...*

Commentary

God was unable to redeem humanity from Heaven. The only way that God could redeem humanity forever, was for the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, to become a Man, climb up on the Cross and be crushed by the wrath of God.

What we see taking place here is that King Solomon had many marriages, and created many chariots for the transportation of his brides. But what makes this chariot different is that he himself became personally involved in its creation. The other chariots, he would have had his servant's make, but not this one. For this one he himself rolled up his sleeves and made it. Fashioned it from wood, and covered it with redemption and a sure foundation.

This is what took place at the Cross. Jesus Christ became a Man, and entered into time and space rolling up His sleeves, leaving His throne in Heaven, to become subjected to life in this age for the redemption of His bride. This is why we love the Lamb. This is why Heaven goes nuts in **Revelation 5** when the only One found worthy is Jesus, the Lamb who was slain. They go nuts because of what He was willing to do to redeem humanity.

Jesus has gone to great lengths to redeem you. This isn't something that came without price. Not only did God the Father look away, but Jesus Himself was afflicted in a furnace of tribulation. The Cross wasn't something that didn't touch Jesus because He was God. We must never forget that He was fully Man as well. This was the God-Man! The pain of the Cross was real, terrible, horrible and joyful because of the sons and daughters it would deliver from hell and empower to live with His Father in eternity.



CHAPTER 3

Take time today to thank Him for the sacrifice that paid the price of your salvation and freedom. Your freedom came at the expense of the Second Person of the Trinity. Don't pass by this moment without saying thanks! Personally, I try to take time each day to say thanks for saving me. Thanks for rescuing me! Don't wait. Tell Him thanks for making a way for you.

Day 9

Song of Songs 3:11a *Go, forth, O daughters of Zion, and see King Solomon...*

(**The bride speaking**) O, you ones around the Church, go and see the King. When I saw Him coming up from the wilderness as an over comer and then saw what He did to ensure my safety as He transports me to Himself, I was overcome with thanksgiving. I challenge you who are standing on the fringes of loving God that you go all the way in. Though I am still struggling with sin and weakness, I am trying to move closer to Him and the more I see the more I am empowered to go. I promise you daughters, that the more you go, the more you read, the more you pray, the more you worship, the more you fast, the more you will see. And what you see will cause you to give up more of what you have so you can reach for Him. He is stunning in His beauty and He is able to captivate you. Oh! Go and reach for Him. He is nearby!

Supporting Scriptures

Psalms 73:28 *But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare Your works.*

Jeremiah 23:23 *Am I a God near at hand, says the Lord, and not a God who is far off?*

Revelation 4:8 *The four living creatures each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night saying...*

Commentary

In this simple challenge to the daughters of Jerusalem from the young maiden there is a very powerful principle hidden. She says to them, go forth and see. When you and I go forward in our pursuit of God we see more. When we read the Bible, when we fast, when we pray and when we worship we see more of God. Well, the more we see the more we go. When we see something we move closer to see what it is. The more we see of Jesus the closer we grow to Him; as we *go* we see more, and the more we see causes us to *go* more.

It could be said that if you don't see much then you don't go much. And if our seeing is connected to our going then we must be among those that both see God and challenge others to see Him also. Without seeing we don't go, and when we don't go we don't see. This cycle is something that goes on and on until eternity and even there when we are with God, we will never stop seeing Him and going deeper into His heart.

We want to develop a lifestyle of seeing and going. The power isn't just in the seeing, but in the going. Many people see things, but they don't go any further. And many people go but never see. Our seeing must be connected to our going which in turn must cause us to long to see more. It's been said that yesterday's manna won't feed you today. Or in another words, what you experienced in God yesterday won't feed you today. You must get new manna, new revelation, new depth, new heights and new understanding today, even though you had some yesterday. It's the perpetual cycle of seeing and going which over time produces a deep life within us.

Take some time to look at the four living creatures in **Revelation 4** that have eyes around and within, who never take their eyes off Jesus. I often think that they are eternally fascinated because they never stop seeing Him and going deeper into Him and they are in eternity. To keep something in fascination for all of eternity,



CHAPTER 3

You must be pretty special. Ask God that He would allow you to see what they see and that He would allow you to go where they go. Remember if you're not going anywhere, it's connected to the fact that you aren't seeing anything.

Day 10

Song of Songs 3:11b ...with the crown with which His mother crowned Him...

(The bride speaking) Now that I have seen You in your glory and am moving closer to You, I freely cast my crown before Your feet. I always wondered why they casted their crowns before You, but now I understand. You haven't made me throw my crown before You, but because of the way that You have revealed Yourself to me, it has caused me to cast it down. Voluntarily, I throw this before You. I give You this crown. It belongs to You. You gave me the choice to love You or not, and I choose You, so here it is. My crown represents whom I will set my affections upon and I choose You! Let the Church, of the mother of the redeemed, crown You their King also.

Supporting Scripture

Revelation 4:9-10 *Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne saying...*

Mark 14:3-5 *And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a women came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, why was this fragrant oil wasted. For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor. And they criticized her sharply.*

Commentary

In **Revelation 4** the elders are pictured as casting their crowns before the Lamb who is seated upon the throne. We understand that there are many crowns with which Jesus is crowned, but the crown that moves Him the most is the crown of voluntary love. Voluntary love is the hinge that moves the heart of God.

Jesus can force people to love Him but He chooses not to do that. Jesus leads His people in such a way that they want to return and serve Him. They want to return and give Him their lives. And when we come back around and crown Him as our King, this moves His heart like nothing else.

The Church will place a crown upon Jesus head that will cause Him to become undone and that is the crown of voluntary love. When we place this crown upon His head we are saying, Jesus I choose You. I want You. I am doing this, not because I have to, but because I want to. You chased me because You wanted to, nobody forced You to love me, but You did this out of compassion and because of that, I am going to do the same.

See Jesus is going to give a crown to those who overcome and it will be that very crown that we return to give to Jesus. Everything we have is a gift from Him. The crowns we will receive won't be because we did something great, but because we trusted the Great Shepherd of our souls. It will be this love that He has crowned us with that we will give back to Him. Voluntary love from Jesus to us, causes voluntary love for Jesus. This is the cycle that continues to spin throughout all ages.

I will serve You for who You are, not what You can do. I love You and here is my love.



CHAPTER 3

Take your love, your passion, your motivation, your failures, your faults and the things that hold you back and give them to Jesus. Crown Him with your life and watch what it does to His heart. Take this time right now to say to Him what you feel on the inside! Say to Him what you are feeling and wait for Him to respond.

Day 11

Song of Songs 3:11c ...*On the day of His wedding, the day of the gladness of His heart.*

(The bride speaking) I had always taken You to be such a Master, such a Commander, such an uptight Man who only tolerated me, but the more I see, the closer I come, I see that You are glad hearted. Is that a smile I see on Your face? But Jesus there are all these guests, all these decorations, all this planning and I see You continually looking at Me. Why me? You're the uncreated King who oversees all things created and uncreated and You are looking at me. You seem to feel so deeply about me, even in the presence of billions of others. You're a *glad heart happy* God!! This is stunning. I am just a peasant farm girl from the field, who was covered with shame and guilt and You're staring at me and rejoicing over me as Your bride!

Supporting Scriptures

Hosea 2:16 *And it shall be, in that day, says the Lord, that you will call me, My Husband, and no longer call Me My Master.*

Isaiah 62:4-5 *You shall no longer be termed forsaken, nor shall your land and more be treated desolate; but you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*

Commentary

All of creation is headed to a narrow ending where all the wedding guests (those who have accepted Jesus) throughout world history will sit before Him at a wedding feast. All things are coming down to a wedding. What's so powerful about this wedding is that, though it will be in a palace that no words on earth can describe, though Jesus will be the center of it, though the entire earth will have been overturned by the judgments of God as Jesus was gathering His bride, and though the preparations of the wedding will have taken thousands of years, the only thing Jesus is excited about is you and me.

Though He will love the dress that His bride will wear, He only wants you and me. Though the bride will smell like the Savior, having made herself ready, He only wants you and me. Though a hundred million, and more, angels will be shouting, none of it will move Him like having you and me in His presence.

The day of His wedding is not so much about the wedding itself, but the bride. This wedding isn't the gladness of His heart; the bride is the gladness of His heart. He is rejoicing over the bride just as He said He would in **Isaiah 62:4**. He is shouting and over-the-top happy that you are with Him forever.

Jesus is planning a wedding with guests, food, a physical location but none of this moves Him like the voluntary love of His bride. Don't be like the other son in **Luke 15** who missed out on the celebration because He thought that working for God equated with loving God. It doesn't. But we do work with God because of love, but not for love. This wedding is about the love of God for us and you must not fight this love right now. This is the gladness of His heart! It's about you, not just others, not just the body of Christ, not just the nations, but individuals. Jesus isn't going to hand out rewards in groups, but to individuals.



CHAPTER 3

Rejoice today that God is rejoicing over you. Don't let the internal lies say that you could never be worthy to attend the wedding with the Lamb. Stop for a moment, take a minute and ponder the reality that God is rejoicing over you. You sing about it, you think about it, you have heard it, but now allow it to change you so that you become it! God is rejoicing over you today!



CHAPTER 4

Day 1

Song of Songs 4:1 *Behold, you are fair, My love. Behold, you are fair! You have doves' eyes behind your veil. Your hair is like a flock of goats going down from Mount Gilead.*

(God speaking) I love you My bride! You are My love. You are My fair one. I know that you don't feel this way right now, but I'm not speaking to where you currently are externally, but what's going on internally. I see your heart says your God, I see the longing within you to love me and I define you by that, not your outward attainment. You will eventually go externally where you are looking and longing internally and that's why I define you by your reach for Me on the inside, not what you have attained on the outside. I love you, you are fair, you are reaching for Me! You have a single vision for Me and Me alone, and I love that. And the dedication of your life to Me is stunning. You really are Mine and I can tell that by your internal passion for Me. The passion in your heart for Me and what you're reaching is hidden behind a veil, you really are for Me and Me alone!

Supporting Scriptures

Philippians 3:12 *Not that I have already attained, or am perfected, but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me.*

Proverbs 4:25-27 *Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left; but remove your foot from evil.*

Judges 6:12-13 *And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, the Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor. Gideon said to him, O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has this happened to us? And where are all the miracles which our fathers told us about, saying did not the Lord bring us from Egypt. But now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered into the hands of the Midianites.*

Commentary

In this portion of scripture the Lord is speaking over the young bride who is still immature but is in the process of becoming mature. What is so powerful about this is that God doesn't define the young bride by where she is at externally, but what she is reaching for internally.

Only God has the ability to see what we are longing for on the inside and calls us by that. When the Lord anointed David through Samuel, the prophet said that though none of the noble sons were selected, this young shepherd boy was, because God doesn't look at the outside, but on the heart. God knew that David had a meaningless job in the natural world, but David didn't know that. David took what he did very seriously, and because David was willing to take serious the small things, God came to him and made him the king of a great nation, and established a root system that Jesus Christ would come from.

This young bride hasn't done anything yet, other than get up and start moving in the start of Chapter Three, but because she is reaching for Him on the inside, though she is still struggling on the outside, He defines her as having a single vision, with stunning faithfulness.

Dove's mate only one time in their lives. If their mate dies, they won't mate again. And they don't have peripheral vision, so they have to move their entire neck to look side to side. Though this young bride is still immature, God says that she has a single eye for Him in her heart.



CHAPTER 4

Take some time right now, right where you are at, to let God come and enjoy you. Don't fight against Him. Allow Him to define you by what is alive on the inside not where you are, externally, today. You might have lost your job, all your money, all your friends and your house, but God isn't defining you by any of that, just the longing in your heart. He loves you and even enjoys you while you are in the process, not just when you get there.



CHAPTER 4

Day 2

Song of Songs 4:2-3a *Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep, which have come up from the washing, every one of them bears twins, and none is barren among them. Your lips are like a strand of scarlet, and your mouth is lovely.*

(God speaking) Oh My dove, how lovely are you. I love your ability to chew up the Word of God and devour that which I set before you in the morning. Your ability to eat the meat of My Word is beginning to produce life among you. That which you are eating is giving life to other things. Your barrenness has been taken away because of your passion to eat My word. Because you are eating My word, your speech is turning around, and is starting to sound like redemption; it is seasoned with grace for those who hear you. I so enjoy you in this process of becoming My partner. I don't say this because of pity; truly My heart is overjoyed because of the weak yes within. I would never crush that weak yes in your heart, it moves me closer!

Supporting Scriptures

Hebrews 5:12-14 *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

James 4:5-6 *Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.*

Commentary

Through **Song 4:1-5** God continues to speak words of affirmation over her. He is calling out what He sees alive on the inside of her. He actually is going to give her a total of eight qualities that He sees within her and He is going to work to call them out.

He tells her here about her teeth and her lips and mouth. The power of the *teeth* is that it speaks of the ability to chew up the Word of God. Teeth mostly speak in the Bible about being able to chew up the deep things of God. She is still weak, hasn't done much with Him, but He sees that she has a passion to eat the Word of God and He defines her by that.

He says to her that what she is eating is actually starting to produce life within her and it is breaking both her spiritual and physical barrenness. And then He says to her that her lips and mouth are lovely. What she is eating is not only making things live within her, but it's also causing her to change the way she speaks and what she does with her words.

We sin mostly by our words, and James tells us that the tongue is the hardest thing for us to tame. Be encouraged that her story is your story. Maybe you are not reading the Bible and other books like you want to be, don't let that hold you back from reading right now. Developing teeth that eat the Word of God takes time. Talk to Jesus about giving you an increased passion for the Word of God. Start talking to Him right now. Ask Him to speak to you and help you cry out for more of Him and more of His Word!



CHAPTER 4

Day 3

Song of Songs 4:3b

Your temples behind your veil are like a piece of pomegranate.

(God speaking) Oh My love, My perfect one, I can see the smile that is breaking forth on your face. I can see that your cheeks are starting to show forth the emotion that is welling up deep within your heart. I knew that when you saw Me, the *glad heart happy God*, it would make you happy in due time. Don't worry about the veil of shame and guilt that you are still wearing, I see beyond all that. You have defined yourself too many times by what you feel and not by what I say about you. I am telling you now, My love, I see the passion and youthful zeal that's emerging deep within you for Me! Oh, how I enjoy you while you are growing and maturing.

Supporting Scripture

Nehemiah 8:10 ...*the joy of the Lord is my strength.*

Commentary

That word *temples* is most often translated as the word *cheeks*. The metaphor here is that God is starting to be able to see that her cheeks are showing the happy emotions that are arising from deep inside her for Him. Often times you can see, either in someone's eye or in their cheeks, what they are really feeling.

If all of a person's face is covered up except their eyes and their cheeks, you can tell if they are smiling, happy or really mad. You don't need to see everything, or even hear their voice, but you can see it on their cheeks. The piece of pomegranate is being used because of its redness and the many seeds that are within that can also be eaten. He is saying to her that He can see the youthful zeal, the passion and the deep enjoyment arising on her face and it's full of redness and sweet like fruit.

What's even more powerful than all this imagery is that God sees beyond this external veil that she is still wearing and is calling out those things deep within her. She doesn't feel any of these things right now, but He is continually calling them out of her, and in due time they will become her own. He is making what's alive on the inside, become hers on the outside.

What are some areas deep within you that you feel God calling out? I challenge you; don't shrink back from what He says about you. Take these words that He just spoke over the young bride and speak them over yourself. These words belong to you. The Holy Spirit inspired them thousands of years ago, so that today, you could look at them and make them your own! Don't shrink back from God's evaluation of you.



CHAPTER 4

Day 4

Song of Songs 4:4 *Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an armory, on which hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.*

(God speaking) How I love to see you following Me wherever I go. I know that you haven't traveled too far with Me yet, but I can see your passion to be wholly Mine, to listen to Me, to follow Me and to trust Me where I lead you. It is so hard, leading so many horses that are not broken and are unwilling for Me to guide them. I have to speak, to inflict pain and constantly work to get them to trust Me and My leadership. I love your trust of Me as I am leading you into great places for both you and Me.

Supporting Scriptures

Philippians 2:13 *For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

Matthew 5:5 *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

Commentary

When God says to her that her neck is like the tower of David, He is speaking about her will. In the Bible the neck usually speaks of the will which explains why we say some people have a stiff neck, meaning they won't listen and they do their own thing. The tower of David was a tall tower that stood within Jerusalem and it helped them to see if an enemy was coming, before it got too close to the city.

What we have to remember is that, as of now, this young bride really hasn't done anything other than get up off her bed and chase the One she loved, after she told Him to depart in **Song of Songs 2**. So why is He saying this to her in such a young state that her will is broken and she is trusting Him? Because He sees the cry of her heart to belong fully to Him and to trust Him, so He is defining her by just that, her cry.

He is calling her out prophetically because He knows what she is longing for internally. In **Matthew 5** Jesus says *blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*. That word meek means strength under control. This gives the impression of a stallion, with so much power, force and raw strength, but it's totally at the will of the master not the horse.

Many Christians are like wild horses that look really good, but they run wild. Nobody can control them, nobody can ride them, so they remain unbreakable and unusable by both Church leadership and God Himself. If you take a moment right now and feel the front of your neck, do you feel rope burn from God pulling on the reins of your life? If so, repent. Apologize to Him.

Many of you have felt the pain of God trying to tame you, and you have asked Him to leave you alone, but He is confused about it. The reason He is taming you, is because you asked Him with the deep cry of your heart. So He responded just like He does with the young bride, and then you asked Him to stop. Take time right now to talk to Him about your will. Tell Him you want to follow Him wherever He will lead you. You will listen to those in authority. You will allow others to shape you and mold you and that you want to be a horse that's not wild, but tame.



CHAPTER 4

Day 5

Song of Songs 4:5

Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of Gazelle, which feed among the lilies.

(God speaking) How I love to watch your passion for both the entry level truths about My Kingdom and your passion for the depths of My heart. I will continue to fill you with both the milk and the meat of My Words. You are growing so well. I can see that entry level truths and the depths of My heart are filling you in an equally right way. It is like twins that are being produced within you. You will offer so much to those new ones while still being able to feed the older ones. Oh, continue to search out My heart and My passion for you and others. I will give you as much as your heart longs for.

Supporting Scriptures

James 2:17-18 *Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, you have faith and I have works. Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works.*

Commentary

Often times as Christians and specifically Church leadership we either find ourselves being a milk or meat ministry. Now when I say milk I am talking about the entry level truths about Christianity and the Kingdom of God, just as an infant starts out with liquid food and then moves onto solid food. When I talk about meat, I am talking about the deep things of God's heart that require a little more searching on our part. Now for us men it is hard to relate with the imagery that God uses right here, but if we could get past the discomfort, we can glean something really profound.

God was telling her that internally she was growing at an equally steady rate with both entry level truths and the deep things. Her breasts, so to speak, weren't lopsided, but both growing together. Faith and love are working together to produce the life of God in her. The same thing is true for us. We want to be people that are growing in both the milk and the meat of God's word.

The reason for this is for those we come in contact with; we will be able to feed both the young ones and the old ones. The truth is, once you drink the milk and then taste the meat, you become passionate about searching out the depth of God's heart. To go deep in God is our lot in this life. Just like the early Church, we never go so far that we can't relate with the young ones, but we also don't stay there. When so much has been offered it's a shame to stay at a distance from the all-consuming fire of God's heart. It's ours for the taking, and He has given an invitation to search it out. So take Him up on it.

Where are you at today in your walk with God? Maybe you're just getting started and you're beginning to taste and see that God is good. Keep going after Him. But maybe you have been a Christian for a long time, and your passion is slowly dying. Talk to Jesus about it today. Ask Him for more hunger. Maybe one side of you has grown, but the other side is getting smaller. Talk to Jesus about it. Maybe you tasted that God was good and then stopped going after Him in a deep way. Return to Your first love today and chase Him in the way that He is chasing you.



CHAPTER 4

Day 6

Song of Songs 4:6

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 bride speaking) God, I am totally and utterly blown away at what you have just said to me through the past five verses. You just spoke over me eight virtues that I do not possess externally, but that I am longing for internally. You really do know me. You really did create me and fashion me. I am so deeply moved. How do You know so much about me and my strengths and my weakness. Truly You are God! Because of what You have said about me, because of the fact that no-body has ever spoke to me like You have, I will follow You. Last time I told You that I was going to stay where I was, and when all my struggles faded away and the day dawned I would rise up and follow, but now I say to you that I will rise up and follow right now, until all the shadow areas of my life are gone. I won't sit here in the secret place waiting for You to free me from my struggles, I will rise up and allow You to deliver me as I am walking with You up the mountains.

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 9:23 *Then He said to them all, if anyone desires to come after Me, let Him deny Himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*

John 6:68 *But Simon Peter answered Him Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

Commentary

This passage for the bride is a great turning point in the entire Song. It's not THE complete turning point, because that takes place in **Song of Songs 4:16**, but this is nearly as monumental. Remember this is the second time the bride has said until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

The first time she said it was in **Song of Songs 2:17** and she was telling Him to go on without her, because she was going to stay there and work through her issues on her own and then follow. But this time, she says that she will rise up and follow Him until. Why the change in heart? Why the increased passion to follow the Lamb right now?

It was because of what He said to her in **Song of Songs 4:1-5**. Within those five verses He told her about eight virtues that she was reaching for internally, although she hadn't obtained any of them externally. Remember, He was addressing her based on the reach of her heart, not where she was externally in life. Because God was able to speak to her heart not her circumstances, it caused her to come alive on the inside. She just told Him, I will follow right now. Today I am rising up and I will go with You where you called me in **Song of Songs 2:13**, up to the mountains.

She also tells God that she will go *her* way. There is a way that God has laid out for each person and you can't go somebody else's way. It has been said that *you should be yourself, everyone else is taken*. You can't go the way of others, only the way that God has made for you. And the same thing happens to us when we hear the voice of God speaking over us how He feels about us. For me personally, this is what caused my heart to come alive more than any other thing. When I heard God speaking to me about what He felt about me and what He had planned for me, I was ruined for anything less!



CHAPTER 4

Look back at the last four daily devotionals and take those words that Jesus spoke to the bride, and make them your own. If you don't take what the Bible says and say it back to God and speak it over yourself, you will never deconstruct the internal lies that you have built. Speak over your life what God says about you and watch your heart come alive. You will rise up and follow this One who knows you better than you know yourself.



CHAPTER 4

Day 7

Song of Songs 4:7

You are all fair My love, and there is no spot in you.

(God speaking) I am overcome with emotion towards you because you said *yes* to Me. Your small *yes* moves My heart in a way that you will never understand. Oh, My love, I knew that when you heard what I see deep within you, it would cause you to rise up and follow Me. We have an amazing future together, though it will have many highs and many lows, I will be with you until the end of this age. You are perfect, you are spotless before Me and I am rejoicing over your trust of Me to lead you. **(Bride speaking)** But God, I have only said *yes*. I haven't even starting moving, I have just said *yes* to You. **(God speaking)** But there is so much passion behind your *yes*. I know you feel like it's a weak *yes*, but I see you differently than you see yourself. I know what I have placed in you and the plans I have for you. Your weak *yes* moves my heart.

Supporting Scriptures

2 Corinthians 11:2 *For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

Revelation 19:7 *Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.*

Commentary

In one of Misty Edwards' songs she has a line that says *no matter how small my all may be, I'm giving You all there is to me*. We have no idea how much our small *all*, or our small *yes* means to Jesus. Remember that this stunning response of Jesus' emotions towards her has come from her just saying *yes* to going with Him. She actually hasn't moved anywhere, just said *yes*.

The power of this Song is that it continually breaks down the lie that God enjoys us only when we attain total freedom in all areas and read our Bible every day, while fasting, praying and telling everyone about Jesus all the time. This is a lie that the Church often places upon the hearts of God's people. We say that God will enjoy you when you become free.

What's happening here is the complete opposite. God is telling her that she still has a veil over her of guilt and shame, she is still weak, struggling to trust Him, but she is willing and this is what overcomes Him. God enjoys us when we are in process; not just when we arrive at the destination. Many of us would live our entire Christian lives reaching for the destination in hopes of obtaining God's delight over us, when He has been enjoying us throughout the entire struggle of reaching for Him and the destination.

Don't wait till you stand before Him face to face to allow Him to enjoy you, do it right now! Today, there are many broken areas in your life, many things that aren't complete within you. But you're repenting of what you know is sin and reaching for Him; He is enjoying you like a husband enjoys his wife. If you have called the sin in your life *sin*, and not excused it, then He is delighting over you. If you have sin areas that are unconfessed, take time right now to confess them and receive His enjoyment of you while you are becoming free, not just when you are freed. Her story is your story!



CHAPTER 4

Day 8

Song of Songs 4:8 *Come with Me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the Lion's dens, from the mountains of leopards.*

(God speaking) You are coming to the mountaintop, a place of warfare with the enemy. You are walking in obedience, even when it's uncomfortable and challenging. You are becoming victorious. You are becoming an overcoming bride that will be stopped by nothing. Even the gates of hell are not going to prevail against you. Shame is losing its grip upon you. You have done well My love, my fair one!

Supporting Scriptures

Ephesians 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

Luke 23:31 *For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry.*

James 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

Commentary

There was a reason the young bride said *no* to His first request to arise and go up the mountain in **Song of Songs Chapter 2**. We see the reason stated here in this very verse. It was because the mountain top is filled with lions' dens and leopards. The mountain in the Song of Songs represents the high places in God in the area of public ministry or our public life before others.

Some Pastors have said they have been hurt by what they call *sheep bite*. Not to mention the wolves and demonic attack that come upon all those that step out into the public place serving Jesus. There is great pain associated with ascending the mountain of our public life. It's one thing to live in the secret place, but it's a completely different thing to climb the mountain of maintaining both our secret life and our public life in God.

God never wants us to always stay in the secret place, but to also climb the mountains of public ministry with Him. Remember, God came to seek and save the lost, so He is in the public place just as much as He is in the private place. We will struggle to ascend the mountain with God to fight the public fight of faith, if we fail to hear how God feels about us and that He will go with us wherever we go. Just like the bride heard the voice of God speaking words of affirmation over her, we also must hear what she heard in order to follow in her footsteps and ascend the mountain with God.

Jesus has received a mandate from His Father to disciple the nations and He is looking for an equally yoked bride to do that with. We pray in the secret place and we partner with Him in public ministry. Into what areas is God calling you that are scary, uncomfortable and new? What lions and leopards is He asking you to face in order to move higher in Him and higher in your calling?

After you have heard His voice of delight over you, respond by ascending the mountain and trusting Him to defend you against all the attacks of the evil one. Listen, respond and start ascending. Nearly all the things that I have done in full time ministry have been scary and frightful, but as I have listened to His voice of affirmation, responded and started ascending into the area that He has called me, I have been strengthened, protected and empowered to not only grow personally, but to also help others. Don't delay, ascend now!



CHAPTER 4

Day 9

Song of Songs 4:9a *You have ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse,
you have ravished My heart...*

(God speaking) You are amazing! You have conquered My heart! All the powers of hell don't move Me. The angels don't move Me. My creation and the beauty of what I have made doesn't move Me, but your willingness to follow Me has left Me undone. You have ravished My heart my sister, My spouse. I will say it again, you have ravished My heart! I know you like a brother knows his sister, all the good and all the bad, but I still choose you to marry! I will marry you forever! Oh, how I love you My bride! You're becoming wholly Mine! I am a jealous husband who refuses to share you with anyone. You have no idea how you make Me feel when I see your commitment to trust My leadership over your life.

Supporting Scriptures

Psalms 139:17 *How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You.*

John 15:9 *As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.*

Commentary

This is one of the most profound passages in the entire Bible. Though at first glance you might not think that much of it, but when you bring into context what is taking place in the life of the bride, you will become blown away. Remember, the bride hasn't actually moved anywhere yet, she has only said *yes* to Him. She still hasn't done anything yet, and she won't until **Song of Songs 5** when she endures the greatest twofold test of her life. But right now she has said *yes* to Him. She has said to Him that she will follow Him *now*!

Look at what her simple, weak *yes* produced in the heart of God. Remember we are looking at this Song as an allegory of Jesus and His bride. That would mean that the Second Person of Trinity, Jesus Christ says that He is ravished by her decision to follow Him. That word ravished means undone, overcome with strong emotion, or held spell-bound. Did you know that your weak *yes* holds the uncreated God spell-bound? Did you know that it overcomes His heart and leaves him undone?

What's more than this? He calls her His *sister* and His *spouse*. This passage used to bother me, as I was trying to understand how I can be His sister and His spouse. It sounded a little strange to me, to be honest with you. But when I began to mine that statement, I was blown away at what I found. I have a sister and I know everything about her. I could honor her publicly and I could humiliate her publicly, because I know all her weaknesses and her strengths. I have lived in the same house with her for over nineteen years. What Jesus is saying is this, *Patrick, I know you in the way that a brother knows his sister. I know all your weaknesses, and all your strengths, but I still choose you as My wife.* OMG(osh)!

One of our great fears is that if people knew the real *me* they wouldn't like me. But not so with God. He knows everything, all my thoughts, actions and passions and He says that He will never deny a marriage between us. In Hebrews He says that He is not ashamed to call me His brethren.

Now, for you today, what are the implications upon your heart if this is true? What does that mean in light of how you live your life before God and others now? Listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you right now. God has been trying to tell you this since you gave your life to Him, but you continually fight it. Stop fighting it and receive it today, right now! God would say to you, *I know you and I love you more than you understand!*



CHAPTER 4

Day 10

Song of Songs 4:9b ...with one look of your eyes, with one link of your necklace.

(God speaking) I know that you think I will love you when you become rich and famous and when the thing that you're putting your hand to right now grows into something that's huge and touches the nations, but I tell you that's not true at all. I see that you have put your all into that small *yes* and it moves My heart more than you will ever know. I don't want you only when you are able to look at Me for hours on end; I want you right now when it's only a glance toward Me. I know that your glance will soon turn into a gaze when you see My beauty. It's not the smallness that makes me move, it's that you put your *all into the small* and that's what I love. Though you are wearing a large necklace with many links, I am moved with passion towards you with just one of those many links. Don't shrink back from loving Me right here and now with where you are, with what you're able to give. Continue to give Me your heart and keep doing the small things for others because it deeply moves Me, though you may feel nothing.

Supporting Scripture

Matthew 10:42 *And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.*

Zechariah 4:10 *For who has despised the day of small things?*

Isaiah 28:10 *For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little.*

Commentary

It's difficult when many of us have grown up under heavy western preaching that tells us God will love us most when we become totally free from what we are struggling with. I have often heard messages that say, *God will love you when you are totally free from what you struggle with, so keep fighting until you're free.* This message does much damage to the human heart.

What we must see is a God who not only loves us when we become totally free, but also along the way, throughout the entire journey of becoming free. Many of us struggle to build a deep prayer life with God because we don't think we pray long enough, fast long enough, read enough or worship long enough. But this passage tells us that God is deeply moved with just one glance of our eyes.

It's not that He's moved only when we are able to stare at Him all day, but He is moved when we just glance His way; when we look His way with our eyes. It's not just the sustained gaze that He is looking for or that moves Him, but it's the glance that leaves Him undone.

And then He goes on to say that He is also moved with just one link of our necklace. The links within the necklace are the little things that we do in the grace of God for both God and others. He really watches all the little things that we do; they move His heart more than we will ever know on earth. Jesus doesn't overlook the little things that we do for Him; in fact He tells us here that with just one link, His entire being is moved.

We often have this feeling that we have to grow something really big before God is pleased with us, but this is a total lie from the evil one. God is moved when we do little things for Him and others because of just that. We are doing it for Him. Take courage today that what you are doing, if you're doing it for Him, regardless of what *it* is. You might be raising kids, working a job, going to school, playing an instrument or taking out the trash. Don't discount the little things of your life, but rather remember that when you do it for Him and for others, His heart is undone.



CHAPTER 4

Day 11

Song of Songs 4:10 *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?*

(God speaking) I know that you originally said to Me that My love was better than wine, but now I say to you, that your love is better than wine. I am the Author and Finisher of your faith and I love how our love is growing and will continue to grow throughout the ages of this life and the life which is yet to come. The fragrance that was within you is now starting to be released through our life and your commitment to me. That which I had hidden away deep within you is beginning to arise and release My fragrance among those around you. I will say it again that you are My spouse and I am your Husband. This will never change and I will continue to declare it over you so that you know without a shadow of a doubt.

Supporting Scriptures

Corinthians 2:14 *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.*

Galatians 5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.*

Commentary

I have heard many times that so and so has an unusual anointing on their life. This always comes as such a strange statement to me because what most people are talking about is what they are doing in ministry. I think that it's important to do both *intimacy* with Jesus and *ministry* with Jesus; but I would rather the external ministry that I do with Jesus flow from the internal intimacy that I have with Him, rather than just being known for something on my life.

My question is what's inside you? Jesus said that it wasn't what came into a man from the external that defiled him, but what came out of the inside or the internal that defiles a man. The young bride who is growing in spiritual maturity has been touched deeply on the inside and God is now telling her that what's within her is starting to emerge among those around her and it's a pleasant fragrance.

The fire of God has been given to us internally. When we begin to burn internally we start to release a fragrance externally which other people smell. This is what Paul is saying when he says that we are to God the fragrance of Christ to those who are perishing and those who are being saved. Our goal isn't to just be fragrance or just have a fire, but to have a fire that leads to a fragrance.

We want to grow in love for God so that we don't only have an anointing upon our lives, but so that we have an anointing within our lives. People that are close to you should recognize that God lives within you because of the way that you act when you're around them. This is worship to God. If you come to Church on Sunday, or to prayer meeting or to life group and people only know you're a Christian then, what good is the life of Christ within you around those that don't know Jesus. You want not only a fire to burn when within the building with other Christians, but also around those that don't know who Jesus is.

My challenge to you today is to talk to the Holy Spirit about that internal fire within you becoming a fragrance that's released through you to the others that you're around. Stoke the fire and fan the fragrance, not one or the other, but both.



CHAPTER 4

Day 12

Song of Songs 4:11 *Your lips, O My spouse, drip as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under your tongue, and the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.*

(God speaking) I love your speech and what you say to Me. Deep within, you possess the ability to feed the young ones and the older ones. There is great substance in the things that you say, but it's not so deep that the young ones can't understand you. I know how difficult it is to tame the tongue, that's why I said to you that it's been set on fire by hell itself. But oh, how hard you have worked on it and the fruit is starting to show. You are carrying on with you the fragrance from the mountains that you have been walking on with me. As you said *yes* to Me and climbed the mountain, you were ascending into the high places with Me and your life is the clear fruit of that expedition.

Supporting Scriptures

Hebrews 5:12-14 *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

James 3:5-6 *Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.*

Commentary

This passage has become a deep favorite of mine in this entire eight-chapter love song. Henri Nouwen said that one of the only ways humans can remain sin free is if we hold our speech and don't say anything at all. For a guy who talks a lot that's a scary reality. We know that honey is a weightier substance than milk. Here honey would be used as something to resemble the meat of God's Word. And milk would also resemble God's word.

Now the difference between the two is that meat is for the mature and growing and milk is for the newborn and the immature yet growing. Now, it's interesting when we look at the words that Jesus uses over this young bride because He tells us that she possesses both the milk of His word and the honey of His word. But where He places both the milk and the honey of His word in her mouth is just as important as the reality that she *possesses* them both. He says that they are under her tongue.

We have already looked at that passage in James where James tells us that the tongue is the most difficult thing to tame for humanity. So when we put all of that together what is Jesus saying to her? He is telling her that she possesses an ability to feed the young growing ones in the Lord, or those that don't yet even know God, but she also possesses the ability to feed the older ones or the more mature ones in the Lord. But all of that knowledge is under her tongue. In other words, she's not a babbling brook of endless words and knowledge that flows like an ungoverned damn, but rather a well governed damn that releases water at the right times to the right people in the right places.

The goal of Christians is to also have the same knowledge of God and be able to keep it at bay when need be. Henri Nouwen also likens our hearts to steam baths. If you are continually opening up the door to the steam bath, or even leave it open, it will lose its steam and soon be nothing more than a wet room, void of steam and the ability to heal the bodies of others. Well the same thing is true if we are continually spouting off what we know to others in a way that damages people as they are overwhelmed with our vast knowledge. Nobody likes a know it all. Make the decision that you will have a secret life with God in the way that you talk to others and speak with those around you. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you with your speech so that you might help others, not harm them.



CHAPTER 4

Day 13

Song of Songs 4:12-15 *A garden enclosed is My sister, My spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. 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—a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.*

(God speaking) Oh My love, you are the place that I go when I want something that I can't find anywhere else. You are a secret garden, a private and pure fountain of love to Me. There is a reservoir of love in your garden that has been stored up as a result of the times that you have spent with Me and drank from My love for you. I love that you don't share this secret place with anyone else, it's only for Me. You have no other gods before Me and your heart is really Mine. The vast seed bag of love that's within you is beyond what you could ever image. I have come to you and I will continually come to you.

Supporting Scriptures

James 4:8 *Draw near to God and God will draw near to you.*

James 4:5 *Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously. But He gives more grace.*

Commentary

Gardens in history and throughout the world in other present cultures mean much more than they do for the present vast majority of westerners. In history, Kings had a garden belonging only to them. This garden wasn't shared with anyone else, or the city, or even others within his kingdom, only for him.

This meant that animals weren't bathing in the water, people weren't bathing in the water and trash didn't pollute the water. This garden would have been manicured by a team of people that kept this garden in pristine shape. This garden would have contained no weeds and a stream of fresh water flowing into it to water everything, keeping it for him to enjoy when he wanted.

Now when we apply this scripture to our lives through a spiritual application we can see that God is speaking over the hearts of His people who have created a sacred space within their lives for God alone. This garden that we have is actually our heart. Our heart is referred to as a garden that we must tend in order for the right things to grow. Within this garden we don't want to share its affections with other lovers, much less other gods. The power of a pomegranate is that it's a fruit with edible seeds. It, by the way, is full of seeds.

What does that mean in connection to our hearts being a garden for God? It means that within our hearts God sees the many seeds that will bear fruit in the lives of others in due time. We possess not only just one seed, but millions of seeds that God has called us to cultivate within our garden and then share those seeds in the right time with others as we give to them what's been given to us.

Who are you sharing your garden with today? Who has access into the secret place of your heart? Friends? Television? Facebook? Boyfriends? Girl friends? Your children? Your heart, the garden of the secret place of your heart is to belong solely to God and God alone. That doesn't mean that we don't share our lives with others, but we must have a place that is for God alone! Make your heart His secret garden and invite Him into to it today.



CHAPTER 4

Day 14

Song of Songs 4:16

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 bride speaking) You have said much about me, God, and you have declared Your great love for me even though all I have done is say *yes* to You. You have spoken so much over me in terms of how you feel about me and if it's all true, if You are to be trusted, then come what may, I want to be fully Yours. Come pressure, come blessing, come whatever must come in order for me to emerge as being fully Yours. You're not critical of who I am, you don't belittle the little I have to offer you, but rather you respond to the sound of my voice and you come. Come. I don't care what I have to go through to be fully Yours, I am willing to do it. You have declared who I am and how You view me and it's conquered me. I'm not holding back anymore, I am pressing in and abandoning all I am for all of You!

Supporting Scripture

Joel 2:11 *For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it?*

Revelation 6:17 *For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?*

Commentary

Often times I have heard in the Church this phrase *The greatest days of the Church are yet ahead*. I also believe this statement, but it's only a partial truth. The other half is this *the most difficult days are yet ahead of the Church*. It's not okay to only proclaim that the greatest days of the Church are yet ahead when in reality those great days are going to live alongside the darkest days of human history.

Life is changing and changing rapidly. The young bride has a clear understanding of this reality of good coupled with bad. The North winds were cold bitter winds and the south winds were warm refreshing winds. The bride understood that it will take both the bitter winds of life and the warm refreshing winds of life to produce in her what God was after. It was after she listened to Him speak over nearly all of Chapter Four that she rose up and responded to Him by saying, come whatever may come, I want to be fully Yours. For us to enter into the fullness of what God has for us we need both the hardship and the blessing. This is why we struggle so much with the half-truths set before people, telling them that life is only going to improve, without being honest and real, telling them that though some things will improve many things will grow worse.

It's so important that we gain an understanding of this reality because it's how God works. God knows the right amount of pressure in the right season to produce His life within us. What we must understand is that this is something that we ask Him for. Notice that the bride said, *Awake, O north wind*. It's important to note that the bride uses the word *O* twice and then caps her prayer with an exclamation point. She is passionate about her plea before God not passive. We must overcome our own apathy towards a deep life in God with great passion in our asking for Him to come. Growing in God will not only be filled with prosperity but also with great pressure. It will take both of those realities for you to become fully mature.



CHAPTER 5

Day 1

Song of Songs 5:1

I have come to My garden, My sister, My spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb, with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat O friends! Drink, yes, drink deeply O beloved ones.

(God speaking) I refuse to enter into your life without your permission. It must be voluntary love that comes from you to Me for it to truly be love. And upon your invitation I will come in and make My home with you. I declare over and over and over again, that you are Mine. I can hear in your prayers and in the deep longing of your heart that you want to be fully Mine, and I have come this day to grant your request. Upon your invitation I respond with a hearty *yes*. You are Mine, all Mine my love. I have come to you at the sound of your prayers and upon your request.

Supporting Scripture

John 11:41-42 *Father, I thank You that you hear Me, You always hear Me.*

Matthew 6:6 *But you, when you pray go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place, and your Father will reward you openly.*

Commentary

One of the most difficult things in maintaining a consistent life pursuing the deep things of God is that we often feel as if God doesn't hear us. Feeling that we are praying to a distant God does nothing but damage our hearts and cause great injury to our devotional life with Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

We must see a God who is really listening to us and is actually moved at the sound of our voice. If we don't see that God is listening to us we will shrink back in shame and condemnation as if God doesn't want us. This entire series is about breaking our agreement with the lies of the devil and our own selves that tell us God is distant, He doesn't care, or He angry with us.

This Song is chapter after chapter of frontal attack on the way that we view God and what God is like. The bride asks Him in **Song of Songs 4:16** for Him to come to her and the following verse He responds with a giant *yes*. When I say giant, I mean giant. Did you notice that nine times in just one verse God uses the word *Mine*? He says nine times, you're Mine, you're Mine, you're Mine, you're Mine, you're Mine, you're Mine, you're Mine, you're Mine, and you're Mine.

This kind of thing doesn't happen on accident when God mentions something like this so many times. What He is saying is that in as many times that you have passionately asked for Me to come to you and take over your life; I am willing to do it.

What does this mean for you? It means that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. God is for you today as much as He is for the young bride in the Song. He loves you in the same way that He loved her. Turn into His love and see a God today who is really listening to everything you're saying and longs to be with you.



CHAPTER 5

Day 2

Song of Songs 5:2

I sleep but my heart is awake; it's the voice of My Beloved!

(The bride speaking) Though I am resting in faith, my heart was wide awake when You came looking for me. I am learning the *rest of faith* while continuing to have a heart that burns with passion for You. I hear Your voice again, and it's surprising me like it did not too long ago when You came looking for me to go with You upon the mountains. Jesus I am hungry for You and I want to be with You where you are and do what You are doing. Give me grace to respond to Your request of me when you come asking for me. I am resting in the rest of faith, but I am awake at the heart level.

Supporting Scripture

1st Samuel 3:1-10 --Read the story on your own.

Psalm 131:2 *Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child is my soul within me.*

Commentary

The rest of faith is different from slumbering in our Christianity. When Jesus came to the Church of Laodicea in **Revelation 3** His main complaint against them was that they were apathetic in their pursuit of both Him and others. That apathy is different from sleeping and resting in faith.

The *rest of faith* is that we are able to calm and quiet ourselves before the Lord so that our bodies aren't going crazy, while our hearts are coming more and more alive on the inside. She is saying that though she is resting, even lying down on her bed, her heart is still moving and longing for more of Him. Remember when Jesus said *if any of you are weary come unto Me and I will give you rest*? Jesus is speaking about the same rest that this young bride is currently in. It's a rest from striving, a rest from position and place, but a rest in which we know who we are and Who is overseeing our lives.

Now this doesn't mean that we check-out because of that knowledge at the heart level, but rather that we press into God more because other things are dialed down in such a way that we can connect with God at the heart level much better. In **Song of Songs 2**, Jesus came to young bride much like He is doing here and surprises her with the sound of His voice over her. This isn't going to be the last time He will do it and it certainly isn't the final time that He is going to do with us.

Jesus will time and time again come to us in a disruptive way, changing all the things that we have going on because He is always after the heart. Our relationship with Jesus is very fluid in the way that it comes and goes. The stirring of lovesickness is overwhelming her deep within and it's creating a powerful place of encounter.

What are some things in your life right now that keep you busy, that keep you distracted from slowing down so that your heart can become alive within you? What could you let go of that would free up more time for you to be with Jesus? Sometimes we have to let go of things we love dearly in order for our hearts to swell in love for the Lamb.



CHAPTER 5

Day 3

Song of Songs 5:2b *He knocks, saying, open for Me, My sister My love, My dove My perfect one...*

(God speaking) Behold My love; you look so good to Me in the grace that I have poured out upon you. I can see the labor of My soul in your vineyard. You look so good to Me and I know there is much more road to travel, but you are moving My way and it leaves Me undone in a way that you will never understand. I love you, I like you, I married you and I will never renege on My vows that I committed to you. But you must open up to Me from the inside out. I will not force My way into your heart. You must open up from the inside My love.

Supporting Scriptures

Revelation 3:20 *Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and sit with him and dine with him.*

Matthew 22:37-40 *Jesus said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it; you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets.*

Commentary

The Kingdom door of God swings on the hinge of voluntary love. God doesn't demand entrance into the hearts of humanity, but rather invites us to come out and open to door to Him. People say that the Holy Spirit isn't a Gentleman and then they use the story of Saul being knocked off his horse to demonstrate this. But even in this passage of scripture God doesn't demand Saul to bow before Him, but rather shows Saul His glory which was shining brighter than the noon day sun, but then leaves the response up to Saul to follow and ask, or harden his heart and refuse.

God only shows His glory to humanity and then He leaves the response up to us. Either we open for Him and see who He is, or we hear the knock and refuse. Bottom line: Jesus will use so many things to grab our attention but everything comes up short before He will violate our free will. Here, He is doing just that with the young bride.

He shows up knocking on her door and He is going to ask her to open for Him. He doesn't break down the door and force Himself upon her. He knocks and invites. Jesus understands that to violate our freewill means that we no longer have the choice to love Him or not, because it's being imposed upon us and then it's not really love. Jesus wants us to love Him because of who He is not because He makes us love Him.

Something else that's powerful about this encounter is that Jesus doesn't mind shouting from the rooftops in the middle of our journey what we will become in the end of our journey. The bride had not yet obtained all those things that He says over her, but she is moving that way, and this is how God motivates His people. He doesn't use condemnation, but rather affirmation because as we hear His affirmation over us, it causes our hearts to soar in Him and we rise up and chase Him in the way that He chases us.

What is God knocking on the door of your heart about today? What is the thing that the Holy Spirit has been speaking to you about your life that you haven't opened the door to Him? It might be something as simple as not allowing Him to love on you right where you're at. Maybe the Lord has been trying to come to you, knocking on your door declaring that He loves you, you look good to Him and He wants you, but because of shame you don't open that door and you leave Him out. Wherever you are at, whatever is going on, stop right now and turn to Him and open the door. The last thing you want is Him to stop knocking because you refuse to open.



CHAPTER 5

Day 4

Song of Songs 5:2c

For My head is covered with dew, My locks with the drops of the night...

(God speaking) Oh My love, I'm not only the resurrected Savior, but I am also the Savior who humbled Himself and was crushed by the wrath of My Father. I am coming to you right now in the garden experience of My life and I am calling out to you to come and be with Me in My suffering and rejection. I know that you have never seen this side of Me, but I am revealing Myself to you as the suffering servant. I am calling you into the same hardship that I endured that you might come forth from testing as pure gold. Don't shrink back; don't run away, but lean into Me in this coming season, though it be difficult.

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 22:43-43 *Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

Mark 10:37-38 *They said to Him, grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory. But Jesus said to them, You, You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?*

Commentary

This is a very different face of Christ that He is revealing to the young bride. He is calling her into the greatest twofold test of her life. Often times in our western affluent culture we remove ourselves from the sufferings of Christ, but this doesn't mean that He has changed. Leonard Ravenhill once said that *the early Church was married to poverty, prisons and persecutions. And the Church today is married to prosperity, personality and popularity.* There is much truth in this statement.

It's easy in our present American culture to remove ourselves from suffering, forgetting that this is actually what Jesus has called us into. Many people want to be happy in this age and holy in the age to come, when Jesus intends for Christians to be holy in this age and happy in the age to come. Holiness means that we will often go without some things that we feel like we might deserve. We are going to be mistreated, misunderstood and in all of this Jesus is watching our response for the development of Christ within us. Our goal in this age isn't to store up treasures and enjoy a nice comfortable life, but rather to grow in Christi-like maturity loving God and others deeply.

In this passage the Groom is likened to Christ in the garden praying through the night before His crucifixion. Jesus wasn't just doing this for them and for us; He was also giving us a pattern to what our lives would look like in the grace of God. We don't like to equate being in the grace of God with suffering and hardship, pain and perplexity but that's exactly what it is. The grace of God isn't about getting us out of hardship, but actually empowering us to go through it.

Christ is praying so hard that He is sweating great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane because He is charting a course that each of His disciples are going to walk through. He is the Forerunner for all things, including power, ministry growth, revelation, suffering, pain and severe trials. This is our inheritance that we would fill up within our bodies that which lacked in the sufferings of Christ. As Jesus is appearing in your life and inviting you into a place of hardship, sufferings, trials and tribulations, talk to Him about it before you start rebuking the devil. God is inviting you to abandon yourselves for His purposes and beyond fame, friendships, wealth and happiness there is a lonely road of hardship that every saint must walk.

What's pressing you right now? What is causing you to lose focus on Jesus right now in your storm? Do you see Christ in your boat as this storm is raging, or do you feel alone? Have you talked to Him about what He is doing in you right now, beyond what is going on around you?



CHAPTER 5

Day 5

Song of Songs 5:3

I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on again? I have washed my feet, how can I defile them?

(The bride speaking) God, I don't know what to do. I know that I love you and I feel like I have already come through much hardship and I can't image that You would want to take me back into more pressure. Remember how my mother's sons were angry with me and the shame that was brought upon me as I became overworked in many vineyards but I lost my own heart? Remember how I lost Your presence and had to search for You again until I found You? I am here resting in faith, though my heart is longing for more. I don't know how to get up and enter into this new pressure that You are calling me into. I have washed my feet from past rejection and I am enjoying this new place in You. I want to arise but I don't know how much more pressure I can take.

Supporting Scriptures

2 Corinthians 4:16 *For our light affliction which is but for a moment is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...*

2 Timothy 3:12 *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*

Commentary

This is really powerful imagery the bride is using to talk with the Lord about her present situation. Many theologians think that the bride was in the place of compromise here, but in reality she is far from that. She is saying to the Lord, who is knocking on her door, inviting her into the sufferings of Christ that she already feels like she has crossed that bridge once before and doesn't know or want to go back into that level of hardship and pressure. When she says that she has already taken off her robe, she is saying that she has already take off that garment of shame and pressure. How could she put it back on again? And when she says that she has already washed her feet she is saying *I have already walked through that past pressure. How could I go back into it?*

What's powerful about this reality is that God is never finished with His servants when it comes to placing us under pressure and hardship. Because God is our Creator, He knows us far better than we know ourselves. This means that God knows what He has placed within us and He is not willing for her to come up short of what He intends for her to be.

Now, pressure and hardship seem to be the perfect environment for the life of God to emerge within us and so He uses these external elements to produce the life of Christ in us and through us. The bride is a perfect picture of you and me, at every place within her journey. What is true for her is also true for us. This request is coming as such a surprise to her. She isn't expecting Him to come to her like this, at this time in her life, and that's why she is processing the request to open up to Him. She is processing out loud His request by asking herself, and Him, the questions about how she could put her robe back on since her feet were already washed. Can you hear her inquiry to Him about what she should do, along with her feeling like this isn't really something that she wants to do, or she even thinks that He would ask her?

Don't allow the surprise of God's voice and His request to cause you not to respond. The surprise of God's voice and His interruption of our lives is actually how He relates with us. If we knew what He was always going to do, we would say *no* much of the time. I encourage you to lean into His request of your life right now and ask Him about it, just like the bride did. We can become religious in our relationship with God and we fear talking to Him in a real way as if He might get mad at us.

Talk to Him. Let Him know how you're feeling. Let Him know what you think about this present struggle and the pressures that are on your life. And ask Him for help to respond to Him in the way that He knows you can.



CHAPTER 5

Day 6

Song of Songs 5:4

My beloved put His hand by the latch of the door, and my heart yearned for Him.

(God Speaking) My love, I hear in your voice the passion to follow Me though it's difficult. **(The bride speaking)** It is hard to understand what You might be asking me to do, but when you came near me and I felt Your hand upon my heart, I yearned with passion for You. I want You, and I already prayed that whatever wind comes, be it the north or the south, I am Yours. So be it. I want You and You alone and I am willing to do anything, to go anywhere and to say anything as long as I have You. Oh, how I love Your presence and the touch of Your hand.

Supporting Scriptures

1 John 4:10 *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation of our sins.*

John 20:27-29 *Then He said to Thomas, reach your fingers here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing. And Thomas answered and said to Him, My Lord and my God! Jesus said to him, Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.*

Commentary

When we see the hand of God coming upon someone or a situation, it's representative of His power or the enabling grace of God coming upon that person or situation to empower them. When Jesus asks something of us, He is also going to give us the power to do what He is asking.

Jesus was asking this young bride to enter into His sufferings while she was on earth and He wasn't going to send her through that on her own without Him. If He was asking her to do that, He will also empower her to endure all the way till the end. When the devil came to God and asked for Job in **Job 1-2** God was convinced that even though Job was going to go through hardship, Job would endure till the end and come out as gold. Now, did God know that Job would endure because Job was strong or because God was strong? Of course it was because of the strength of God. Just like Job and the young bride in this story, God is calling her out into a place of great difficulty but He is going to empower her to walk all the way through it.

It takes God to love God. We don't love God on our own. We love Jesus Christ and God the Father in heaven, because God the Holy Spirit lives in us on Earth and helps us love the first and second Persons of the Trinity. It's only because of God that we love God. The same thing is true when we walk through the pressures of life. We are able to endure because He helps us. Also, it's one thing to be moved by the preaching of the Word and to step out in faith, but it's a totally different thing to be moved by God Himself as He comes to us asking difficult things of us. She isn't being moved by just someone else's experience or word, but by God Himself.

Don't forget that the One who is asking you to go where He is and to do what He is doing is the One whose hands are pierced with nails and whose side is marked. Though the pressure of the hand that is upon you is making life uncomfortable, His hand is tender, loving and helpful. Receive from Jesus today because He is trustworthy and faithful.



CHAPTER 5

Day 7

Song of Songs 5:5

I arose to open for my Beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the lock.

(The bride speaking) What is happening to me? I arose for you instantly and I am now in the midst of a crisis. I know it was You, but what is this pain, pressure and hardship that I am feeling? I am covered with pain and hardship and all I have done is respond to your command for me to open the door. I did it, but where are You? I heard Your voice, I felt your touch and I smelled Your fragrance, but now You're nowhere to be found. I want You and will go anywhere to find You. You have never quit on me, so by Your grace upon me I won't quit on You. Suddenly I have found myself in a great difficulty.

Supporting Scriptures

Job Chapters 1 and 2 --Read the story on your own

James 1:2-3 *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.*

Commentary

Wow! What a storyline that God is writing both in our lives and in the life of the young bride. Some Christians are always looking for the God of anointed ministry, or the God of healing, or the God of prosperity, or the God of fertility, or the God of comfort, or the God of power, or the God of family problems. It's okay to ask God for help in all those areas and it's not a bad thing to talk to Him about each of those issues and realities. But there is something more than *stuff that God does for us*. That something more is the beautiful God who longs for intimate relationship with us.

Look how she addresses Him. She says I opened for my Beloved. She is saying that He is to her a Beloved and a Friend. Remember she's not looking for the God of anointed ministry, but her Beloved. She is looking for the One whom her soul loves. She's not looking for God so that He can do something for her, but because she loves Him, misses Him and longs to be with Him. She is also covered in Myrrh.

Myrrh was a very costly spice that was used for burial preparation and it was actually one of the spices included when they laid Christ in the tomb. Suddenly, as she arises, she finds herself in the middle of a crisis. As I have already noted, what's true for the bride, is also true for us. The crisis of pressure and hardship in the grace of God that comes our way isn't gradual, but suddenly. It's not like over time things happen, but it seems like *in one hour* they happen.

Don't be surprised at what's going on around you. Instead of being surprised and taken out of the game with confusion, lean into the Lord and ask Him what He is doing in you and how you can respond rightly to Him, to help Him in what He is doing. Using James' advice, *Count it all joy*. Now, you don't count the trouble as all joy, for the simple fact that it's trouble. You count the trouble all joy, because it is evidence that Christ is working in you. Allow Him to work in you what He wills, even if it catches you off guard.



CHAPTER 5

Day 8

Song of Songs 5:6 *I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought Him, but I could not find Him. I called Him but He gave no answer.*

(**The bride speaking**) My Beloved, I am up and have arisen but You are gone. Last time You asked me to arise and didn't respond right away and I lost You, but now I have risen at once and I don't see You anywhere. This is a new experience for me. Last time you called me I hesitated and lost Your presence, but this time I have arisen as soon as you spoke, and You are nowhere to be found. You are my Beloved, my only Beloved and I want to be where You are, and if that means that I follow you into the place of pain, then so be it.

Supporting Scriptures

Isaiah 55:8-9 *For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than Your thoughts.*

Psalms 22:1 *My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?*

Commentary

This is a brand new experience for her in the grace of God. She has never had something like this happen to her as she has been reaching for Him. In the close of Chapter Two He called out for her to come with Him up onto the mountains but she said *no*. At the start of Chapter Three she had lost His manifest presence and couldn't find Him anywhere, so as soon as she rose up off her bed and went looking for Him she found Him. This time He called for her in Chapter Five and she arose instantly and opened for Him, but she couldn't find Him anywhere. She heard Him, felt Him, and smelt Him, but she couldn't see Him.

The first time that God withdrew His manifest presence from her life it was to motivate her to move forward. Now, God is seeing whom she really belongs to, herself or Him. It will be in the midst of this beginning trial that she will be forged by fire and come forth as gold, but in the meantime she is presently entering into the greatest twofold test of her life.

There is a difference between losing God's manifest presence and losing God Himself and His oversight over our lives. When we become Christians the promise of God to us is that He would never leave us nor forsake us. God Himself leaving us, and losing His manifest presence are two entirely different things. Though His manifest presence be lifted off our lives for a little while, God Himself never leaves us, for He has made His home within our physical bodies. If you remember in **Song of Songs 1:4** there were two things that the young bride had asked for; to be drawn away in intimacy and to run with others and Him in ministry. She is about to lose both of those in a terribly painful way, and it begins by losing His manifest presence.

There have been times when I don't feel God around me or working in me and it causes me to question His love for me and to ask Him if I have done something wrong. This is a terrible mindset within me that must be broken down in order to fully partner with God in what He is doing within me.

If you are in a place where you don't feel God upon your life, you have asked if it is sin or compromise, and He hasn't said anything to you, then you need to talk to Him about what He is doing in you. Don't go into a place in your mind that you shouldn't. Don't agree with the lies of the enemy that God doesn't care. Continue to move forward reaching for God and trusting that He is working on your behalf. He hasn't left you, nor will He ever.



CHAPTER 5

Day 9

Song of Songs 5:7

The watchmen who go about the city found me. They struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me

(The bride speaking) When I rose up to find You as You called me, You were nowhere to be found. Then I went into the streets and to the Church leaders to see if they could help me and they wounded me. They struck me and took away my position from within the church. I am now without Your presence and I have no place of service within the Church body. I am confused, hurt, feeling rejected by others, but I won't stop looking for You. I will pay my vows that I made to You. I choose to believe that You are good and You will be faithful to me.

Supporting Scriptures

Hebrews 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

Psalms 116:18 *I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people.*

Genesis 32 --Read the story on your own.

Commentary

What is taking place within the bride is a direct reflection of two things. In **Song of Songs 1:4** the young maiden lays out her theology and vision statement before God. She says *the only two things that I want are intimacy and ministry*. Then in **Song of Songs 4:16** she prays to God that He would do whatever was needed to release the beauty of Christ through her life, through both blessing and pressure. God is now responding to her vision statement and her prayer in **Song of Songs 4:16**.

The call to go deep in God and become the garden of God has gone out to everyone, but not everyone responds to God in that fashion. Some are happy with only salvation and a little bit of service in the Church. Others make vows to God about going deep in Him and obtaining all that they can from Him. God is relentless in His pursuit of people for salvation but the call of wholeheartedness is only an invitation from Him. He doesn't force others to love Him wholeheartedly He only gives the invitation. That's why your life will look very different from other Christians around you.

When you become awakened in Christ, something comes alive deep within you that isn't satisfied with nominal Christianity but only with going deep in God. This doesn't happen for every Christian. Though God longs that every Christian would respond to His invitation, they simply don't.

So, as the young bride has responded to His invitation to go deep in Him, she is experiencing the greatest twofold crisis of her life in the midst of it. Right now she has lost His manifest presence and her position, which are the only two things that she has asked for. But what's so profound is this is actually where Jesus has led her right now. He is in the midst of her pressure as the Chief Shepherd of her soul.

Where do you go when you don't feel Him and you feel rejected by the Church? What kind of thoughts do you think? Do you assume you've done something wrong, or it's your fault? Do you see Jesus leading you through your crisis? Or do you see yourself all alone? Jesus has promised to be with you until the end of this age, so hang in there, He's working in you something you can't see right now. Trust Him.



CHAPTER 5

Day 10

Song of Songs 5:8

tell Him I am lovesick.

I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved, that you

(The bride speaking) Oh, fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, what is Jesus doing? Have you seen Him lately? Do you know where He is at? Have you seen His face or heard His voice? I love Him so much, and all I want is to be reconciled with Him, because I am having a hard time finding him right now. Make sure to tell Him if you see Him that I am not offended about His leadership and the judgments that He makes. Tell Him I am lovesick and I will search for Him like silver and gold. I won't stop until we are together again.

Supporting Scriptures

Psalm 23:1-4 *The Lord is my Shepherd...though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.*

John 11:4-6 *When Jesus heard that, He said, this sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that He was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.*

Commentary

At this point in the bride's journey she is in deep distress. She has now gone some time without the presence of the One whom her soul loves and her place of ministry in the Church has been taken from her. It would be one thing to just lose your position in the Church, but they struck her at the same time and deeply wounded her. The bride is reaching for Him, but she doesn't see Him reaching for her, even though He is.

Even though the daughters of Jerusalem within the Song are pictured as the lukewarm believers within the body of Christ, while the young bride would represent the more mature, fervent believers, she is asking them for help. At her place of desperation she doesn't have a preference for who can help her find Him whom her soul loves. She is just looking for Him, under every rock, over every mountain and in every valley.

The days ahead of the Church are going to be just as dark as they are going to be light. Sin is going to increase and so is wickedness, at the same time. The current situation that the bride is in is going to be duplicated in the body of Christ worldwide before Jesus returns. And just as the bride declares that she is lovesick so also will the global Church of Jesus Christ in that season that is yet awaiting us in world history.

Jesus is currently calling forth a new breed of Christians that are equipped to endure both tribulation and the Great Tribulation that is being led by the Lamb Himself. Jesus is about to return to the earth and as He does, everything is going to unbuckle within the earth and inside the Church. How you respond and what you cling onto in that day will determine if you emerge from that season as an over-comer or one that is overcome. It's time now to press into the Lamb so that we can build a personal history in God for the purpose of being strong ourselves and helping blaze a path for those that are following behind us.

It's my goal that another generation behind me won't have to dig through the pig-pen of misplaced Church theology to find out who God is and what He is doing in the earth. Every generation must look for God themselves, apart from other people's discoveries, but today there is such limited knowledge of God and how He relates with humans that we need understanding released.

Make it your goal to increase in your hunger of God. Don't stop short of searching for God because you can't find Him right now. Press into His heart, ask others and set aside lesser pearls to lay hold of the Pearl of Great Price.



CHAPTER 5

Day 11

Song of Songs 5:9

*What is your beloved more than another beloved,
O fairest among women? What is your beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us?*

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) We have watched you from the beginning of your journey, and your passion continues to increase for Him. When we look at your intentional pursuit of Christ, it makes us feel as if we have settled for so little when so much is being offered. Why would you continue to love this Man, more than all the other things the beloved's Church offers to you. He has taken His presence away from you, and you have lost your place of ministry. If we recall correctly, these two things are the only things you asked Him for. What is so different about Him?

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 6:33 *Seek first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you.*

Revelation 3:1 *And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.'*

Commentary

The western Church and much of the global Church have many different beloveds within their bodies but Jesus isn't the only beloved. If you placed Jesus on a scale of one to ten, with one the most important and ten the least important, Jesus would fit in there somewhere, but He would not be number one in priority. He might be number one in our words, but not in our actions.

The daughters of Jerusalem, within the Song, represent the lukewarm believers within the body of Christ. They are saved, but chose to stay on the outer fringes of what God is doing in the Earth. They are happy attending service, but draw back from abandoning their all to Him in the way that He gave them His all. In the start of the song the bride was around the daughters much, but as she progressed in Christ and began journeying along with Christ she was moving further and further away from them until now. In the bride's place of desperation to find the Lamb, she has asked them for help. She is willing to ask anyone for advice as to where she can find Him. But when she asks them for help, they respond to her question with another question. They say, what is your Lover among all the other lovers within the Church? What's so different about this Guy among all the other things the Church does? Why is He so special?

See, the Church has many beloveds but Jesus isn't her prize position. The Church wouldn't admit this outright, but the way we live our lives and how we invest our time and money would tell a different story. Little money, little time and little focus is spent on helping a community of believers grow in deep passion for Jesus Christ through prayer, fasting, worship, Bible reading, fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit and other spiritual disciplines.

It must have stunned the daughters of Jerusalem to hear the bride speak with such passion for a Man who seemingly deserted her. She is un-offended and undeterred in His distance from her. It's causing her to press in harder and stay the course of loving God through all seasons.



CHAPTER 5

Do you struggle to serve God through all seasons well? In the season of delay do you remain un-offended in His leadership over your life, or do you lash out against Him and others at what you think He should or shouldn't be doing? The challenge to you today is making Jesus the priority of your life. Not just for the day, but for the rest of your life. You only have one moment to press into Christ in faith, and this is your shot. Make it count. Live in faith and abandon yourself into the God who has abandoned Himself to you.



CHAPTER 5

Day 12

Song of Songs 5:10-16 *My beloved is white and ruddy, chief among ten thousand. His head is like the finest Gold; His locks are wavy and black as a raven...*

(The bride speaking) Oh young ones, oh those around, gather near and I will tell you about Him. I will declare in this place of pressure who He is and what He is like. Though I don't feel Him and though I have no place of ministry, I am not offended at His leadership. He's a Good Shepherd that faithfully watches over all those who entrust themselves to Him. He is brilliant in glory, and red in humanity. He stands head and shoulders above anyone else. His head, the place of decision making, is purest gold. His hair isn't dead and decaying, white and aging; it's black like a raven. It's not brittle and broken, it's wavy and strong. Oh, you must see this One who loves like nobody in world history.

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 9:27-36 --Read the story on your own.

Revelation 21:22-23 *But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is it light.*

Commentary

The bride is now responding to what she is being asked by the young, lukewarm believers around her. You can see that she isn't striving internally to come up with an answer for who He is but it is bubbling forth from her to them. This description of Christ is one of the most beautiful descriptions of Jesus in all of the Bible, and even more so when we look at the context from which it flows out of her heart towards Him. Remember, the bride is still in the midst of the greatest twofold crisis of her life. She still hasn't felt His presence and she has lost her place within the Church. Those two things happen to be the only things that she has asked Jesus for, and both have been taken by Him, yet this is what she has to say about Him.

The start of her description is the reference to the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ. She says that He is white and ruddy. That word white is the word brilliant, or bright in glory and that word ruddy is the word red, or flesh. Just like John said in Revelation 21 that there is no need for the sun or moon in the eternal city because the Lamb is its light, The Lamb, representing Jesus' humanity, and the bright light, representing His glory, in His divinity.

Then she speaks of His height and how He stands head and shoulders above the rest. There is nobody who holds a candle against Him. Remember from **Revelation 19** that He has a name written on Him that says *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*. This is who He is, and there is no one else like Him.

She says that His head is like the finest gold which is a reference to the way He makes decisions. The head is the place of authority and leadership. His decisions are to be trusted because He has passed through the fire and come out on the other side as a victorious Lamb. His leadership is perfect and the way that He makes decisions is beyond understanding.

And then one of my personal favorite descriptions is what she has to say about His hair. When you think of a raven you don't usually think immediately about Jesus Christ. But when you think about the reality



CHAPTER 5

that Jesus died when He was only thirty-three; it makes Him a young man at death. She is saying that Jesus' hair isn't white and yellowish like an aging person, but it is wavy, strong and healthy.

We must remember that this description the young bride is giving is in the midst of her great personal crisis. The goal of our Christian life is to love Jesus well in every season and to make sure that our love for God isn't contingent upon what's going on in our lives. We are called to trust the Shepherd of our souls in such a way that we don't question the decisions that He makes. It's often difficult for us to receive clear revelation of who God is, apart from great pressure, and this is why God uses difficulty in our lives.

Speak back to Him what the Word says about Him. Find yourself lost in the beauty of Christ Jesus, not so much for what He can do for you, but for Who He is to you.



CHAPTER 6

Day 1

Song of Songs 6:1

Where has your Beloved gone, O fairest among women? Where has your Beloved turned aside, that we may seek Him with you?

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) Your passion for Christ has moved us to go beyond nominal service to Jesus. We have known Him for a while, and have been around Him, but the way you speak about Him causes our hearts to burn within us. We want what you have and we want to touch Him in the way that you have touched Him. Where is He that we can go and search Him out? We want to know Him like you do, and we want to do what you're doing; go where you're going. Let us go forth with you to seek Him.

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 24:31-32 *Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us and opened up the scriptures to us?*

At the close of **Song of Songs Chapter 5** the bride ends one of the most stunning descriptions of who Christ is to her. The revelation of Christ that she gives to the daughters of Jerusalem has been birthed in great pain and pressure. Remember that the Lord hasn't spoken to her since the start of **Song of Songs** when He called her out of her bed, to go with Him into the place of suffering.

Her descriptions of Christ, in the middle of her greatest twofold crisis of losing both His presence and her place of ministry in the Church causes the hearts of these lukewarm ones around her to become provoked within them. You don't know how you impact those that are around you when you walk through the hard places of life. If you're a Christian, people are watching you. If your family, friends and co-workers know that you're a Christian, they are watching you. And they want what you have, but most people have seen so many fakes that they don't trust other Christians. And when it comes to other Christians who aren't that interested in Jesus, they are also watching how you chase Him down.

This was true with Mary of Bethany. When Mary broke the costly oil over Jesus' feet you must understand that the disciples, including Judas, were standing right there by her. But when she broke that costly oil they became indignant with her and said that she was wasting that expensive oil. Why was this considered a waste to those standing around, but Mary considered it an investment into the Man who was unlike any other Man? Because Mary saw something different in the same Man they were looking at; it caused passion for extravagance to arise within her. Jesus responded to Mary's act of devotion by saying that wherever the Gospel is preached in all the world, her story will also be told. Jesus was saying that an entire generation of lovesick worshippers was going to arise because of Mary's act of devotion.

Remember, people are watching you, and they are seeing how you respond to situations, people, frustration and the pressures of life. If you respond rightly you will cause passion for Christ to arise within them, but if you respond wrongly, you will push them further away from Christ. When you respond wrongly, repent to them. Apologize and tell them that you really blew it and you're working on your temper, your patience or whatever it was that you did.



CHAPTER 6

Day 2

Song of Songs 6:2-3 *My Beloved has gone to His garden, to the beds of spices, to feed His flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am My Beloved's and my Beloved is mine. He feeds His flock among the lilies.*

(The bride speaking) In all my seeking and in the midst of my pressure it has come to me where My beloved is. He is in the place of intimacy, in the secret place and in the pasture that He oversees across the earth. Though I loved Him so, I felt so lonely and there were moments that I felt as if He had left me, even though I knew Him to not be like that. Those were but fleeting thoughts, even though they were very real and painful. It's in the place of the pure garden that God feeds those who love Him. He is always near, even nearer yet.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 28:20 *...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

Hebrews 13:5 *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.*

Commentary

It's in the midst of this great twofold crisis that the bride receives this powerful and stunning revelation, He had never left her even though she didn't feel His manifest presence upon her heart. He was with her, she just didn't feel Him. Even though she has discovered this powerful truth, she still hasn't felt Him or heard His voice again.

For those that are longing to love the Lord you must become secure in the reality that Jesus is often coming to and fro on the hearts of those that seek to love Him. One minute we feel Him and the next we don't. Why is that? It is because He is always moving throughout nations, gathering more lilies and bringing them to His garden. The ebb and flow of God's presence upon our hearts and lives causes us to move beyond a feeling and reach for the reality that God is with us, lives in us, has empowered us and is always helping us. It's within this profound revelation that we can become unshackled from life in this age and become shackled in the age to come.

So many of us, myself included, can spend the majority of time looking for Him as if He has left us, when all along He lives in me. It's not just the looking for Him when I don't feel Him that's bad, but it's the thoughts that plague my mind. Thoughts that He doesn't love me, He doesn't care about me, He doesn't see me, He doesn't hear me, He doesn't like me and He likes everyone else more than me. Those thoughts alone are enough for me to ask Him to teach me to trust Him in the midst of not feeling Him.

The Bible tells us that we are to walk by faith and not by sight or by what we feel. And Jesus' promise to us is that He will be with us even unto the end of this age. He would never leave us nor forsake us, so even though I feel like He has, He truly hasn't. Jesus is emerging a people in the earth today that are deeply rooted in the reality that they belong to God and He belongs to them. It's in the midst of this revelation that the bride is receiving that she declares, I am my Beloved's and He is mine!

Can you see in the dark?



CHAPTER 6

Day 3

Song of Songs 6:4

O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners.

(God Speaking) I am now going to break the silence between you and Me. You have run the course of My commandments, even when you didn't feel me and others mistreated you. You aren't offended at My leadership, you haven't shrunk back in shame but you have overcome. Victory isn't yours right now, it's been yours during the entire trial, and now you are reaping the fruits of your faith towards me in the dark night of your soul. You are beautiful, stunning and are truly an overcoming bride. O My love!

Supporting Scriptures

Luke 4:1, 14 *Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness...Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region...*

Hebrews 12:2 *Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Commentary

The bride has emerged through this season of divine testing and has stayed the course. Though God had placed her in the middle of this crisis, she hadn't become offended at Him and His leadership and she didn't shrink back in shame and condemnation because of the loss of His manifest presence and her place of service. Instead she rose up, cast off those feelings of neglect and chased Him hard, until she found Him.

This is the first time that God is speaking to her since **Song of Songs 5:2**. God breaks the silence between them by praising her faithfulness to Him in the midst of this great twofold pressure. He can't say enough about her and how she responded to the pressure that He had placed her in. We are going to see in the next couple days the different things that Jesus has to say about her, but today we will look at two phrases that He uses, *lovely as Jerusalem and awesome as an army with banners*. Jerusalem was the capital city of Israel and the designated center for worship throughout the entire nation. We also see in Revelation the New Jerusalem that will ascend out of heaven from God to us; there is nothing in this city that is evil, or corrupt. In this phrase that Jesus is speaking over the bride, He is saying to her that she is all pure, and there is no spot in her, she is perfect in His eyes.

And when He says that she is as awesome as an army with banners He is talking about her victory in the midst of battle. The only reason that an army returned home with their banners intact was because they won. If an army lost, during the battle the victorious army would take their banners and those that were left alive would then return home with no banners, in shame. Jesus is saying to her, I placed you under serious pressure and took from you those things that you wanted most, but you didn't quit and give up your victory. You have returned from the divine season of testing with your banners intact. Victory hadn't become hers when He said it was hers, it had become hers in the midst of the testing when she chose to not give in, or give up.

Jesus is looking for those who will press into His heart right now and trust Him when they don't see Him, not only when they do see Him. Do you hear the joy of God over your life when you are pressing into the Lord, or do you only hear the voice of accusation? You must make a decision as to whose voice you listen to. You will always hear both God's voice and the devil's voice, but you choose who you will listen to. Who are you listening to right now? One that says you're victorious? Or one that says you're a failure?



CHAPTER 6

Day 4

Song of Songs 6:5a

Turn Your eyes away from Me, for they have overcome Me.

(God speaking) Your eyes have overcome Me. Do you remember when I told you that you had dove's eyes, that you had a single eye for Me and Me alone and you didn't feel like it was true, but I told you anyway. Those words were given to you as a prophecy, but now they are a reality. You have fixed your eyes upon me in the midst of severe testing and you kept them on Me. I can't look at you because of the passion that arises in My heart towards you. You have truly overcome My heart. The mountains don't overcome Me, the devil doesn't overcome and the rage of man doesn't overcome Me; but your eyes on Me, trusting My leadership over your life in the midst of great pressure, leaves Me undone!

Supporting Scriptures

John 19:11 *Jesus answered, you could have no power over Me unless it has been given to you from above...*

Luke 10:42 *But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.*

Commentary

What has just taken place very well could be the most powerful statement from the lips of God toward a human. Jesus has broken the silence in the last verse and then He follows it with this statement about her eyes overcoming Him.

Some commentators assume here that God is looking away, much like He did when Jesus was on the Cross because of the sin offering Jesus had become. This is absolutely not what is taking place. When Jesus says to the young bride *turn your eyes away from Me, for they have overcome Me*, He is speaking in deep, romantic and poetical language. He is saying to her *because of the way that you trusted Me in the dark night of your soul, because you stayed the course and didn't quit, you have overcome Me. I am not moved by anything, I am the uncreated God, all powerful, all knowing and ever present. But when weak humans trust Me in voluntary love, I become overwhelmed with passion towards them.*

See, the young bride wasn't trusting Jesus in this dark night because He was forcing her to. She was trusting Him and allowing Him to lead her through this season because she had come to know Him as the Chief among ten thousand. When you taste the beauty of Christ and His kingdom, what else could you turn to that would be equal? Nothing. So the bride trusts Him because she has come to know that He is better than any other lover.

Just think with me for a moment; the uncreated God is overcome by weak humans that say yes to Him and trust Him even when they don't see Him. What are the implications of that reality for you and me right now? Remember, what is true for her is also true for us. Though the bride didn't feel anything during that season, He felt everything. Though she didn't hear Him, He heard everything. Though she didn't see Him, He watched everything like a mother hen with her chicks.

If you are able to see what the bride saw, you can overcome like she did. But if you don't see a God who is ravished over you, who loves you, who is watching you, you will cave under the pressure that life and He has placed upon you.

What does your God look like? Does He look like the God of the Bible? Is He ravished over your faithfulness to Him even though you stumble along the way? Is He calling you by name and telling you that you have overcome Him? Don't wrestle with God until the morning, give in and let Him love you and tell you that you move His heart, right now, even in your sin, your heart that longs for Him is moving Him right now!



CHAPTER 6

Day 5

Song of Songs 6:5b

Your hair is like a flock of goats going down to Gilead.

(God speaking) Earlier in your journey, I spoke prophetically to all the budding virtues that were locked up in your heart, but weren't an actuality in your life. But that which I called forth internally is now manifesting externally. You are seeing the internal longings of your heart become a reality in your life. You are becoming a dedicated one, a consecrated one and I know that you are in this for Me and Me alone. You dedication is moving to Me says your God.

Supporting Scripture

John 1:42 *And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, you are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas, which is translated stone.*

Commentary

Now that the silence has been broken between the bride and the Groom (Jesus) they are sharing a powerful interchange. God is speaking over her things which are a part of her life, things that she had only dreamed about becoming a reality, and now the Lord is openly praising her for what she is manifesting externally.

In Chapter Four Jesus listed eight virtues that were only longings within the bride's heart that she had only thought about but never actually attained. But because of her longing and her refusal to quit, she actually continued to press into God in such a way that He is now, not only praising her for what was alive inside, but what is manifesting outside in her physical life.

Hair in the Old Testament speaks of dedication to God and the commitment to Him. There was an Old Testament vow called the vow of a Nazirite, and that vow consisted of not allowing a razor to touch your hair. Remember the story of Samson and how he finally allowed Delilah to cut his hair, rejecting the vow.

God is telling her that she has dedication that was once only a longing but now is a reality. The story of Gideon also defines this reality that has taken place with the young bride. When God came to Gideon He called him a *mighty man of valor*, even though Gideon was hiding from the Midianites. God knew that Gideon was scared and hiding from the enemy, but God also knew that internally Gideon longed to be a deliverer and to be used by God to save his people.

God sees the longing of our hearts to grow in Him and if we will stay the course with Him, those longings will in due time become realities. Gideon ended up leading the people of God into great victory, even though they were a small ragtag army, with pitchers, trumpets and torches against an army that the Bible says was *as many as the sand on the seashore*. Remember, what is true for the bride is true for you. So whatever you are longing for internally is what you are becoming externally, for the good or for the bad. If you are longing for things outside the grace of God, though they are just thoughts right now, they will become a reality outside very soon.

Don't define your life by what's taking place outside, but by what's taking place inside! That's really who you are. Behind all that skin, there's the real you!



CHAPTER 6

Day 6

Song of Songs 6:6

Your teeth are like a flock of sheep which have come down from the washing; every one of which bears twins and none is barren among them.

(God speaking) You have an incredible ability to eat the Word of God and digest it into useable material. I love the way that you systematically devour My words, and you hang on every Word that comes from My mouth. My words, eaten by you are actually bearing fruit in your life and they are not only helping your heart to come alive in Me, but they are helping you to feed the others around you and it's starting to bear fruit in their lives as well.

Supporting Scriptures

Psalms 42:1-2 *As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?*

Deuteronomy 8:3 *...that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.*

Commentary

The bride's ability to eat from the word of God and allow it to change her own life is powerful. But that's not the end of it as far as Jesus is concerned. He praises her not only for her ability to eat from the Word of God, but also for her ability to turn what she has eaten into words that she can share with others.

It is one thing to devour the Word of God for yourself, but it's a completely different thing to be able to turn those words that you have eaten into something that you can share with others. Teeth in the bible speak about our ability to chew up the Word of God. The sharper and stronger our teeth become the better our ability to chew up the larger topics of God's Word

Being able to look at subjects like the judgment of God, and grace of God and the salvation at more than an introductory level requires our ability to chew up more and obtain more in Him. There are some very specific things that I have done over the years that have helped me maintain a steady diet of the Word of God. I am going to list some things that I have done that have helped me over the years; they might help you also.

- 1) I always try to read the Bible in the morning before I do anything else.
- 2) I always pray before I start reading, because I want to take seriously what I am reading in the Bible. It's more than just another book; it is God's words for me, today. So I lay my hands on the actual pages and ask the Holy Spirit to open up the words to me.
- 3) I read out loud. I do this because if I read in my head, I start thinking about tons of other stuff, and this helps me to not only stay on track, but to also hear what I am reading with my ears, not just my mind.
- 4) I always read with a pencil/pen and a journal in hand. I do this as a statement of faith. I say to God with a pen in my hand, I am a ready writer. If you have something to say to me through the Word of God today, I am going to capture it in my journal. I'm not missing anything You might have to say to me.
- 5) I read systematically. That means that I start in one place and I work my way through. I might start in Matthew but I will read all the way until Revelation and then start somewhere else. I find that those who bounce around don't end up reading at all, or consistently.
- 6) And I always have a good cup of coffee, Stumptown that is. With those things in your mind, a pen or pencil and coffee in your hand you are bound to succeed in your Bible reading plan.



CHAPTER 6

Day 7

Song of Songs 6:7

Like a piece of pomegranate are your temples behind your veil.

(God speaking) I love the Godly emotions that are coming forth from your life. You treat others so kindly and you have such peace deep within and it is spilling out into the lives of those around you. I told you that deep within you was an orchard of seeds and those seeds are springing up into large trees in your life. Your emotions are so balanced, you're not happy one moment and angry the next. I love that you are the same person in front of others that you are when you're alone.

Supporting Scripture

2 Chronicles 16:9 *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, searching for a heart that fully belongs to Him.*

Commentary

So much can take place when we stay the course with God. Most people never see the goodness of God in the land of the living, because they don't stay the course long enough to see the outcome of what they paid in. God is a rewarder of those that seek Him.

There is powerful imagery taking place here with the descriptions of the bride from the Groom. The word *temples* can be translated to the word *cheeks*. And the pomegranate speaks of a very sweet fruit with countless seeds within when broken open. The cheeks are truly the outward place where people see visibly what we are feeling internally. If you are angry, it shows up in your cheeks. If you are happy, it shows up in your cheeks. It is difficult to conceal what you are feeling when your cheeks are boldly declaring it.

Jesus had spoken about her cheeks in **Song of Songs 4**, but it wasn't because she possessed the fruit of the Spirit externally, but that she was longing for it internally. Now they are manifesting externally, not only internally and it's causing the Lord to be moved towards her.

The *pomegranate* speaks of the red of that specific fruit. Red is often connected to romance and the ability to blush with the cheeks when something is being said that causes one to blush. Prostitutes don't blush when inappropriate content is being discussed, they become emboldened in their sin, but a young chaste bride would blush greatly.

And then to cap all of this Jesus says that it's all behind her veil. The veil in the Bible has different meanings, but here it is speaking of a *covering*. God is saying all these things about her life, but most importantly, it's what's taking place behind closed doors. She is the same person in front of people as she is when she's alone. She isn't changing from one place to the other, but staying the same. She is the same in Church as she is at work, and at home. It doesn't matter where she is; she is taking seriously the reality that God is watching over her, that His eye is upon her.

Do you change from place to place? Are you the same person at Church and with Christians, as you are with non-Christians? Christians understand that God is watching them in Church and at home, and God is expecting that we are the same person no matter where we go.



CHAPTER 6

Day 8

Song of Songs 6:8-9 *There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, My perfect one, it's the only one of her mother, the favorite of her who bore her, the daughters saw her and called her blessed, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.*

(God Speaking) I am surrounded by so many beautiful things, but you take the cake. There is none as beautiful as you in heaven or on the earth. My bride, fully surrendered to Me is the most beautiful thing to Me. Even among the bride, I have deep love for them all, but there are some that the earth enjoys more than others and you are one of them. Your extravagance will be remembered throughout Church history as the favorite.

Supporting Scripture

Luke 10:39 *And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His words.*

Commentary

Throughout Church history there are doing only what's required and those that go beyond what's required, giving extravagant love to Jesus. It's not that Jesus loves one more than the other, but it's that the Church and those looking for examples of extravagance forget the ones who lived nominal Christianity. They look for those who did more than required. Church history doesn't hold the record of those giving Jesus only what was required, but notes those who give extravagantly to Jesus what is due His name.

Giving to Jesus what is required and what is due His name are totally different things. The Church must learn to not criticize those that do what's required as they seek to give Him what's due but rather honor people for their own personal decision and allow them to go as far as they want. Jesus doesn't force us to give Him what's due His name, He only requires us to do what's needed for salvation and that which agrees with basic Christianity, beyond that, everything is an invitation from God to us. Here, Jesus is praising her that the Church has many beloveds around her, and even in heaven He is surrounded by much activity, but here on earth, there is one that steals the show, one that draws the attention of entire generations, the favorite of her who bore her.

We remember names like Martin Luther, John Calvin, Smith Wigglesworth, William Seymour, Mother Theresa, just to name a few. Though there have been billions that have loved God well, there have only been some responding to give Jesus what's due His name.

Mary of Bethany is one of those who are remembered throughout Church history. When Mary and Martha were in their house and Jesus came over, one chose to work and serve and the other chose to sit and lavish love on Christ. Jesus said that Mary had chosen the good part and it will never be taken from her. It dawned on me that I can make a choice as to what I grab in the grace of God. I can choose to abandon my life to Christ or I can choose to become busy with many things. Being busy isn't bad, because God has called us to work with Him, but working for God without a paradigm of love will leave us burnt in the end.

What are you doing concerning abandoned love for Christ that will make you a favorite of Church history? What kind of print are you going to leave in the ground for those coming behind you looking to love Christ in the way that He has loved you? Leave a memory, not of buildings, business and stuff, but of passion for Jesus!



CHAPTER 6

Day 9

Song of Songs 6:10

Who is she who looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, awesome as an army with banners?

(God Speaking) I love to see your progression within My kingdom and the plans that I have for you. I so enjoy you when you trust Me and you believe what I say to you. There is a special blessing held for those that believe in Me yet never see Me. This is something that the angels long to peer into: Why My creations trusts Me, even when they don't see Me or feel Me, they stay faithful to Me. I can see the prayers of your heart to follow Me until starting to emerge in the life you're now experiencing. You have more authority than you will ever understand, and the way you reflect My life to the watching world makes Me so proud of you. It's easy to lavish praise on you.

Supporting Scriptures

Proverbs 4:18 *But the path of the just is like the shining of the sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

Isaiah 28:9-10 *Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little there a little.*

Commentary

Do you remember the young bride's prayer in **Song of Songs 4:6**? If you don't, this is what she said *Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, I will go my way up the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense.* This was a huge turning point for the bride when she finally made the decision that she wasn't going to draw back from God, but would rather press on until the day breaks and the shadows flee away. Well now that the bride has walked with Him for a little while and has come through the dark night of her soul, He is saying to her that she has followed Him and the day is starting to dawn in her life. The shadows of night, the little foxes, the hidden areas of compromise and sin are fading away, and the light of Christ is emerging within her life.

God is praising her because she prayed two chapters before, that she would have strength to follow Him and He has helped her to do just that. And now He can visibly see the fruit being manifested in her life as she has stayed faithful to Him. We grow in the Kingdom little bit by little bit, line upon line and precept upon precept. This is why we don't try to eat an entire pizza in one day and then hope to not eat for several days. You eat one or two pieces and then you eat again when you are hungry.

The same thing is true in the Kingdom of God. We can only do so much, and we can only obtain so much in a day, so we make the most out of that day getting what we can and then moving on to the next day. Over time, living our lives in this way we will also hear from the Lord, like the bride did, as He praises our continued growth. She is shining forth like the morning, this wouldn't be high noon for her life yet, but the morning sun is dawning in her life and this is a blessed moment for her.

One of the powerful analogies here is the contrast between her life and the moon. What is powerful about the moon is that it doesn't have any light of its own, but only reflects the sun and through that light alone illuminate entire nations at the dark of night. She is starting to reflect the life of Christ, and the brightness of who He is to the watching world around her. For us to hear what the bride heard, we too have to live our lives like hers. That doesn't mean that we are perfect, but that the average of our lives is spent reaching for Christ. Though you stumble you get back up again and keep reaching.

Maybe today you have stopped reaching and have just settled, but you haven't heard the Lord speak over you about His great delight in you. Take time right now to re-enlist in the Kingdom; sign up again today for wholeheartedness. I sign up near daily, as I keep reaching for Him though I fall often.



CHAPTER 6

Day 10

Song of Songs 6:11-12 *I went down to the garden of nuts to see the verdure of the valley, to see whether the vine had budded and the pomegranates had bloomed. Before I was even made aware, my soul had made me as the chariots of my noble people.*

(The bride speaking) I will rise up and go down into the garden of God, because that's where You are and I want to be with You where You are. I want to partner with You in the place of service and help to oversee that which you have entrusted to Your Church. I want passion for both the immature ministries and mature ministries. You have loved me in the process and it's only right that I share that love with those who are still growing and those who are full grown. Overnight it seems my passion for the second commandment has come alive.

Supporting Scriptures

1Corinthians 12:15-17 *For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?*

Matthew 18:21-35 --Read the story on your own

Commentary

Something happens within Churches and denominations and even individual Christians. What happens is that God places something in our hearts that we are to pursue as a life vision and we end up only loving and appreciating this part of the Kingdom of God that He has given to us. This can happen with anything in the Kingdom of God. The ministry God calls to the place of prayer ends up despising the ministry that God has called to grow in leadership skills, and vice versa. Or maybe the Lord grows our family, business, ministry or career path into something really large. We can end up forgetting about the process that we went through to achieve that success and begin to despise and run out of time for the others in life whose family, business, ministry or career path is at the small size ours once was.

This happens a lot with Churches and ministries and individual Christians. Those that are further along and have more experience often throw stones at the youthful way the others below them are doing those different things, as if we weren't in the same place at one time or another. We never want to become like the ungrateful debtor who was forgiven so much, and held others to so little.

Here the bride is going to see the ministries that are struggling and not growing really large and they aren't offending her and bothering her. But she can also go to the large flourishing ministries and learn from them and appreciate what they are doing for the Kingdom of God, even though it's a different style than hers. This is what's called Kingdom maturity, where we have love for all that belongs to God, not just what God has highlighted in our personal lives and ministries. It's here that she makes the statement *before I was even aware, my soul had made me as the chariots of my noble people.*

A chariot in that day was the best possible way to travel. You could go long distances and have the comfort of sitting on something other than a horse, like on a bench or a covered room that made transport much more comfortable. What she is saying in this, is that as she has chased Him and Him alone; the place she found Him was in the garden, feeding and tending to other Christians. As she has loved Him and received love from Him, her soul suddenly had become converted with passion for others.



CHAPTER 6

It's often times that the Church is afraid to do the first commandment because they don't know when the second commandment will get done. But God's way is that we do the first commandment first and over time our hearts become passionate about the second commandment and partnering with Him in the place of service to the nations.

Take time this morning to place Jesus as your only priority in life. Make Him the center of all that you do, and trust as you touch the Chief Intercessor you will also touch the Chief Evangelist. As we love God, He will help us and motivate us to love others for they go hand in hand.



CHAPTER 6

Day 11

Song of Songs 6:13 ...return, return, O Shulamite; return, return that we may look upon you!

(The daughters of Jerusalem Speaking) O Shulamite, we know that you want to go to the garden and be with the One that your soul loves, but we don't want you to go. We see the passion in your life and the fruit of loving Jesus. We want to look upon you more, talk to you and understand how it is that you grew in such deep love for your Beloved. Don't leave us. Remain a little while longer so that we can learn from you more and more. We are tired of living a lukewarm life and want to have increased passion like you.

Supporting Scriptures

Acts 20:37-28 *Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.*

Mark 1:35-38 *Now in the morning, having raised a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. And Simon and those who were with Him searched for Him. When they found Him, they said to Him, everyone is looking for You. But He said to them; let us go into the next towns that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come.*

Commentary

Often times in the Church when Jesus touches us through certain people it's hard to depart from them, or see them move on to their next assignment. I have had many people throughout my life that have touched my life in a powerful way, and then the Lord moved them on to the next thing.

It's my opinion that God does this on purpose and with great wisdom. Though it's very painful, it also forces us to take our focus off a specific person or ministry and place our trust and hope fully on Jesus. There are also a lot of *Consumer Christians* in the Church today that would suck dry the very life of God, out of the men and women of God in the Church and do nothing with what they received. It's what you call an obese Church and overweight Christians. It's those that have filled themselves with Bible teaching for a decade but have never done anything with what they have learned.

They sap the life of leaders, always needing more time, more money, more prayer, more help, more counsel but never actually stepping out of the nest to go and reach for Christ on their own. When the people that have deeply impacted us move on, the Lord pushes us out of the nest and causes us to fly on our own. That's not a comfortable first flight, but it's a much needed one, because without this we don't enter into the fullness of a life of faith, leaning on Christ and Christ alone.

What you have to remember is that the young bride has been reaching for her Beloved mainly on her own. Her reaching for Christ has been on her own. It's her journey, and she has become strong and is now able to give to others what she herself has received from the Lord. The lukewarm believers around her are looking at this one whose face is shining with passion for Jesus and they are slowly being awakened to that love and now she is departing and they don't want her to go.

The Lord used this young bride who they neglected at the beginning and couldn't understand, to actually awaken them in love for Jesus. Now He is calling her away so that they will seek God on their own in the same way. In reality, this is the life of the forerunner. She has run ahead of the pack, endured her own sin, encountered her weakness, touched His love for her; she walked through the dark night of the soul in



CHAPTER 6

which she lost His manifest presence and her place of ministry within the Church. She walked through all that first, so that others could then eat the fruit of her victories and walk in the same way that she did. God's plan is not to have one person do all the reaching for Christ, but to have an entire body that reaches for Him in the same way. Jesus is calling every human to reach for Him in the same way that the young bride is.

How is the Lord challenging you to get your eyes off other people and set them on Him? Have you been provoked by the Christian life in others in such a way that it actually caused you to go hard after Christ? Or do you see others and want to coast off their growth in Christ? My challenge to you today is: Allow others to walk with Jesus to provoke you, not condemn you. And if you're resting on other people's faith in Christ, stop it. Step out of the nest and learn to fly on your own. It's fun to ride, but it's amazing to drive!



CHAPTER 6

Day 12

Song of Songs 6:13

What would you see in the Shulamite—as it were the dance of two camps?

(The watchmen speaking) Why is everybody up in arms about this young bride? She's just a common girl. I don't even know why everybody thinks she's so pretty. She's a farm girl, just a lowly servant girl. She's nothing special. You watch and mark my words, her passion for the Beloved will die soon and she'll be back in the same place as we are in no time. Let her talk her talk, she won't be able to walk the walk. Quit making her the example of what our lives are supposed to look like.

Supporting Scriptures

Acts 7:26-29 *And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, Men you are brethren; why do you do wrong to one another? But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill us like you did the Egyptian yesterday? Then, at this saying, Moses fled...*

James 3:17 *For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.*

Commentary

Shortly after I gave my life to Jesus somebody within the Church said to me, Hey, just wait a little bit, your fire will die out soon enough and you'll calm down. I didn't really understand what he was saying, but my grandmother sure didn't like his statement. Over the years as I have thought about that statement, and it has bothered me as well. What a shame that Christians would say to other Christians, just wait you will soon lose your passion for Jesus. If anything, Christians should be praying to God for every new believer in Jesus that their passion will only burn brighter until the full light of day, not hoping that it dies out so they look like the rest of sluggish Christianity.

If you think about it, wholeheartedness becomes the central conflict in most every situation when you're dealing with lukewarm believers. When there are some in the Church that want to leverage their lives to love Jesus in the way that He has loved them it really disrupts those in the Church that are content living at a distance from Jesus.

When the first commandment is restored to first place in the body of Christ worldwide, there will be more bloodshed in the Church than in any other time. It was said that passion for Jesus destroys a thousand other evils. Much of our trouble in the Church is that we have lost our passion for Jesus and when that happens we start to take offense over those that are seeking to go deep in Christ. Envy and jealousy are twin towers of destruction for anyone who wishes to move on in the plan of God for our lives.

There are two types of watchmen in the body of Christ today. There is what I call the David watchmen and the Saul watchmen. The David watchmen are all about the growth of God in others, not just themselves. They create room for others to grow as leaders and help others succeed. The Saul watchmen on the other hand are detrimental to the life of the Church and the emerging next generation. They don't help them, but they actually hinder them. Saul was envious of David and when the song was being sung that Saul had slain his thousands but David his ten thousands, it infuriated Saul. Saul's position was in jeopardy and David was his great threat to this kingdom that Saul had built.



CHAPTER 6

This is what's happening with the young bride. She is encountering the Saul watchmen who are mocking the request of the Daughters to have the bride stick around. They don't see any reason to keep the bride around, in reality the Saul watchmen are jealous of her and her growth in God and they don't know how to relate. Instead of loving her and helping her, they ridicule her. This dance of two camps is the dance between those in the Church that are whole hearted and those who are content or lukewarm. This dance won't ever end, but only continue to increase until Jesus returns for the second time.

Maybe you have found yourself being ridiculed by other Christians or non-believers for your passion for Jesus, or maybe you're the one who ridiculed others for their passion for Jesus. If you're the one who's been ridiculed, stay strong, look to Jesus and trust that He is working things out in your life for your good. Don't settle for a distant relationship when you've been made to be close to Him. And if you have ridiculed other Christians in the Church, repent and ask for their forgiveness. Don't be a Saul leader who can't rejoice in the spiritual progress of others. Jesus will have something to say to you if you take people who are fervent for Him and make them lukewarm like yourself. Don't hate, congratulate.



CHAPTER 7

Day 1

Song of Songs 7:1a

How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O prince's daughter!

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) O watchmen who stand at a distance and speak such negative words, why can't you rejoice in the life of those that also love the Lord. Look at what the Lord has done in the life of this young bride. She is becoming strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Though He spoke prophetically to her in the early stages of this journey she is now manifesting publicly that which He seen inside of her. She who was once separated from intimate relationship with the King is now living in the palace as His beloved. And her feet carry her so gracefully as she takes His message to disciple the nations in the many vineyards of the earth. Celebrate her life, don't tear her down and put her asunder.

Supporting Scriptures

Ephesians 2:12 ...*that at the time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no home and without God in the world.*

John 15:15 *No longer do I call you servants, for a servant doesn't know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.*

Commentary

It's amazing when you serve the Lord for a while how many times those in the Church that are doing the minimum to remain a Christian, challenge you when you're new in Christ. But when those new ones really press in and press past those who are jealous, envious and critical of your new found faith, often times they eventually come around and desire what God has done in us, and they end up being the ones who vindicate us in our pursuit of God.

This is exactly what's happening to her in the life of the bride. The Saul type of watchmen who have been no help to the bride and have even voiced things to her that have been hurtful have spoken out of envy of her, and now the lukewarm believers around the bride have risen up and are defending her.

What's so powerful is that they see in her what only God spoke to her about the longings of her heart in Chapter Four. God started describing her from the head down, the now the daughters of Jerusalem are describing her from the feet up. The Lord in Chapter Four addressed the character of the bride and here in Chapter Seven the daughters are addressing the ministry of the bride and her service to the Lord.

What a statement of her wealth in Christ that those around her recognize as they call her the prince's daughter. Paul tells us to rejoice because we were once alienated from the common wealth of God but now have been brought into the aristocracy of Christ. She is rich beyond comprehension and it's not based on what she has done, but in the love that Jesus has lavished upon her. Because of the love that Jesus has placed upon her, it has taken her into an arena and style of life that few will ever know on this side of eternity.

Jesus isn't looking for window dressing, but a physical, literal and actual bride that He can share His vast empire with. What is it today that's holding you back from giving all unto the Lord? What is it that you are holding onto here on earth that you're having such a hard time letting go? Until you let go of all things and place them with Christ you will struggle to see the vindication of God through those around you. Lukewarm is the only temperature that Jesus Himself says He can't stand. If you're cold you're not in the



CHAPTER 7

Church and that doesn't disrupt any other believers, you're just going with the flow. But if you're hot or on fire for Christ it will challenge the cold hearts of those around you to chase God in the way that you are. Hand over all to Jesus and receive the eternal wealth of the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom that will never perish.



CHAPTER 7

Day 2

Song of Songs 7:1b *The curves of your thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a skillful workman.*

(The Daughters of Jerusalem Speaking) Look at the strength of your legs. They are able to support such powerful life that's taking place within you. What God has placed upon your shoulders isn't going to crush you because you have strengthened your legs to uphold everything that God is giving you. All those years that we mocked you, watched and didn't join in the journey of loving God wholeheartedly has paid off for you, but not for us. You took seriously the call to follow Him and the fruit is evident in your life. Your secret discipline has made you strong to follow Christ into both His heart and the many vineyards He oversees.

Supporting Scriptures

Ephesians 6:13-14 *Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore...*

1Corinthians 15:58 *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

Commentary

Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ often talked about Christianity like a race that we are to run. He would say that it's not only about starting a race, but actually finishing it. I don't know if you knew that in pro football, every team is judged on about forty hours of game time per season, and however they worked during those forty hours is how they are judged by Americans and people all over the world. Now, there are hundreds, maybe even thousands of hours that go into practice, but if those forty hours aren't played well they will be ranked at the back of the pack.

There are two things going on in this example. First, many Christians spend their entire life in Christ practicing but never actually stepping foot onto the playing field to put to practice what they have learned. And secondly, there are many Christians that don't take the practice seriously and step out onto the playing field and get creamed by their opponents. The bride is in a place where she has both practiced hard, but is now playing hard and doing well.

Some people think they don't have to practice, they don't have to attend meetings, and planning sessions, read their Bible's in the morning and they have no prayer life, but it shows up on the game field. The bride has taken seriously the call to sit before God, before she stands before man. What's happened here is that when the Lord moves her to stand before people, because she has sat before Him, she has power within her to actually help others, not just share cute information. The daughters are praising the strength of her legs and then likening them to jewels. It's lovely for them to look upon the foundation of the bride because she has become so strong, even though most of what she has done looked like weakness to the natural eye. People thought that Christ was weak when He didn't get Himself off the Cross, but though He was crucified in weakness, Paul tells us He has been raised up with power.

My challenge to you is, don't be like either one of those football players but be like the bride. The one football player spent his entire life practicing for a game he never played. And the other football player didn't take practice serious and was utterly defeated when he stepped foot on the field. But the bride, she took both the practice and the game day seriously, and because of that those around her noticed the strength of her legs. Listen, your legs won't become strong in Christ overnight. This takes time, even your whole life. Settle in that you're not running a sprint but a marathon and the goal is to finish at the end of your days having loved Jesus and others more and more each and every day.



CHAPTER 7

Day 3

Song of Songs 7:2a *Your navel is a rounded goblet; it lacks no blended beverage.*

(The daughters of Jerusalem) You are so healthy in all that you do. The foundation that you have laid has created such a healthy and whole person. You're not malnourished, or in need of something that you don't already have, but you are healthy and are lacking nothing. O that we would rise from complacency and take your lead and enter into a healthy life just like you. Lethargy has created a sluggish response to the Beloved, but not for you. You are healthy as one who has been well taken care of.

Supporting Scriptures

Psalms 131:2 *Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul. Like a weaned child with his mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.*

Matthew 7:24-29 --Read this passage on your own.

Commentary

For the uninformed ear these words could mean so many different things to you. You wouldn't believe where different groups take these truths, and the beautiful imagery that God the Holy Spirit used to inspire and awaken love within us for God. The idea that the Holy Spirit is using through the lips of the daughters of Jerusalem is that the bride isn't malnourished or unfed, but rather she is healthy, growing and strong from the foundation that has been laid underneath her.

David said that He was like a weaned child and that he had calmed and quieted his soul with him. A weaned child is a child that isn't lacking anything or wasting away, but a child who is strong and moving onto foods outside the mother. This is not the case for most Christians today.

The Church worldwide is filled with those that seem to be in the midst of a spiritual famine. Though the Word of God is more abundant today than in any other time in world history, many have no need for it. Church leaders will be held responsible for the lack of passion in the lives of Christians because it's a reflection of us, the Church leadership. It's not okay that the Church is malnourished when there is a table spread before us that has no start or end. It's a simple choice that every person makes, either to be full or to be found wanting.

Jesus said that storms were going to come to both the Christian house and the sinner's house. The only difference is what those houses have been built upon. The storms are going to come and the only way that we will be able to withstand the wind, waves and torrents is because we have built a solid foundation in Christ from which we have been healthy. There is no need for you to be malnourished in this day and age. Keith Green once said, *How can you be so dead, when you've been so well fed?* Wow, those are pointed words, but it's the truth.

It's time to slow down your life so that you can set yourself before Jesus and His Word, not just for a day, or a month or a year, but for a lifetime. Jesus promises that if you draw near to Him, He will draw near to you. Feed yourself with the life of Christ and regain the health that rightly belongs to you.



CHAPTER 7

Day 4

Song of Songs 7:2b

Your waist is a heap of wheat set about with lilies.

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) We can see that the time you have sowed into the Beloved has paid off in possessing divine promise within your physical body. We can see that you are full internally with the divine plan of God and it's going to bring forth much fruit for your Beloved. We now look on you with godly jealousy and see that what looked so foolish, what looked so weak and such a waste of time was actually the wisdom of God. Growing up in the Church our leaders have led us to activity more than to Jesus and that has caused us to be somewhat lazy in our spiritual disciplines. We used to mock you when we watched how you spent your time, but it's now clear who has invested their lives wisely. Filled with such divine promise you possess purity we have seen only in the Beloved Himself.

Supporting Scriptures

Galatians 6:7-8 *Don't be deceived, God is not mocked; whatever a man sows that he will reap. For he who sows to the flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*

Matthew 11:19 *The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners! But wisdom will be justified by her children.*

Commentary

In the life of John the Baptist we see a countercultural lifestyle being lived. A life that was spent mostly loving Jesus, living simply and without much publicity. John was actually hidden by God in the wilderness for the majority of his life and it was in the place that He cultivated a burning heart for God and was satisfied just hearing the voice of the Bridegroom Jesus Christ.

But when the Church leaders and the people of his day looked at the way John was living he was labeled a fool and a radical that was wasting His life. But what Jesus had to say about John in this passage changes everything. Jesus actually says about John that the wisdom of his lifestyle won't be seen only in Him, but mainly in the lives of those that follow in the way of John.

This is what's taking place in the life of the bride in the Song of Songs. The daughters or the lukewarm Christians around her have watched her life for some time and they have mocked her spending so much time with Him, walking through the dark night and continuing to trust Him when He has seemly hurt her. But now that time has passed and she has matured with Him, they now see the wisdom in the life she had been living. There is powerful imagery taking place here. The waist being like a heap of wheat is speaking of her being pregnant with the harvest of the divine purpose of God. There is nothing more powerful than seeing the Church full of divine promise as we are becoming confident in God's love towards us. She is full of power to go out and reap the harvest in partnership with the Beloved.

And that it's set about with lilies is speaking about the purity and integrity of the life she is living behind closed doors. She's not changing from one group to the next, but she is the same at home as she is at work and in the Church. Jesus is longing to release the great harvest to the Church but because they haven't taken seriously the call to cultivate intimacy with Him in the down time, they don't have enough purity and integrity to be able to reap the harvest in the way that God intends for them.

What is the divine promise that is alive within you? We are all called to live and carry destiny and promise, but so few of us actually take seriously those things God has spoken over us. Take seriously the things that God has spoken to you today; reach for them and walk in partnership with Jesus.



CHAPTER 7

Day 5

Song of Songs 7:3 *Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.*

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) There is such depth within you and such a grace to give to the young ones what they need to continue growing. You are not only filled with prophetic promise but also with a divine ability to feed that which you are going to give birth to. We love how tender you are with the young ones. You aren't too harsh, but you also aren't a pushover. We are too afraid to tell others *No* and to correct people on their journey with the Beloved that we would rather just be quiet. But you speak up when it's needed; you pick up others when it's needed and you allow some to walk away, leaving the relationship when needed.

Supporting Scriptures

Ephesians 4:11 *He himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers...*

Hebrews 12:1 *Therefore we also since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run the race that is set before us.*

Commentary

There's seems to be two groups in the body of Christ today. There are those who can convert people to Christ, but can't and or don't know how to disciple them. And then there are those that can disciple people, but they never lead anyone to Christ or connect people with Jesus for the first time. Here the bride is in a special place that God longs to bring all of the Church to a place where we can both reap the harvest and disciple those that we reach through Christ.

If we can only convert people but can't disciple them we will raise up shallow Christians who don't grow in the knowledge of God. But if we only raise up Christians who are disciplined but can't reach other Christians, the Church will cease to exist. Therefore the Church can't do one or the other, but must do both. It must reach new converts and disciple those it reaches. This is what's taking place in the life of the bride. Breasts always speak of the ability to nurture.

The daughters, just before this passage, spoke about her being pregnant with the harvest. But now they are saying that she is also able to feed those she brings to the beloved. A fawn is a deer that is under 1 year of age. This is speaking to her youthful ability to grow others, unlike those who are older but still needing someone to feed them. This is in no way distasteful to those who are older, but God is praising her for her ability to feed others as a young mother does. And the analogy of the twins of a gazelle speaks of a double portion and the speed at which she is able to bring them to maturity. There are some mothers on the earth today and in history that aren't able to bring children into maturity. That is not a quality but rather a deterrent.

We must bring both our natural children and spiritual children into maturity, quickly and in the right time so that when it's time for them to run on their own they are able to do just that. The Bible tells us not to despise the day of small beginnings because all large things start in seed form. We start small and over time the Lord is able to grow us up in Him.

What do you feel Jesus is pulling on in your life right now, so that you rise up and start entering into maturity in Christ? In the Kingdom for us to climb higher we must let go of more things. What is it that God is asking you to let go of? Remember, now that your reading this, it's not the preacher of the Bible that you are avoiding, but God. If you know what you're supposed to do and don't do anything that's the sin of omission. That *is* a sin. You must repent of it, press *Delete* and work to move on so that you arise in maturity.



CHAPTER 7

Day 6

Song of Songs 7:4a

Your neck is like an ivory tower, Your eyes like pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath Ribbim.

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) You have made such powerful commitments to follow the Beloved into such hard places and you have given over your life to Him so that He can shape you into what He is calling you into. We can see the pain that you have endured to become such a beautiful representation of what God can do with someone who doesn't resist Him, but allows Him to break you in order to build you. Your eyes have received so much revelation and now our ears have heard things that we didn't even know existed. It's all because of what your eyes have seen. We have heard in our ears because of what your eyes have seen. You listened to the Groom in the secret, you have shouted it aloud from the rooftop and we have heard you.

Supporting Scriptures

Romans 12:2 *I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

Ephesians 1:17-18 *...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him...*

Commentary

This isn't the first time somebody has praised both the neck of the bride and her eyes. It was the Groom who first spoke about her neck in **Song of Songs 4:4** and her eyes in **Song of Songs 4:1**, but this has an altogether new meaning to both analogies. What we must understand about *ivory* is that it isn't given to us without great cost. Ivory comes from living things, not just something inorganic that's sitting in the mountains.

Here the daughters of Jerusalem are praising the bride for the sacrifice that she has endured to become all that the Groom had dreamed about in His heart for her. She has committed great sacrifice in order to respond to Him and to go to the places that He has called her. We don't enter into the high calling of God without walking through much sacrifice and pain.

This is what Paul is talking about in **Romans 12:2** when he talks about our lives being lived as a living sacrifice. See, the bride could have walked off the alter anytime she wanted, and she actually did a time or two, but she always got back on and allowed the fire of God to season her rightly so that He could use her powerfully.

Jesus also gives us a powerful example when He is multiplying the food for the disciples to feed those that were gathered. Jesus first takes the food from the disciple's hands and gets it into His. Then He blesses the bread and then breaks it. Many of us have given our lives to Christ and put everything we have in His hands, but our current dilemma is that we never or seldom allow Him to break our lives so that we can actually be used in the way that He intends to use us. The key to entering into the fullness of God is just saying *yes* to Him, even when we don't understand what's going on. What separates those that do great things for God from those that don't is simply continuing to say *yes* to Him.



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I remember some years ago that I was in a worship service in another Church and the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said that I was fighting the press and was resisting His hand upon my life. He said, you want the oil but you won't allow me to press you and release the oil of the Holy Spirit through your life. The oil of the Holy Spirit doesn't flow without the pressure of God upon our lives. It's actually through that pressure that the oil of God is released. When I heard Him, I quickly told Him that I was sorry for fighting the press and I would put myself back underneath His hand and now I ask Him to not remove His hand of pressure from off my life. It's here also that the daughters praise her eyes for what they have seen. What have your eyes seen or what are they seeing right now? You could take the majority of what your eyes look at all day long and I could tell you what you will become over time. What you look at will determine what you become. If you want to rise to the high calling of God you will have to adjust what your eyes are looking at. Talk to the Holy Spirit right now about what you're looking at. Ask Him for help to keep your eyes fixed on Him.



CHAPTER 7

Day 7

Song of Songs 7:4b *Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon which looks towards Damascus.*

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) The sacrifices that you have made and those things you have allowed the Groom to walk you through have given you a divine ability to understand spiritual warfare. It seems that when evil creeps into and around our lives we don't know what's happening, but you do. You often see it before it comes and it doesn't take you off guard so to speak. Your nose has been trained to smell darkness before it reaches you and the lives of others. Because you have a heart that's full of passion for Jesus you are able to overcome that which comes your way. We want to smell and sense evil just like you do. Please teach us to have an understanding heart like yours.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 24:43 *But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.*

Ephesians 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

Commentary

My Grandpa (Bill Mentor) had a wonderful saying that went like this *Every day you spend chasing the devil's dogs, is one day less you have for God.* This didn't always make sense to me when he first shared it with me, but over time it has made a great deal of sense and has actually helped me in my walk with Christ.

Basically what he's saying is that when we spend our time and energy chasing the devil we lose out on time that we could have spent chasing God. I don't have time to chase the devil nor does the Bible ask me to do that. What I have learned is that the devil shows up when he wants to and that's why it's good to have a nose that's trained in the things of the Spirit. The bride is being praised by the daughters here because of her ability to smell evil and the work of the fouler so that she doesn't fall into his schemes. So many Christians are more carnal than they are spiritual that they actually don't understand how their enemy works. Because of this lack of knowledge they end up falling into sin and compromise.

We want a nose like the bride's, one that is trained to smell what the Evil One is cooking. Now, this isn't speaking about physical smells, but rather a spiritual sense. I have heard about people who actually can smell evil spirits and they can smell certain spirits that are leaving people's bodies who have been delivered from a demon. But this is speaking mostly about a spiritual sense. The Church must become versed in the things of the Spirit so that we aren't caught off guard when the evil one arises in our midst.

When you start working at a bank to handle money they don't start out giving you fake money, but real money. And then in the midst of the real money they also plant some fake bills as well. The reason for this is because when you handle the real thing long enough you can feel the fake in a moment's notice. The same thing is true in the Kingdom of God. We don't spend the strength of our time understanding Satan, but understanding God so that when the evil one comes he is easy to spot. To the trained eye a counterfeit is easy to spot. But to the untrained eye, something that's fake looks like the real thing and if you aren't aware you can find yourself steeped in deep darkness and deception. Take today and re-sign up for chasing God with your whole heart.

Turn off the TV, turn off the radio, turn off your phone and get alone with God and re-sign up for growing in the knowledge of Him so that your nose can be trained to smell darkness when it comes near. Tell Jesus today that you don't want to be caught off guard by the devil but that you want to understand when he is coming near and He will help you. God doesn't want you taken off guard, but with Him where He is, doing what He is doing.



CHAPTER 7

Day 8

Song of Songs 7:5 *Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel, and the hair of your head is like purple, A king is held captive by your tresses.*

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) You remind us of the men and women of God throughout our history that have done great exploits for the Kingdom of God. There is such power upon your life and the way that you think. The things that you say give us insight into the thoughts that you think and they are much different than ours. And what can we say about your unusual dedication to the Beloved, it's beyond anything we have seen except for the stories of history. There is such royalty in the way you live your life and it's clear to whom you belong. It's not only us who are held captive by your life but it's clear that you have overcome the King's heart as well. He is held by you!

Supporting Scriptures

John 19:17 *And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of the Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha.*

Numbers 6:1-5 *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, speak to the children of Israel...take the vow of the Nazirite to separate himself to the Lord...all the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the Lord, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.*

Commentary

Within this passage the daughters of Jerusalem give three analogies that refer to the bride's new life in Christ. The first thing that they say is that her hair crowns her like Mount Carmel. Mount Carmel is where Elijah called down fire on the prophets of Baal and contended with them as to who was the Living God. It was here that God showed Himself strong on behalf of Elijah whose heart was loyal to Him.

The daughters have much to say about the young bride's head and what's taking place within the head. I would say, personally, the strongest battle that I have had to fight as a Christian has been around my mind and seeing it renewed. Jesus was crucified at Golgotha which literally means *the place of the skull*. The bride is being praised here for her thought life and how she is thinking about all things spiritual and natural. This is the aim for the life of any Christian.

Then they speak about her hair being like purple. The hair most of the time in the Bible speaks about our dedication to God. In the Old Testament many took what was called a vow of consecration, or what was actually called a Nazirite vow, the vow Samson was under from before his birth. This vow included several things, but one of them was that no razor was to touch their head or hair. The length of hair in the lives of these young Nazirites was a sign of great dedication to God. The long hair was an external sign of an internal condition and it's clear to the daughters that she was fully dedicated to the Groom.

It wasn't just her dedication that moved the daughters but also the royalty that she now possessed in Christ. What's so powerful about this is that the young bride wasn't bringing anything to this relationship other than a willing heart to follow Christ and say yes to Him. The cost of the wedding, the price to clothe her, the expense to promote her was all being paid by Him. Because He was deeply involved in her life there was a certain royalty about her. Purple represents the royalty that she now carried, through her life in Christ. Paul tells us that though we were once alienated from the common wealth in our sins, we have now been brought into the family of God, the aristocracy of Christ and His eternal Kingdom. Beloved,



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you are wealthy beyond comprehension. You will inherit an eternal city that has no need for a moon or a sun because Christ is its light. And the final statement the daughters make to her is that the King is held captive by her tresses.

Do you feel beautiful right now, right where you're at before Christ? Do you see a God who right now, right at this very moment, is captivated by your willingness to follow Him where He leads you? It's right now, not later that He sees you and is captivated by your beauty. Nothing moves Christ more than seeing those that He has redeemed follow Him in faith to places they know not of. Don't allow condemnation and guilt to plague you any longer. Rise up, right now, and drink from the eternal well that God has provided for you; enjoy the royalty you have been given. Thank Him for adopting you into His family and paying the bill with His own blood.



CHAPTER 7

Day 9

Song of Songs 7:6-7 *How fair and how pleasant you are, O love, with your delights! This stature of yours is like a palm tree, and your breasts like its clusters.*

(God Speaking) Those around you are starting to see on the outside what I have worked on the inside. You are emerging so beautifully and I must tell you again that I love you, you look good to me and I so enjoy you. The love that we share is beyond what words can describe. You have weathered the many storms, hardships, pressures and trials that have come your way. You are more than an over-comer. The power of placing the right priority on the first and second commandment has given you both a vibrant heart and a ministry that feeds others. You now possess both and, not just either or. O how I love you!

Supporting Scriptures

Psalms 1:3 *He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper.*

Romans 8:37 *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*

Commentary

In this part of the Song it's now the Lord who has broken back into the conversation and is speaking over her. Many theologians have thought it was God speaking the entire time throughout **Song of Songs 7** but the opening verse tells us it's not Him speaking but rather the daughters of Jerusalem. We know this because when they call her O prince's daughter. It is the daughters of Jerusalem that have been speaking to her in the past 5 verses but now Jesus breaks in and speaks over the maturing bride.

Something that you will notice throughout the entire eighth chapter is that when God has something to say to the bride He always first states how He feels about her and what He sees in her. It doesn't matter what He has to say be it good or bad, He always, every single time, first speaks over her His great pleasure in her and how she has won His heart. He is doing this here when He declares over her that she is fair, pleasant and filled with delights. It's so important for those of us that struggle with feeling God's love that we work overtime to allow Him to shatter that lie that He doesn't love us.

This deep-seated lie within us is something that wasn't meant to be maintained but utterly broken. Jesus then uses symbolic language to tell her she has been planted deep in the soil of His goodness and not only is she planted but she is also feeding others from her life. What is important to mention about *palm trees* is that they go deep in the ground so they will stay strong, supporting all that weight from the top of the tree and the storms that they endure. Palm trees are notorious for standing strong even in the midst of hurricane force winds that are sustained for long periods of time; not only their strength to withstand the storm, but their ability to produce fruit represent her positive qualities.

You and I have been called by God to produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives and if we aren't producing the fruit of the Holy Spirit then something must be changed within us so that we can. Just like a palm tree, we too must go deep in Christ and allow our lives to connect with that eternally deep well within us called the Holy Spirit so that we can feed others as well just like the maturing bride.

As a local Church we have a mission statement that says *We are building a resting place for Jesus Christ.* This mission statement fits because often times when God comes to dwell with His people, we resist Him



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and never allow Him to love on us and convert us from what we used to be, to what He has called us to be. We resist Him when He tells us that He loves us and that He enjoys us. This we do when we don't agree with Him and actually exalt our opinion of ourselves more than His words about our life.

Break your agreement with the devil today and allow God to love on you and make you His own. His passion is towards you right now and you can't change that, only receive it.



CHAPTER 7

Day 10

Song of Songs 7:8-9 *I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of its branches. Let now your breasts be like clusters of the vine, the fragrance of your breath like apples, and the roof of your mouth like the best wine.*

(God Speaking) The depth of spiritual life that you have cultivated in Me is causing growth, passion and fruit to emerge. You have taken the call seriously to follow Me and it's producing fruit not only for your life but also for others who come near you. Even in the midst of the drought you are being watered because of the depth to which your roots go down. I am now releasing you in the power of the Holy Spirit to feed others, refresh others and be filled personally with the life of the Holy Spirit.

Supporting Scriptures

Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, against such there is no law.*

Luke 4:1, 14 *Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness... Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.*

Commentary

In **Matthew 22:14** Jesus says this, *Many are called but few are chosen*. This was a scripture my grandfather loved to use and to apply to my life specifically. Now what was so weird is when he would make me out to be the *chosen one*, or the special one. It felt very Mormon or Jehovah Witness or even Matrix-like. It was as if I were the *only* unique one, that I was totally different from every other Christian. Though I love my grandfather deeply, this isn't what this passage is implying.

What Jesus is saying is that the call to follow Him has gone out to everybody, but few have responded to become chosen. He has called many, but few *choose to be chosen*. We actually make the decision as to whether we are chosen or not by the way we respond to Jesus, because on the Cross Jesus called out to anyone who would listen, and is still sounding that same call through the Church today. The call of Christ to the Christian or anyone who will follow is a call to go deep in Him. Even Christianity at its introduction is a call to abandon our life in light of His and to go deep in discovering the knowledge of God.

What's so powerful about palm trees is that, though they are tall, they also go deep into the soil where they are planted. Because palm trees are predominately planted in dry climates, they must have a root system that goes down deep to find water. This analogy is what God uses to describe the maturing bride's life in Him. In the middle of this analogy Jesus shifts gears from describing her to actually releasing her to go forth in the power of the Holy Spirit. The three things in which He releases her are, first, the power of the Holy Spirit. This is what He means when He speaks of her breasts and their ability to feed others. Then secondly, it's the call to refresh others through her life in the Holy Spirit. This is seen when He speaks of the fragrance of her breath being like fruit or apples. And thirdly, he releases her to share the message of intimacy with others. Often times the Church is so busy working for Jesus that we neglect to be with Him and to cultivate a relationship with Him. Burnout is the fruit of this type of relationship with Jesus. What are you going to do to make sure that spending time with Christ is the first thing that you do? How is it going to be the main thing that you live for? Christians, me included, are notorious for talking



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about Jesus being central in our lives, but we are wholly guilty of doing nothing and just speaking cheap words. Your response is either wholehearted or dull and lazy Christianity, but either way it's a response. And remember, the Holy Spirit longs for the day when Jesus is lifted high in His own house as the central thing Christians are living for. Lean into the Holy Spirit today, confess your weakness to Him and ask that He strengthen you with divine might. He is willing, able and happy to do it.



CHAPTER 7

Day 11

Song of Songs 7:9b-10 *The wine goes down smoothly for my beloved, moving gently the lips of sleepers. I am my Beloved's, and his desire is toward me.*

(The bride speaking) I love You Jesus, and as I have felt Your deep love and passion for me, I find myself in agreement with Your leadership over my life. The wine of Your words, and the things that you ask me to do, even though they are difficult, go down smoothly for me. I used to resist Your leadership over me, but no longer do I do that. My life is but a vapor and I want to respond in trust to Your leadership over me. As we have journeyed together down this road of intimacy, I love that You are now using me to awaken others into this bridal relationship with You. You really love me and I can feel it both when You are near and when you feel far. Jesus, I love You!

Supporting Scriptures

Ephesians 5:18 *And do not be drunk with wine which is in dissipation, but be filled with the Holy Spirit...*

Psalms 40:3 *I delight to do Your will O my God, and Your law is within my heart.*

John 6:68 *But Simon Peter answered Him, saying, Lord to whom shall we go, You alone have the Words of eternal life.*

Commentary

Often times when we are in partnership with God there are requests that He asks of us and places that He sets us that are difficult and hard to understand with the natural mind. Over time, as we partner with God in the place of intimacy, we begin to trust Him and see His pure heart of love and tenderness towards us. This makes the difficult season easier because we aren't accusing Him of mistreatment and neglect and we are not offended at His leadership over our lives.

For those us who have tasted that God is good, the wine of His words and His leadership goes down smoothly for us. We don't choke on the pain of situations that He leads us into, for we know that He is a good Shepherd and worthy of our total trust. One of the fruits of trusting Jesus over time in our personal lives is that we become passionate about helping others enter into this same partnership with God.

When you begin to understand God as He rightly is and not how Western Christianity has known Him, you can't help but to share Him with everyone you meet within the Church. When we learn to swallow the wine of God (His leadership) we in turn become passionate about awakening those who are spiritually asleep in Christ. There are many today within the Church who are Christians, but spiritually they are living at a distance.

I love how Peter responds to Jesus' question in **John 6:68**. Here Jesus had just run a bunch of people off with His statement about eating His body and drinking His blood; then, after many people left Christ to follow Him no more, Jesus turned to His own disciples and asked them what they were going to do. Peter responded not only for Himself but also for the others and says *Lord, to whom else can we go, You alone have the words of eternal life*. Peter is saying, I don't totally understand what You are asking me to do, and although this wine that You are serving up is hard to swallow, I have nowhere else to go, so I am going to stay here and trust Your leadership and oversight for my life.



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You and I must enter into this kind of a relationship with Jesus if we are ever to enjoy our Christianity and our experience of Christ. It is also important for us to note that the bride describes her twofold confession that has deeply awakened her heart. First she says *I am my Beloved's*. Here she is declaring that she is a lover of God. She's not serving God at a distance, but up close and personal. And secondly, she says *and my Beloved's desire is for me*. The second half of this is the most difficult for us to attain. The reality that not only do I say that I love God, but that God really loves me, not just loves but is both passionate for me and desires me.

Today, as you are reading this, take the Word of God and speak back to Him. Tell Him that you really love Him and that He really loves you. Work the muscle of faith for the purpose not only of knowing that God loves you but feeling that God loves you. This is yours for the taking, you just have to take it; the Bible says that you must take it by force. Lay hold of it and say it until your heart believes it and your life is changed.



CHAPTER 7

Day 12

Song of Songs 7:11-13 *Come, my Beloved, let us go forth to the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine has budded, whether the grape blossoms are open, and the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love. The mandrakes give off a good fragrance, and at our gates are pleasant fruits, all manner, new and old, which I have laid up for you, my beloved.*

(The bride speaking) Oh my love, come, I was never intended to do ministry on my own. Oh how I love to be with You in Your Father's vineyard's helping others grow deep in the experience of Your love. Let us go together and see if the villages that most people have neglected have grown some since we were last there. Thank You for training me through discipline to live a disciplined life because now instead of sleeping the morning away, I am up and eager to be with You and the ones that You love. I want to express my love for You in the place of service with You.

Supporting Scriptures

Mark 1:35 *Before the sun ever rose, Jesus got up, went out and departed to a solitary place and there He prayed.*

James 2:17-18 *Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, you have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.*

Commentary

The call to serving in the second commandment (ministry, or service to others) is never a call to solitude but to society. It was never a call of selfishness but to love. In **Song of Songs 1:4** the bride makes it clear that she must be drawn first into intimacy before she can successfully run in ministry with others. Intimacy is something that we do primarily by ourselves, and ministry is always something we do in community.

Jesus formed a body, not body parts, and through that body He intends to disciple the nations in the life of His Son, Jesus Christ. Within just two verses the bride says four times *let us*. She is imploring that Christ be with her in the place of Christian service to others. Serving others and serving in the many vineyards of the earth is never about how much you can do on your own, or how strong you are but how you partner with Jesus in the great commandment.

In Chapter Six the bride said *I will go down*, but now she is saying *let us go down*. Anyone who has done Christian service on their own knows how badly we need Jesus to help us serve others in the way that only He can do it. This is why the bride is asking for Him to come with her and really what she is saying is, would you release Your presence and power through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in all that I am doing. The arm of the flesh can only serve others for so long. It's in this place of service that we see the many needs of people and come to understand that serving the nations who are spiritually, physically and emotionally broken is no task for any single individual. *

The bride also says to her Beloved that she wants to rise up early in the morning and go out into the vineyard with Him. Christian service and Christian discipleship in general requires discipline on our part to place our lives before Christ in such a way that our cold heart melts before the bonfire of His burning heart. Spiritual disciplines aren't something we do because we are earning anything from God, but



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because of the longing within us that cries out for more of Him, thus we are compelled to do whatever we have to, so that we can have more of Him. Jesus tells us that through many trials and tribulations we will enter into the Kingdom of God and to walk through those many things that come our way requires that we are disciplined and committed to the journey of being heaven bound.

What are some areas that you are doing things in your own strength, things that you have been doing on your own without Jesus' involvement? And what are some areas for you that are out of balance? Things that you need to re-evaluate so that you continue growing in your spiritual disciplines that God has called you into. Take time today and evaluate your life before Jesus, through the work of the Holy Spirit.



CHAPTER 8

Day1

Song of Songs 8:1-2 *Oh that you were like my brother, who nursed at my mother's breasts! If I should find you outside, I would kiss you; I would not be despised. I would lead you into the house of my mother, she who used to instruct me. I would cause you to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate.*

(**The bride speaking**) I wish there were a way for us to relate so that I could show You affection in public and we wouldn't be disgraced. So often when I show my love for You in public and when I attempt to love You to the fullest, in intimacy, I am shamed by those around me. It's something that I do behind closed doors, and in that place of secret I can be a fool for You. I can be a broken, weeping, dancing and rejoicing bride. You love me so well and I long more than anything to be with You. I know that I first asked You to kiss me, but now I long to also to speak to You!

Supporting Scriptures

2 Corinthians 5:2-4 *For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.*

Philippians 1:21-23 *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor, yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.*

Commentary

For all who have touched a deep life in Christ, or at least have been awakened in deep love for Christ, completely understand what the maturing bride is saying here. She is longing for the ability to express her love for the Groom in wholehearted ways, in public.

It's one thing to express love for Jesus in private or even in the Church, but to do it in public, to hold onto the truths of the Bible at work, to have morals, to express extravagant love for Jesus in public, well, this a completely different story. So many of us struggle with making it clear whom we belong to when it comes to loving Jesus. I try and pray daily that God would break off the fear of man from my life so that I would be a faithful witness to Jesus Christ even under the pressures of our present culture. Even something as simple as speaking in tongues in Church becomes something that paralyzes most Christians. I agree there is a time and place, but to never do it at all around your brothers and sisters in Christ because of fear is something that must be broken. We are talking about speaking to God in the heavenly language that God has given to us.

The bride in this passage is expressing those same longings. She is saying that she longs to live wholeheartedly for Jesus in public just like she does in private. In the culture that the bride was speaking this, it was more acceptable for a sister to show affection to a brother than a fiancé. So she is using this language to say that she longed to show Solomon affection in public like she would in private. There is a longing in all who have been awakened in deep love for Christ to express that passion in public but often even in the Church our extravagant love for Christ is seen as foolishness.

What fears hold you back from expressing your passion for Jesus publicly? Now I'm not saying that you should be holding up billboards and shouting from a megaphone, but what fears hold you back at the work place? What fears hold you back from not participating in things that violate the core values in your heart and from what you read in the Bible? What fears hold you back around other Christians from expressing your love for God at Church, at prayer meetings, at small group and the other Church related events you attend? Take time today and ask Holy Spirit to show you what fears you have and how you can become free from them and also express your love for Christ.



CHAPTER 8

Day 2

Song of Songs 8:3-4 *His left hand is under my head, and His right hand embraces me. I charge you daughters of Jerusalem, do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.*

(The bride speaking) I know that you are looking on My love from a distance, and I know that internally you long to be near Him but are living at a distance externally. I challenge you just like I have in the past, only come near Him if you are willing to surrender all for Him, because if you only give up half of your heart or just a portion of your heart to Him, you will be among the most miserable people on earth. His love is powerful, it's all consuming and when you say *yes* to Him something is ignited deep within you that will only burn brighter until death. Only do it if you're serious about giving Him all. Only do this if you're willing to look like a fool for Christ

Supporting Scriptures

2 Timothy 2:4-5 *No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlists him as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.*

1 Corinthians 4:9-10 *For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are distinguished, but we are dishonored.*

Commentary

The Church today and the Church throughout world history has been filled with people who say *yes* to Jesus but never jump fully into the river of His love. I call this living at a distance from Jesus. The power of the bridal paradigm is that it gives us the perspective of being in relationship with Jesus just like a bride and a groom.

This isn't about being male or female but about being in a position of privilege with Jesus. It's about having access to Jesus' heart and His hand much like a bride would have access to her husband's heart and hand. It represents a relationship of intimacy and nearness to the Creator of all things. So when we look through this paradigm we can see that some still remain at a distance from Jesus and never lean fully into His heart to enter into the fullness of what we were created for. It's like having just enough Jesus to get you into heaven, but still have some connection to life in this age.

Again, the daughters represent those in the Church that never fully jump into the river of God's love for them. So the bride is saying to them, only respond with your *yes* to Him, if you're willing to jump all the way in. Because if you say *yes* to Him, but don't jump all the way in, you will live with so much condemnation and guilt over the double life that you're trying to live. Many of us unfortunately live in this kind of a relationship with Jesus. We attend Church, we may even come out to some mid-week meetings, but the way that we live our lives day to day, from what we watch, where we spend our money, how we spend our free time, the lack of Bible reading, the non-existent prayer lives and lack of spiritual disciplines speak the same word as those in the Song, the daughters of Jerusalem.

We also are living at a distance. Jesus challenges the people in His day through the passage listed above to leave everything and follow Him. To give up house and home, kiss father and mother good bye and



CHAPTER 8

follow Him. And then He goes even further and says that we also should take up our cross (take the death march) and deny ourselves to follow Him. He asks us to do this, because He Himself has already done it.

My challenge to you today, is just like the challenge from the bride, don't awaken love until you're ready to chase it all the way. But, if you're ready today, then abandon everything and chase the Lord with your whole heart. If you want to do this but find yourself not doing it, talk to the Holy Spirit right now and ask for help. Ask Him for help, right now. Tell Him you want to give all and follow all the days of your life, but you struggle and you need His help. He will help you.



CHAPTER 8

Day 3

Song of Songs 8:5

Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?

(The daughters of Jerusalem speaking) We can see from a distance this figure walking towards us. It's not clear from here if it is one person or two. It seems as if it's the bride and her groom, but we can't tell if there one or there are two. We see that, as they move closer, its two people but they seem as one. It's as if the bride is fully leaning upon her Beloved and she is overcoming all things earthly and demonic, but she's not doing it on her own, it's through her Beloved, through Christ. She is ascending from this fallen age in power, fully leaning upon Christ and it's stunning to our eyes. Who is this one?

Supporting Scriptures

Proverbs 3:5 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but acknowledge the Lord in all your ways and he shall direct your paths.*

John 16:33 *These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Commentary

Life in this age is promised to be difficult, full of pressures and great tribulations. If that were the whole story we would have no reason for rejoicing, but that's only part of the story. The rest of the story is that Jesus Himself tells us that we don't have to worry about all those pressures, hardships, and trials but rather take heart and be of good courage, for He has overcome all things earthly and demonic. Jesus fully understands our situations and the difficulties that we face, for He indeed faced them personally.

But the reason we have for rejoicing is because not only did He encounter those troubles, but He overcame them and His promise to us is that if He overcame them, so also will we. Now, we don't overcome all things earthly and demonic just because Jesus said so, or just because we want to, but because we choose to lean into Christ. The truth is, on my own I can't overcome much of anything. But through Christ I can overcome all things. It's not about how strong I am, but about how well I lean on Christ for all things. Not just for something, but for all things.

What we have happening in the story of the bride is that the daughters of Jerusalem see her coming up from the wilderness leaning upon Christ. Now if you remember in **Song of Songs 3:6** Jesus is pictured coming up from the wilderness as an over comer. Truly Jesus is the Chief over-comer. He has conquered death, hell and the grave and He is alive for evermore. So, because Jesus has overcome so also can we. But we only do it by leaning upon Christ.

The wilderness represents all things earthly and demonic. This represents life in this fallen age here on earth. So the daughters see her as coming up from life in this age totally disconnected from its pleasure; the earth no longer has a hold on her heart. She's free to look for an eternal city and to leave this one on earth. But what's so powerful about this picture is she is fully leaning upon Christ to overcome. It's one thing to have power on your life to overcome, but it's completely different to still be leaning on Christ. I call this a loving and leaning heart. It's a heart fully empowered by the Holy Spirit, but a life that's still leaning upon Christ for all things.

What do you do when you're having a good day, or week, or month or year in Christ? Do you return to give thanks and press in harder, or do you back off and enjoy what you have received. Remember, love knows no static place; it's either moving forward or moving away. It's never just idle. What is your love for Jesus doing right now? Pressing in towards Him to overcome, or moving away?



CHAPTER 8

Day 4

Song of Songs 8:5b *I awakened you under the apple tree. There your mother brought you forth; there she who bore you brought you forth.*

(The Groom Speaking) I remember, under the apple tree, when I first touched your heart with how I felt about you. It was there that you saw both your unique beauty before Me and also My unique beauty among everything else in the earth. It was in the Church that you saw these two realities and it caused you to be awakened in love towards me. Oh how special you are to Me and how special I am to those that have had their eyes opened. It was in this twofold reality that you were brought forth in love.

Supporting Scriptures

John 20:17 *Jesus said to her, do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.*

John 15:9 *As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.*

Commentary

For many years in my Christianity I have focused on my passion for Jesus and how well I was able to keep myself committed to Him. But one day I heard a teaching that emphasized the reality that I am not a good follower, it's that Jesus is a great Leader. It's not that I am a good listener, but that Jesus is a good speaker. It's not about my ability to keep myself in Him, but about His strong love that's able to keep me. It's not that I love Him, but that He fully loved and loves me. It was through this reality that I began to understand if I focused on Jesus' strong love for me, instead of my weak love for Him, that I was able to enjoy Him more and rest in my relationship with Him.

The other thing that is so critical for us to become awakened in love for Christ is that we see the same twofold reality that the bride saw in **Song of Songs 2:2-3** which the Groom is referring to here in **Song of Songs 8:5**. He is reminding her here that her heart was originally awakened when she first saw her beauty before Him and then saw His beauty among the other things in this earth. It took those two realities to make her heart fully alive in Christ and it takes the same for us. If we never see that we are special to God and only see that God is special we will live at a distance from God. The idea here is that if we feel loved and feel clean we live clean. But if we feel neglected, overlooked, common and dirty then we also live that same way before God.

But when we see that we have been sought out, called, loved and cherished we respond rightly. How we see God and how we see ourselves are the two most critical parts of enjoying Christianity. Now, even in that twofold reality we will have plenty of up's and down's but we can get through them because we know that God is good and that He loves us like a husband loves a wife.

My question to you today is how do you see yourself before Christ? What do you do when you sin, or have a bad day where you weren't very spiritual? Do you run towards Him and allow Him to love you and hold you, and speak words of encouragement over you, or do you run away from him, hide in shame, guilt and condemnation? If you run from God, you don't see both Him and yourself rightly. Take the time this morning and ask the Holy Spirit what He thinks of you. Ask Him how much you mean to Jesus and listen for His response. And then ask Him what He is like. What made Him do what He did on the cross for you. Give Him time to speak, and meditate on this thought throughout the day.



CHAPTER 8

Day 5

Song of Songs 8:6a *Set Me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm...*

(God speaking) Oh my love, I want to be the central thing in your life. I want to be the main thing that your heart is living for and from that reality I also want to be the strength of your arm. I spoke through Moses and said that you shall love me with all of your heart and I have echoed it again in the gospels, that you shall love Me with everything and love your neighbor as yourself. Allow Me, to set that divine seal of fire upon your heart and upon your arm. I will sign it with My very name and I will endorse all that you're doing in the gospel work. Place Me first and your service second.

Supporting Scriptures

Psalm 90:17 *And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish the work of our hands for us; yes, establish the work of our hands.*

Ephesians 1:13-14 *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation.*

Commentary

Misty Edwards sings a song with words that go like this *I'll take my cold, cold heart.....I'll take my un-renewed mind...I'll take Your word in my hand, and I'll give you time...to come and melt me.* Something that we must remember is that we are not doing spiritual disciplines to earn anything from God. Fasting doesn't earn anything from God, nor does praying a lot, nor does reading the Bible all day or spending all your life serving the poor. Beloved, you can't earn something you have already been given. It's more about waking up to the reality of where you already are.

The reality is we do the spiritual disciplines and the service to others, because it puts our cold heart in the way of a burning God. My heart is only on fire to the degree that it gets closer to Jesus. Spiritual disciplines and service to others help move me and position my cold heart before the burning God. What's so powerful about what's taking place here is that we can hear the longing of the Eternal God to have a people that belong fully to Him; everything that they do for others, is done in the strength of His name and in relationship with Him.

Did you know that it's possible to fall out of relationship with Jesus through serving Him? Many times Jesus had strict words to Churches and ministries that had lost their love for Him in their service towards others. Listen to the words of Jesus here. He is longing to be the strength of what we live for at the heart level and then also in the service of our lives towards others. This is the first and second commandment in perfect order, spiritual love for Jesus first and service and love for others secondly. Jesus is passionate about raising up a people that love Him in the way that He loves them; a people that love others and our cities in the way that He loves others and our cities. The harvest is never a problem for Jesus, it's always prepared and sent messengers where He has a shortage.

I pray that you can hear the tenderness of the Lord in this passage longing for the central place in our hearts and lives. Take time today, and say to the Holy Spirit *Come*, set Jesus as the divine seal of fire upon both my heart and my arm. I want to live for You at the heart level and serve others with You, not for You. Come and ignite my heart in passion for You alone.



CHAPTER 8

Day 6

Song of Songs 8:6b-7 *For love is strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it out. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised.*

(God Speaking) For I say to you, My Love, as sure as the grave is for every person who has ever lived so also is My love. It's a strong love, stronger than anything that will come against My love. It has weathered every storm of human history and it will be no different for you. My love burns hot, hotter than you will ever know. For My eyes are filled with fire, with passion for you, not just when you're strong and mature, but when you're weak and struggling. I love you and that love caused My very death, but love empowered Me to suffer, because I longed to be with you forever.

Supporting Scriptures

John 10:28-29 *And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one.*

Matthew 3:11 *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandal I am not worthy to carry, He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

Commentary

So aptly Solomon describes his love for the Shulamite not just as a flame, but as a most vehement flame. The word vehement is being used to say that it's not just hot; it's so hot, hotter than you could ever understand. When Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit in **Acts 2** we see that fire came upon them and that fire was significant for two main reasons. Firstly, fire is purifying.

We know that when the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus He came in the likeness of a dove. The dove represents peace, purity, gentleness among many other things. But when the Holy Spirit was poured out in Acts 2 on the disciples and apostles it came like fire. Unlike Jesus, we must be cleansed of sin and unrighteousness and have our internal life cleansed by God Himself through the Holy Spirit. Secondly, the fire of the Holy Spirit represents passion. This is what this passage in the Song of Songs is talking about. It's talking about the passion of God in the likeness of an eternal fire that never burns out, but should actually be growing day by day, night by night and week by week.

When we look at the Revelation of Jesus Christ we start seeing that everything around God is on fire. His eyes are flames of fire, there's seven lamps of fire burning before Him, there a sea of glass mingled with fire, His feet are like burnished brass as if refined in a fire, He's selling gold that's been refined in a fire and His face is brighter than the sun shining in all of its strength. See, it's not that Jesus is like fire; it's that He is fire. Jesus is a burning flame of both passion and purity. The fire of God first purifies us and then it empowers us with passion for Him and for others. Beloved, the fire of God is not something to be afraid of, but rather something to long for. We want to be set on fire by the burning God because just like Moses' burning bush experience, the bush was consumed but not burnt up. This fire doesn't burn out like the many lesser fires that we chase in this age. This is a fire that only burns brighter and never dies out.

Ask for the Holy Spirit to fill you with the love that never disappoints, that's strong and that you can place all your hope in. We want to burn bright with the light of the Lamb. Ask Him now; He will set you on fire!



CHAPTER 8

Day 7

Song of Songs 8:8-9 *We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister in the day when she is spoken for? If she is a wall, we will build upon her a battlement of silver; and if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.*

(The Brothers/Daughters of Jerusalem speaking) I know that we ridiculed you in the start of your journey that we were envious and jealous of you, but now we see the wisdom of your abandonment towards the King. We see the fruit of how you have loved Him and how His loved for you has completely changed you. We have a young lady in the Church and we don't know what to do for her and how to awaken love for Jesus within her. Would you help us, would you come and share your journey with her and tell her about what happened to you?

Supporting Scriptures

Acts 26:19 *Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision...*

1st Corinthians 15:10 *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which was with me.*

Commentary

This is one of the most bittersweet passages in the entire Song. Here we have the brothers and the daughters of Jerusalem asking the mature bride to come and help them awaken love in the life of a young lady in the Church. Remember the brothers from **Song of Songs 1:6**? They were angry with her, they were jealous of her and instead of helping her love the King, they put her to work. After working hard in the Church, she ended up burning out and losing both other people's vineyards and also her own. It's these same brothers who are now coming around and asking for her help. They have come full circle. These ones, who were once so jealous of her passion for the King, now see the wisdom of her lifestyle and they are asking her for help.

The reason this is bitter sweet is because when they first put her to work it really damaged her heart, but because she stayed faithful to the Lord she is now able to help them, which is the sweet part. Here's the key for you. When you start following the Lamb, you aren't responding to the expression of ministry that God is going to give you, you're only responding to the revelation that He has given you. Often times we want expression for the revelation that we have received, but Jesus doesn't work that way. Jesus first gives us a revelation of Himself, and as we press His heart and grow in intimacy with Him the expression of that revelation starts to take shape.

The reason why this presents a problem for many sincere Christians is because instead of growing in the revelation of Jesus or the specific revelation that we have received, we throw ourselves into understanding its expression. The Biblical pattern is that we spend the majority of our time growing in the revelation we have received; in due time the expression takes shape, almost by itself. For you to see the expression of what God has written upon your heart, you will have to give yourself to the revelation. That revelation will take you through many deep waters, sleepless nights, dark valleys and some high mountains. But for you to see the fruit of others coming around and asking help from you, you will have to walk the long, cold and lonely road that the bride has walked. Remember, we are nearing the end of her journey.

What is the revelation of God that you have received and how are you walking that out? How are you searching that out? How are you growing in the knowledge of God not just the expression?



CHAPTER 8

Day 8

Song of Songs 8:10a *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers; then I became in His eyes as one who found peace.*

(The bride speaking) I have complete clarity about who I am both before Jesus and before others. I have lost the strife and the positioning of myself before others and I have peace about who I am. There is nothing like the feeling of knowing who I am before Jesus. I realize now that I am not working to earn something from Him that He has already given me. I am His and He is mine. There is so much peace in living before His eyes and His eyes alone. The peace came when I understood who I was and that peace which I now have is priceless.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 11:28 *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

John 13:3-4 *Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.*

Commentary

The bride in this verse is making a huge declaration before those around her and before God. This is what I call *full bridal maturity*. This is a completely yoked relationship, meaning that both the bride and Groom are walking in totally unity. She makes the statement that she is a wall. A wall in the Old Testament meant a whole lot more than it does today. We see that the book of Nehemiah is nearly completely dedicated to the rebuilding of the wall around the city.

That wall was made to protect things coming into the city. They would set watchman on those walls who were those that looked ahead and tried to foresee trouble on the horizon. In the spiritual sense, she is saying that she has a prophetic gift that enables her to give spiritual direction to those around her and she can also help guard the flock of God from those things which would hinder the work of God in that fold.

What is also true about both her life and ours is that in this place of understanding that which God had called her into; she had obtained total peace and security in Christ. It's not easy to find yourself before Jesus and to stop the internal turmoil that takes place as we are in the process. But just like Jesus, because He knew who He was and where He was going, He was able to take off His robes and gird Himself with a towel. It's hard for us to serve others, when we don't know who we are first. And the knowledge of who we are doesn't come from within, but from Christ.

I love that the bride says that she was living before His eyes. She is talking about the secret life that we have before Jesus and Jesus alone.

Who are you? Do you know? Do you struggle with finding your place among the crowd? Do you think that you just blend in when God looks at you, or do you stand out to Him? How you answer those questions determines a lot when it comes to loving God and loving others. If you don't know who you are, or what you're called to do, start by asking Jesus. Take today and the days that follow and ask Him for wisdom. He will give it, if you just ask Him.



CHAPTER 8

Day 9

Song of Songs 8:11 *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon; He leased the vineyard to keepers; everyone was to bring for its fruit a thousand silver coins.*

(The bride speaking) O King of all wealth, I want to steward rightly what you have given to me. I want to be accountable as a faithful servant who oversees His Master's house in a right way. I want to be diligent to work in the field that you have set me in; I long for the day when you return and reward me for my labor. I thank You for showing me there is a reward for me if only I endure until the end.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 25:14-30 --Read the story on your own

Matthew 24: 45 *Who then is that faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season.*

Commentary

I find that when I talk about the rewards of Christ both in this age and in the age to come, it catches many Christians off guard, almost as if they have never thought about it. Now if something is new to a person, that's okay, but if you have been around the Church for a lot of years and you know nothing about the eternal rewards of Christ, that's a problem.

When you look at **Revelation 2-3** there are twenty-two rewards listed in just two chapters. Along with those rewards are the words *to him who overcomes*. I remember when that first touched me, the connection between the over-comers and those who receive rewards from Christ. Jesus understands that both the Church throughout world history and the Church at the end of this age will, even more, need to have an overcoming spirit. So to connect us with a hope to endure and overcome, Jesus offers us rewards. Those rewards are to motivate us to live in such a way that we are longing for life in the age to come, not just life in this age.

Solomon was a wealthy King and he had many gardens; he would hire people to work these fields and oversee what belonged to him. Jesus also spoke much about working in the farm, and specifically cultivating and overseeing that which He has given to us. Jesus has also given us great things that are tucked away inside our lives and He expects us to not just bury them in the ground, but put them to work and multiply what we have been given. What you have been given from God is a gift from Him, but what you do with what you've been given is your gift to Him.

Did you know that you will give a gift to God? You will. What you oversee rightly and handle with care and passion, God will reward you when you present it before Him on that day. Your life holds great eternal rewards if you will steward rightly what God has given to you. Don't shrink back now and shy away from rightly overseeing what God has given you, for you will be rewarded if you do it rightly. Ask the Holy Spirit for help so that nothing is burned up when you stand before Christ. He will help, but you must ask.



CHAPTER 8

Day 10

Song of Songs 8:12 *My own vineyard is before me. You, O Solomon, may have a thousand, and those that tend its fruit two thousand.*

(The Bride Speaking) Oh my Love, I can see now that my life has come full circle. When I first said yes to You, I also said yes to lots of other people, but that didn't get me very far. In fact, as I said yes not only to You, but lots of other things, I lost my vineyard in the service of other vineyards. But now, now my Beloved, my own vineyard is before me. Not only am I doing well pursuing the first commandment, but I am also making an impact in the second commandment. I love this life in You! Take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

Supporting Scriptures

Matthew 13:45-46 *Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 *Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*

Commentary

It's hard to describe this powerful statement the lovesick bride is speaking to the Beloved. Though it is small and could easily be overlooked, it is packed with so much power and truth. Remember in **Song of Songs 1:6** when she said that her own vineyard was neglected because she was serving everyone else's vineyard? And now look at what she is saying towards the end of her journey.

She is making the declaration that her personal life, her heart, her garden, her vineyard is before her, it's maintained and kept clean and in right order. The goal of our lives is to be at the same place as the bride as we age, both in life and in Christ. We don't want to live our lives out of order when it comes to the first and second commandment.

It's so important that we see the passion in the heart of God for us to live in a right order, specifically in the first and second commandment. The bride is able to say with all confidence that her own vineyard is before her. I have met very few people in my life that live in this kind of a way. It's the kind of way that says *no* too many things so that they can say *yes* to the *one thing* of loving God first and foremost. We too, just like the bride, want to look at Jesus and the tending of our own heart first and from the fruit of this we can go out and serve the nations.

It's like the idea of a good Shepherd. A good Shepherd can shepherd others well, if he also is being shepherded well. We must take care of our own hearts first and from that reality we can go and help other people with their lives. Jesus taught it one way by saying that we should take care of the log in our own eye before we go and try to take care of the speck in someone else's eye.

With this in mind, what does your own heart look like? Listen, it doesn't have to be perfect, but are you working on it? Are you working to put your heart in right order? I encourage you to take time and sit before Christ; say *no* to the lesser pearls of this age, so that you can say *yes* to the Pearl of Great Price.



CHAPTER 8

Day 11

Song of Songs 8:13 *You who dwell in the gardens, the companions listen for your voice—let Me hear it.*

(God speaking) Look at what's happening in your life My love. The people are coming from all over to hear what's in your heart. Because of the way that you have tended the garden of your heart, I have opened up a door of great ministry influence for you to share with others what's been worked in you. I have caused this in you because of your longing and hunger for Me. But in the middle of all this influence, don't forget to let Me hear your voice. I hope you hear My passion for you My beloved. Don't get so busy feeding others that you forget to speak with Me. How I love your voice!

Supporting Scriptures

Revelation 2:4-5 *Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.*

Revelation 3:19 *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*

Commentary

Life can often present us with pressures and difficulties. We live in a very busy culture and a busy way of life in general. Even in the Church it's true that we are often running from one place to the next, doing this thing and then off to take care of that thing. God blesses all of us in different ways. Some of us have large doors opened up for us and others have smaller doors opened unto them. It's not the size of the open door that matters, because the person who has a small door of opportunity opened for them can be overwhelmed with the responsibility just as the person with the large open door.

What's taking place here in the life of the bride is that God has now opened up a large ministry door for her. People are coming to hear her, they are listening to her. They are buying her tapes, CDs, DVDs and books. She is giving them what God has worked into her over the past eight chapters which really represent her entire life in Christ and it's good what she is feeding others. But in the middle of it all the Lord breaks in and says to her, *I know that people are coming to hear you, they are buying books you have written from these experiences you have had in Me, but don't forget to also let Me hear your voice.*

Can you hear the tenderness of the Lord, the uncreated God, who is all powerful, all knowing and ever present saying to her that He longs to hear her voice? This is stunning! I have heard God remind me over the years that though ministry opportunities present themselves and though my life gets busy, don't forget Me in the middle of it all. I often in the secret place of my heart say to the Lord *I will sit before You, before I stand before man.*

It's important that we make that same decision; however you decide to do it. Often times we think about God, while complaining about God and about our lives to others. We mumble around about our lives, but so often we don't ever really say anything to God Himself. Take time right now to talk to Him. Lift your voice to Him and speak to His heart, with your own voice and your own words. He longs to hear you, right now, right where you're at.



CHAPTER 8

Day 12

Song of Songs 8:14 *Make haste, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices.*

(The bride speaking) I started this journey with passion and longing, weak hunger and it has only increased to epic proportions. My love, how deeply my heart is awakened towards you right now. I ask that You would come to me. Come quickly to me. Show yourself to me like you did in Chapter Two as One who conquers all things earthly and demonic. How I long for nearness to You and I miss you. Come Lord Jesus!

Supporting Scriptures

Revelation 22:17 *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come!*

Luke 5:33 *Then they said to Him, why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink. And he said to them, Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they will fast in those days.*

Commentary

Here we have come to the conclusion of our commentary of the Song of Songs. This is what we could call the *Bride's final intercession*. Here the bride is standing in the **Revelation 22:17, 20** position. After John hears everything from the book of Revelation, with all its calamities, it doesn't cause him to shrink back, but it causes Him to long for Jesus to come quickly. This is where the bride is. She is standing in the place of longing and deep hunger asking for Him to come to her.

What's so beautiful about this entire song and the journey of Christianity is that though it starts with weak hunger and weak passion, if we stay with it, it will become a deep well of internal longing that only grows brighter and brighter until the full light of day. The bride at the end of her journey isn't tired and worn out, depressed or discouraged, but fully in love, longing for Him to come to her.

This started as just a few coals that were ready to go out and by now she has received the seal of fire and her heart is engulfed with His love for her. Is your hunger for Jesus growing or waning? Is it getting stronger or growing dimmer? Maybe you are at the place today where the bride first started, and you have hunger, but it's weak and feels really small. Don't worry; it's not going to stay that way. Surely it will increase and grow into the burning flame that God longs for you to have. Don't be discouraged at what you have or don't have, be grateful there's a spark of hunger in your heart for Jesus.

As you water that hunger with some prayer, fasting, worship, Bible study, personal Bible reading, over time it will grow into something that will captivate your entire life. Remember, you're working with the uncreated God who is well able to ignite your heart and cause His love in you to burn bright!

Thanks for reading this and thanks for having passion for Jesus. Take time to ask God to fan into flame that little flicker in your heart. Remember, however big you might think your flame is, it's little in comparison to what Jesus will do if only you ask.