

Table of Contents

SESSION 1 - Introduction to the Song of Solomon	3
I. INTRODUCTION.....	3
II. THE SONG REVEALS THE PATTERN OF HOLY PASSION	3
III. HOW TO INTERPRET THE SONG OF SOLOMON.....	4
IV. THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION: 3 COMMON APPROACHES	5
V. ALL BELIEVERS ARE INCLUDED IN THE BRIDE.....	5
VI. THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS OF THE BOOK.....	6
VII. COMPARING ECCLESIASTES AND SONG OF SONGS.....	7
VIII. THE CANTICLES OR A SERIES OF SONGS	7
IX. ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION	8
SESSION 2, PART 1 - Encountering Jesus in the Greatest Song (Song 1:1)	9
I. THE GREATEST SONG.....	9
II. FOUR DISTINCTIVES OF THE SONG OF SOLOMON	9
III. THE 3-FOLD INHERITANCE—PS. 2:11-12	10
IV. TURNING THE SONG INTO AN AFFECTIONATE PRAYER DIALOGUE WITH JESUS.....	11
V. ENCOUNTERING JESUS: PRAY-READING THE SONG OF SOLOMON.....	12
VI. THE NECESSITY OF JOURNALING	13
SESSION 2, PART 2 - Receiving the Divine Kiss: Using the Bridal Paradigm to let the Word transform you	14
I. INTRODUCTION.....	14
II. THE KISS OF GOD’S WORD.....	14
III. THE DIVINE KISS: THE BRIDE’S SUPREME REQUEST	15
IV. THE 3-FOLD NATURE OF THE CRY FOR THE KISS OF GOD’S WORD	16

V.	THE 2-FOLD SPIRITUAL REST OF THE BELIEVER.....	17
VI.	LIVING BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF ONE	18
VII.	PRACTICAL APPLICATION: SEEKING THE KISSES OF GOD’S WORD	18
	SESSION 3 - An Overview of the Storyline in the Song of Solomon.....	19
I.	SONG OF SOLOMON: THE DIVINE KISS & THE BRIDE’S LIFE VISION (SONG 1:2-4)	19
II.	HER JOURNEY BEGINS WITH THE PARADOX OF GRACE (SONG 1:5-11) AND EXTERNAL CRISIS (SONG 1:6c).....	19
III.	UNDERSTANDING HER IDENTITY (SONG 1:12-2:7)	21
IV.	CHALLENGING THE COMFORT ZONE (SONG 2:8-17)	22
V.	SHE EXPERIENCES GOD’S LOVING DISCIPLINE (SONG 3:1-5).....	22
VI.	A FRESH REVELATION OF JESUS AS A “SAFE SAVIOR” (SONG 3:6-11).....	23
VII.	THE PROPHETIC HEART OF THE BRIDEGROOM GOD (SONG 4:1-8)	23
VIII.	THE RAVISHED HEART OF THE BRIDEGROOM GOD (SONG 4:9-5:1).....	24
IX.	THE ULTIMATE 2-FOLD TEST OF MATURITY (SONG 5:2-8)	25
X.	THE BRIDE’S RESPONSE TO THE 2-FOLD TEST (SONG 5:9-6:5).....	26
XI.	JESUS PRAISES HER AFTER THE SEASON OF TESTING (SONG 6:4-10).....	27
XII.	THE VINDICATION OF THE PERSECUTED BRIDE (SONG 6:11-7:9A).	28
XIII.	THE BRIDE'S MATURE PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS (SONG 7:9B-8:4).....	28
XIV.	THE BRIDAL SEAL OF MATURE LOVE (SONG 8:5-7).....	29
XV.	THE BRIDE’S FINAL INTERCESSION AND REVELATION (SONG 8:8-14).....	29

saturday@theHOP Core Values ***The Song of Solomon***

SESSION 1 - Introduction to the Song of Solomon

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In this session, we will give introductory information about the Song of Solomon and principles of interpretation. This will give us a road map so as to understand the big picture in the Song.
- B. King Solomon is the author of this eight chapter love Song in approximately 900 BC. It was probably written before his spiritual decline (1 Kings 11:3-4).
- C. The two primary sections of the Song are Song 1-4 and Song 5-8.
 - 1. The first four chapters of the Song focus on the Bride understanding and enjoying her inheritance in Christ. These chapters emphasize how God views and desires her.
 - 2. The last four chapters focus on Jesus' inheritance in the Bride. We seek something from Him, but He also seeks something from us. He wants us to love Him with all our heart (Mt. 22:37). The focus of the book completely shifts in the middle (4:16-5:1).
 - 3. This book describes a journey ... a progression to mature intimacy. We can all see ourselves at different places in the book.

II. THE SONG REVEALS THE PATTERN OF HOLY PASSION

- A. This Song reveals God's pattern in how we grow in passion for Jesus. It touches the significant principles and practical realities needed to develop mature love for God.
- B. Understanding this Song helps us identify the issues that God is specifically dealing with in our lives. It equips us to discern what God is doing in the different seasons in our lives. Through our life, we ebb and flow in and out of the testing and blessing described throughout the Song. People often find themselves in two different places in this Song in the seasons of their life. I revisit the same place in the Song again and again.
- C. The extent to which you live a Surrendered Life will be determined by your level of intimacy.
- D. Intimacy is the motivation that keeps you returning to the prayer room.
- E. Intimacy is what unlocks the mysteries of God.

III. HOW TO INTERPRET THE SONG OF SOLOMON

- A. *Natural interpretation*: this view depicts a natural love story between King Solomon and his bride, the Shulamite maiden. It emphasizes biblical principles that honor the beauty of love within marriage. This view has grown in popularity in the last 100 years and has many good commentaries. There are two basic story lines when interpreting the Song as a natural love story.
1. The first tells of a Shulamite maiden who was wooed by the handsome and wealthy King Solomon who progressively wins her heart as the storyline unfolds.
 2. The second is the story of a godly Shulamite maiden who deeply loves a poor shepherd in her hometown (Shunem). King Solomon passed through her town and noticed her working in a vineyard. He was struck by her extraordinary beauty. Thus, he sought to steal her heart away from the poor shepherd that she loved. She remained loyal to the poor shepherd in the midst of the temptations of King Solomon's wealth and power.
- B. *Spiritual interpretation*: this is a symbolic interpretation to see the spiritual truths in our relationship with Jesus behind the natural love story. This is the approach I will use in this study course. We study the Song to gain deeper understanding of our relationship with Jesus. This is the most common interpretation over the last 3000 years (since Solomon wrote this Song).
1. Jesus is exalted in the Song. He spoke of Himself from all the Scriptures to the disciples on the Emmaus road. He went through all 39 books of the OT to speak of Himself.

“He expounded...in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

- Luke 24:27

2. The Spirit inspired all Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16) and exalts Jesus in all that He does.

“He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.”

- John 16:14

3. The Spirit has deep friendship with Jesus and a fierce loyalty to fill people with love for Jesus. They have been together from eternity past. Thus, it is inconceivable for the Spirit to inspire a book in the Bible without Jesus being the predominant theme.

IV. THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION: 3 COMMON APPROACHES

- A. First, is the relationship between Jesus and the individual believer. This approach gives spiritual principles that aid us in our progression of holy passion. This is the way we approach this study.
- B. Second, is the relationship between Jesus and His corporate Church throughout history.
- C. Third, is the relationship between God as the Bridegroom and ethnic Israel as His Bride (Jer. 2:2; Hos. 2:16-20; Ezek. 16:8-14, 20-21, 32, 38; Is. 54:5-6). This was the primary approach of the scribes in OT times as well as Jewish rabbis today.
- D. We bless different interpretations as long as they exhort others to grow in love for Jesus.

V. ALL BELIEVERS ARE INCLUDED IN THE BRIDE

- A. Theologically, all believers on earth are betrothed (engaged) to Jesus. In Hebrew tradition, an engaged couple was legally married and needed to be divorced if they broke their engagement.

“For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

- 2 Corinthians 11:2

- B. The consummation of the marriage relationship occurs in the age to come (Rev. 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.”

- Revelation 19:7

- C. A working definition of the Bride is one that includes all those who are mature in love.
- D. I believe that the Bride of Christ is the entire Church from history that is filled with mature love. In the resurrection, the Spirit will bring God’s work to completion in the whole church. In other words, every believer will experience a mature bridal relationship with Jesus.
- E. First, the maturity of the Bride is ultimately the fruit of Jesus’ work on the cross.

“If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

- Romans 8:31-32

- F. Second, in heaven there will be only one unified people, rather than two classes of believers. Jesus prayed that His people would be unified like the Father and the Son.

“That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You...”
- John 17:21

- G. Third, we will be like Jesus when we see Him in glory. The impact of seeing God will release great power that will transform all believers in the age-to-come.

“When He is revealed we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”
- John 3:2

- H. Fourth, the Bride’s destiny is ensured by God’s ravished heart for her. His heart is ravished for all of His people. God’s heart is ravished for all the redeemed, not just for those who are spiritually mature during their brief time on the earth. Jesus is not more ravished for one group in the Church than He is for another group.

“You have ravished My heart, My sister, My spouse...”
- Song of Solomon 4:9

- I. Summary: the maturity of the Bride is based primarily upon Jesus’ work on the cross, His intercession, the revelation of His glory and His ravished heart for us.

VI. THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS OF THE BOOK

- A. *King Solomon*: in the spiritual interpretation he is a picture of the triumphant resurrected Jesus Christ who is King of Kings.
- B. *Shulamite maiden*: in the spiritual interpretation she is a picture of the Bride of Christ. She is introduced as a young maiden who grows up to become a Bride in mature partnership with King Jesus. The Shulamite is mentioned once by name (6:13). She lived in Shunam (north of Jezreel).
- C. *Daughters of Jerusalem*: in the spiritual interpretation they speak of sincere yet spiritually immature believers. They look to the Shulamite for answers on how to grow close to the King. They are not an actual group that we can identify in history (but personify immature believers).

VII. COMPARING ECCLESIASTES AND SONG OF SONGS

- A. Solomon wrote 3 books in the Old Testament: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon. It was common for the Jewish fathers to relate the 3 books of Solomon to the temple he built.
 - 1. They related the book of Proverbs to the outer court of Solomon's temple.
 - 2. They related the book of Ecclesiastes to the inner court of Solomon's temple.
 - 3. They related the Song to the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple.
- B. In Ecclesiastes, he wrote, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." This book proclaims that life without obedience to God is vanity. Therefore, it is impossible to be satisfied with even the most desirable circumstances. This book speaks of man's endless wanderings until he finds rest in God. We can have everything but if we lack reality with God then in reality we have nothing.
- C. In the Song of Solomon, Solomon shows forth the joy of life that can be attained without regard to how our circumstances are going. In this book, the Holy Spirit is calling us to make intimacy with God the goal of our life. The Song highlights how full our life is when our consuming passion is to love and know Jesus. Even with hard circumstances, our spirit can be alive in God.
- D. Ecclesiastes teaches us that no matter how great our accomplishments are in man's eyes they will not ultimately have any value if they are not pleasing to God. When Ecclesiastes is understood it awakens us to the fervency that begins the journey in Song 1:5. Thus, Ecclesiastes prepares us to understand the Song of Solomon.
- E. The philosophy in Ecclesiastes tells us to "assert ourselves to gain more worldly experience as the way to enjoy life." Song of Solomon speaks of entering fulfillment through humility, obedience and the impartation of God's love.
- F. Ecclesiastes speaks of the vanity of pursuing the best things found in earthly life, while Song of Solomon speaks of the spiritual pleasure of pursuing the best things found in heavenly life.

VIII. THE CANTICLES OR A SERIES OF SONGS

- A. The Song of Songs is sometimes referred to as the Canticles. The Latin noun "canticum" means "a Song". Canticles mean a series of Songs.
- B. The Vulgate was a popular Bible translation written in the 4th century by Jerome who translated the Scripture into Latin so that the common people could understand it.
- C. In the Vulgate, the Song of Solomon is called the Canticles. The following references may be rightfully used: Cant. 4:9 or Song 4:9 or SS 4:9 or SOS 4:9.

IX. ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION

“But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic (figurative in NIV; allegorically speaking in NAS). For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar, for this Hagar is Mount Sinai...and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.”

- Galatians 4:23-26

- A. The allegorical interpretation has been used in different ways through history. Paul’s treatment of the Hagar-Sarah story “is described by Paul as symbolic by the NKJV, as figurative by the NIV and as an allegory by NAS.
- B. Paul’s use of the Sarah-Hagar story in Gal. 4:21-31 is more “figurative” (typology) instead of an “allegory.” Paul’s use of allegory differed greatly from Alexandrian allegory (first-century Philo as well as the third and fourth century Origen and Chrysostom).
- C. The Alexandrians used allegory in a way that ignored its historical context and meaning. In 1Cor. 9:9-10, Paul used an allegorical interpretation of the “muzzled ox” (Deut 25:4) to apply to the full-time workers in the gospel receiving finances.
- D. An allegory is a fictional story with symbolic meaning without historical facts as its basis. An experience of this type of an allegory is seen in the book, The Chronicles of Narnia.
- E. An allegory is a literary form where people or objects symbolically represent truths. Allegories illustrate truths to make them easier to understand. Our primary interpretation of Scripture must be the historical grammatical that takes the Scripture at face value. We approach the Scripture this way unless the Scripture indicates otherwise (Gal. 4:24; Jn. 15:1-6; Rev. 11:8; Isa. 5:1-7; Hos. 2:1-14; Ezek. 16; Dan. 7:2-8, 16).
- F. Allegorical interpretations are helpful if we only use them to illustrate truths that are clearly established throughout the New Testament.

SESSION 2, PART 1 - Encountering Jesus in the Greatest Song (Song 1:1)

I. THE GREATEST SONG

- A. Solomon was a prolific Songwriter, writing 1005 Songs (1 Kings 4:32). The Holy Spirit inspired him to name this Song using the ultimate superlative (i.e., King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Holy of Holies). The Song of Solomon is the greatest song in redemptive history. I refer to it as the Song.

“The Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s...”

- Song of Solomon 1:1

- B. There will be a great interest in the Song of Solomon in the generation in which the Lord returns. The Spirit is raising up many, young and old who proclaim it, sing it, write about it and pray it. Arise prophetic singers of God’s new song. Arise songwriters to take your place before the Lord.
- C. I will offer practical advice to songwriters who are inspired by the Song of Solomon in writing new songs. Some write songs using the exact language of the Song of Solomon, rather than interpreting its meaning. We receive edification from symbolic language if we understand it.
- D. I recommend only taking a small portion of the Song of Solomon to write a new song. It is the longest Song in the Bible and is in a “concentrated” form.

II. FOUR DISTINCTIVES OF THE SONG OF SOLOMON

- A. We seek to love God with all our heart because God loves us with all His heart and strength. Our whole heart has a vast and mysterious capacity. It is like a diamond with many facets. The reason we have deep and diverse emotions is because God does. We are made in His image. There are aspects of our heart that are best and most touched by God’s holy poetic affection.
- B. The Song emphasizes the emotional side of Jesus’ activity. Why did Jesus create in Gen. 1 and why did He go to the cross for us.
- C. These four distinctives are found in many places in Scripture. The uniqueness of the Song is not the fact that it contains these truths. Rather, it is in the focused concentration of them.
1. First, is the revelation of Jesus’ passionate affections and enjoyment of His people.
 2. Second, is the revelation of the beauty of Jesus, especially as a Bridegroom King.
 3. Third, is the revelation of the beauty of the individual believer to Jesus, even in our weakness. If you want to know what you look like to God then study the Song.
 4. Fourth, are the principles needed to grow in love and mature partnership with Jesus.

- D. The Church needs to be equipped with this revelation because of the significant increase of emotional wounding and sexual brokenness. Jesus wants to fascinate us with His beauty and to enthrall our heart with the beauty that He has given to us. The Song of Solomon is one of God's holy laser beams of revelation of Jesus' heart and desire.

III. THE 3-FOLD INHERITANCE—PS. 2:11-12

- A. King David described God's 3-fold inheritance as being a people who tremble, rejoice and kiss the Son of God. This is one of most excellent descriptions of the mature Bride.

“Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance...Be wise, O kings...Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son...”
- Psalm 2:8-12

- B. David showed us the three sides of our redemption.
 - 1. **Trembling** – we tremble in the fear of God by seeing the eternal majesty of Jesus.
 - 2. **Rejoicing** – we rejoice by seeing who we are in Christ and the legal benefits of the cross.
 - 3. **Kissing** – we figuratively “kiss the Son” or we love Him with all our heart as expressed by holy affections. In this, we touch the emotional and passionate side of our redemption
- C. There are three books of the bible that focus on these three sides of our redemption.
 - 1. **Revelation**: the majestic eternal side that causes us to tremble before God
 - 2. **Romans**: the legal practical side that causes us to rejoice in our benefits of the cross
 - 3. **Song of Solomon**: the passionate emotional side that empowers us to love God
- D. Luther wrote of the legal side of our redemption, yet avoided the passionate and emotional side.

IV. TURNING THE SONG INTO AN AFFECTIONATE PRAYER DIALOGUE WITH JESUS

- A. We must engage in long and loving meditation on the Song with a hungry and honest heart before God. One of the Spirit’s purposes in the Song is to fill us with the Father’s love for Jesus.

“I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”
- John 17:26
- B. If we are to receive the full benefit of the Song, we must turn it into an on-going affectionate prayerful dialogue with Jesus. It is not enough to only study the Song without going to the next step of turning it into a prayer dialogue. The language of the Song must get into our prayer life and thought life before it will transform our emotions.
- C. We approach the Song as more than an academic exercise as seen in Bible research. Informing our intellect is significant but it is only a starting point. No one would go to a famous restaurant to merely study the menu. The menu is there to help them obtain a good meal. It is not enough to be a connoisseur of the Song of Solomon, we must allow this book to fill our heart.

- D. I have about 10 phrases that have become deeply personal to me. In my early days, I wrote them on postcards to use when I drove or took a walk. I slowly whispered them to Jesus. For example, “Father, let Him kiss me with His Word” or “Spirit, sustain me, refresh me” (Song 1:2; 2:5).
- E. As you read through these study notes, pray specific phrases from the Song back to God. By doing this, we use the Song as a springboard to launch into the depths of God’s love.

V. ENCOUNTERING JESUS: PRAY-READING THE SONG OF SOLOMON

- A. I define two general categories of truth related to meditating on the Word. The first category is related to truths that exhort us “**to believe**” something about God, ourselves or the Kingdom. The second category is related to truths that exhort us “**to obey**” God’s Word.
- B. Below are two ways to pray-read the Scriptures that exhort us “**to believe**” God’s Word.
 - 1. First, we **thank God** for the particular truth set forth in the passage. We turn the truth into a dialogue that includes taking time to say “Thank You, Jesus” in a specific way.
 - a) For example, when reading, “You have ravished My heart,” (Song 4:9) we respond by thanking God for this truth by praying, “Thank you Jesus, that I ravish Your heart.”
 - b) For example, when Jesus says to the Bride, “Your love is better than wine” (Song 4:10), we respond by praying “I thank You Jesus that You esteem my love for You as better than the wine (the glory and pleasure) of this world.”

“How fair is your love...How much better than wine is your love...”
- Song of Solomon 4:10

- 2. Second, we **ask for understanding** of the truth as we seek to believe more. Ask God to release revelation that causes us to know and feel the power of specific truths (Eph. 1:17).
 - a) For example, when reading, “You have ravished My heart, My bride.” ask Jesus for heart revelation by praying, “Jesus, show me more how I have ravished Your heart.”
 - b) For example, when reading that Jesus says to the Bride, “Your love is better than wine,” respond by asking for understanding by praying, “Jesus, show me more about the truth that “My love for You is better to You than all the wine of this world.”
- C. Below are two ways to pray-read the Scriptures with truths that exhort us “**to obey**” God’s Word.
 - 1. First, we **commit to obey** Jesus in the specific way described in the passage. We turn a particular truth into a simple dialogue with God that includes declaring our intention or commitment to obey Him (according to the particular exhortation in that passage).

- a) For example, when Jesus exhorts the Bride to “*rise up in obedience to leave the comfort zone to follow Him*” (costly obedience; Song 2:10), we respond by simply committing to obey this truth by praying, “Jesus, I will rise from the comfort zone to meet You on the mountains of costly obedience (Song of Solomon 4:6).”

“*My Beloved...said to me: "Rise up, My love...and come away."*
- Song of Solomon 2:10

- b) For example, when Jesus honors the Bride’s heart for being like “*an enclosed garden whose springs of water are undefiled*” (a king’s garden was enclosed or locked, in contrast to public garden. This points to having a pure heart that is as an enclosed garden or fully reserved for Jesus). We respond by committing to obey this truth by praying, “Jesus, my heart is locked to all compromise. I am fully Yours.”

“*A garden enclosed is...My spouse, a spring shut up...*
- Song of Solomon 4:12

2. Second, we ***ask for God’s manifest power to obey*** a particular truth in a passage. Ask the Spirit for help to obey specific exhortations in a passage.
- a) For example, when the Lord exhorts the Bride to “*arise in obedience to follow Him to the mountains,*” we ask the Spirit to help us obey by praying, “Jesus, empower me to obey You as I arise from the comfort zone to meet you in costly obedience.”
- b) For example, when the Lord honors the Bride’s heart for being like “*an enclosed garden...*” we respond by asking God for help to obey this truth by praying, “Jesus, empower me to live with a locked heart that resists all compromise for You.”

VI. THE NECESSITY OF JOURNALING

- A. Take time to journal by writing down your thoughts, prayers and meditations as you “pray-read” through the Song. This will help you to capture the truths that the Lord puts on your heart. The simple exercise of writing your ideas will help you take this magnificent Song and turn it into a glorious prayer dialogue between your heart and Jesus.
- B. Be patient, speak slowly and softly, then journal your thoughts. You may be surprised how the Spirit will give you more revelation, strengthen your obedience and tenderize your heart by this.

SESSION 2, PART 2 - Receiving the Divine Kiss: Using the Bridal Paradigm to let the Word transform you

I. INTRODUCTION

“Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth (Word) -- for Your love is better than wine.”

- Song of Solomon 1:2

- A. What is a Bridal paradigm? A paradigm is a point of view or a perspective. It is the lens through which we interpret our worldview. In July 1988, the Lord began to lead me to see the Kingdom of God through the eyes of a cherished Bride who is to be fascinated with the beauty of Jesus as the Bridegroom God. I began to see Jesus' beauty in a whole new way, even in familiar passages.
- B. The dominant theme in the Song is the King's emotions or affections for His Bride. We must make it a priority to study and meditate on the subject of God's emotions. This is important to our own emotional health. We are transformed as we understand the way God thinks and feels about us, especially in our weakness. This revelation causes us to run to Him instead of from Him. It causes us to have confidence in His love and to open our spirit to Him in our weakness. Many sincere believers seek God with a condemned heart or a closed and guarded spirit.
- C. In the grace of God, our experience of God's love is not to be quenched nor drowned by any flood. Many have a quenched heart in which their ability to experience God's love has been drowned. The truths of the Song unlock our heart by the fire of God.

“Set Me (Jesus) as a seal upon your heart...for love (God's love in us) is as strong as death...its flames are flames of fire...Many waters (persecution, sin, condemnation, pressures, etc.) cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it.”

- Song of Solomon 8:6-7

II. THE KISS OF GOD'S WORD

- A. The focus of this session is to understand the Divine kiss of God's Word. The eight chapter love Song unfolds the implications of receiving the Divine kiss. This is the theme of the Bride's life.

“Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth (Word) wine.”

- Song of Solomon 1:2

- B. There are different types of kisses in Scripture. Examples are the kiss on the cheek of a friend, or the kiss on the feet of a servant. The kiss of the mouth speaks of holy married love or intimacy.

- C. The maiden requests the kisses of the King's mouth. The Word of God is what proceeds from God's mouth. Our heart can only live by that which comes from the mouth of God. Jesus quoted Deut. 8:3 in His wilderness temptation (Mt. 4:4). For 3,000 years, rabbis have referred to the "kisses of the mouth" in this verse as the "kiss of the Torah".

"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."

- Deuteronomy 8:3

- D. The Divine kiss is a metaphor for intimacy with God. We are to think of God's hand touching our heart by the Holy Spirit to expand our capacity to receive His love and to give ourselves back to Him in love. It speaks God's invitation to go deep with Jesus. The kisses of His mouth speak of the release of the Word of God that tenderizes our hearts in the love of God. We are NOT to think of kissing Jesus on the mouth. This is entirely outside the boundaries of God's Word. We renounce all interpretations of the "kisses of the Word" that come from sensual imagination.
- E. The Song of Solomon was written to extol the beauty of married love and to give us insight into our relationship to Jesus as our Bridegroom God. All that the Spirit teaches motivates us to love Jesus more. It is inconceivable that the Spirit would inspire Scripture that did not point to Jesus.

"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you."

- John 16:14

- F. The Word of God covers many different subjects such as relationship skills, ministry skills or apostolic strategies for outreach (Book of Acts). The Word as it pertains to growing in these skills and insights is very valuable to us. However, in Song 1:2, the Bride cried out specifically to receive the Word of God in a way that would reveal and impart God's love to her heart.
- G. There are three metaphors of intimacy with God in the Song. They are the Divine kiss (1:2), the Divine seal (8:6), and the Divine embrace (2:5; 8:4).
- H. The Bride's journey started with a longing for the kisses of His Word (Song 1:2) and up ended up encountering Jesus in His holy jealous love (Song 8:6-7). He came to seal her heart with holy jealous love which is the ultimate expression of maturity in the Song.

III. THE DIVINE KISS: THE BRIDE'S SUPREME REQUEST

- A. The maiden made her request to One with authority over the King instead of directly to the King. She said, "Let Him..." She asks One who could influence the King in personal matters.

- B. Solomon writes this love Song in a way that is reminiscent of his own experience with God. In Solomon's early years as king of Israel, God visited him in a dream to test him (2 Chr. 1; 1 Kg. 3). The Lord tested Solomon by allowing him to make one supreme request or to ask God for anything. He asked for a supernatural impartation of wisdom and knowledge to serve God better.

"God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask! What shall I give you?"...Now give me wisdom and knowledge...for who can judge this great people of Yours?" God said to Solomon: "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life--but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people...wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings have had who were before you, nor shall any after you have the like."

- 2 Chronicles 1:7-12

- C. In a similar way, the Lord has invited the Church to ask for anything in His will. As the Bride, we stand in the Father's presence to ask for what we want most. We cry "Father, let Him kiss me with the kisses of His Word." We ask for the deepest things that God will give the human spirit.

"And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive. (Mt. 21:22) Whoever...does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will come to pass, he will have whatever he says."

- Mark 11:23

"Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

- John 14:13-14

- D. God continues to test His people by allowing them to ask for anything. The Bride's supreme request from the Father is the Divine kiss of the Word. She wants this more than power, prominence and earthly comforts. God is raising up a people who long for the kisses of God's Word as their supreme request. There are many necessary things to ask for. They are secondary. The greatest prayer of faith is to receive grace to love God with all our heart and strength.

IV. THE 3-FOLD NATURE OF THE CRY FOR THE KISS OF GOD'S WORD

- A. First, this is the great **prophetic cry** that expresses **where** the Spirit is leading the Church in the nations. The Spirit will restore the First Commandment to first place before Jesus returns. God promised Moses that in the End-Times, He would circumcise the heart of His people so that they would love God with all their heart. The Church will cry out with a bride's love, "Come, Jesus!"

"Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart..."

- Matthew 22:37

“The LORD your God will circumcise...the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”
- Deuteronomy 30:6

“The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come!’”
- Revelation 22:17

- B. Second, this is the great **philosophical cry** of the human spirit that answers **why** we exist in time and eternity. The ultimate purpose and meaning of our life is to experience intimacy with God. The absolute definition of success is to a wholehearted lover of God. When we know that we are loved by God and desire to be a wholehearted lover of God, then we are truly successful.
- C. Third, this is the great **psychological cry** that answers **how** our heart functions. It answers the mystery of how our heart experiences true happiness and is satisfied. God designed us so that experiencing His love is the most pleasurable reality available to the human make-up. We were created to love God with all our heart. When we do not love God with a passionate heart, then our emotional life is out of balance. Life does not work without pursuing this. We were created in such a way that we can not live in wholeness without the pursuit of being wholehearted for God. If we have nothing to die for, then we have nothing to live for. Many in the Body of Christ are suffering from spiritual boredom because they are not passionate in their pursuit to love God.

V. THE 2-FOLD SPIRITUAL REST OF THE BELIEVER

- A. **The rest of forgiveness:** we experience this with the knowledge that we are fully forgiven as a free gift in Jesus. We rest in receiving forgiveness because of Jesus’ finished work on the cross.
- B. **The rest of intimacy:** we experience this as we pursue intimacy with God. There is no rest until we conclude the highest purpose of our life is intimacy with God. Augustine (354-430 AD) wrote, “Man does not rest until he finds his rest in God.” We only find our ultimate purpose for life in being wholehearted in our love for God. This is our highest life purpose that brings us peace and happiness in this life. Many believers who have the assurance of being forgiven are striving to find purpose and happiness. It is not an issue of going to heaven but how and why they live on earth.
- C. There is a God-shaped vacuum in our hearts that can only be fulfilled in the rest of intimacy. Without resting in this area of our lives, we are far more vulnerable to sexual bondage, addictions and bitterness, etc.

VI. LIVING BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF ONE

- A. I heard the story of a concert pianist in the last century that longed to play in the great concert hall in Vienna. When he finished his first concert before thousands, the people gave him a long standing ovation. Afterwards, he was asked, “Was it the greatest moment in your life to receive this long applause?” The concert pianist replied, “No! I liked it, but it was not the most important thing to me.” He said, “When the people all sat down, an elderly man who sat in the top corner of the balcony simply nodded his head at me. That was the greatest moment of my life because he is the master who taught me for 30 years. One nod from him was worth much more than the long applause of the masses.”
- B. We must learn to live before an audience of One. Receiving the nod from our Master has great power in the hearts of those who love Him. It has more power than the approval of all others.

VII. PRACTICAL APPLICATION: SEEKING THE KISSES OF GOD’S WORD

- A. The cry for the kisses of God’s Word is the same reality as living before the audience of One.
- B. We receive the kisses of God’s Word by pray-reading God’s Word or in meditation on it (as covered in session 2) as we set our heart to receive the deepest things that God will give us.
- C. In times of temptation, we speak this truth before the Lord. We say, “I will not yield to sin. Father let Him kiss me. My life is about receiving the kisses of God’s Word. This is who I am.” When people mistreat us. We declare, “My life is not primarily about being more popular, I live for the kisses of God's Word.”

SESSION 3 - An Overview of the Storyline in the Song of Solomon

I. SONG OF SOLOMON: THE DIVINE KISS & THE BRIDE'S LIFE VISION (SONG 1:2-4)

- A. The theme of the Song of Solomon is the Bride's spiritual journey to be drawn near to Jesus in intimacy and then to run in deep partnership with Him in ministry. She matures in these two realities as she experiences the kisses of God's word touching her heart.

"Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth (Word). For Your love is better than wine...Draw me away (intimacy)! We will run after you (ministry)."
- Song of Solomon 1:2-4

- B. The Song of Solomon has two main sections. First, Song 1-4 is focused on receiving **our inheritance** in God. Second, Song 5-8 is focused on God receiving **His inheritance** in us.

II. HER JOURNEY BEGINS WITH THE PARADOX OF GRACE (SONG 1:5-11) AND EXTERNAL CRISIS (SONG 1:6c)

"I am dark (in heart), but lovely (to God)...my own vineyard (heart) I have not kept."

- Song of Solomon 1:5-6

- A. The paradox of our faith is that we are dark in our heart yet we are lovely to God. Both truths must be held in tension to understand who we are before God. Some emphasize how sinful we are (darkness of our heart) and others emphasize how beautiful we are to God (lovely in Christ).
1. Paradox: our legal position in Christ versus our living condition
 2. A two-fold revelation: (1) Dark in heart (sinful desires) – our weak flesh is dark to God, and (2) lovely to God (sincere intentions to obey Jesus): our willing spirit is lovely to God
- B. We are lovely before God even in our weakness for four reasons.
1. God's personality: is filled with tender loving emotions for His people. God sees us through His heart that is filled with tender love. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder.
 2. The gift of righteousness: we receive the beauty of Jesus' righteousness as a free gift.

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

- 2 Corinthians 5:21

3. The Spirit's impartation: of a sincere and willing spirit of obedience that cries for God.

"You received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"
- Romans 8:15

4. Our eternal destiny: as Jesus' Bride. God sees the end from the beginning. He sees us in light of the billions of years in which we will be perfect in obedience.
- C. Three stages to victory
1. Our sincere intention to obey God – the Spirit is the author of such intentions. God rejoices in these intentions. Some measure their life by their attainments – leading to condemnation.
 2. Partial breakthrough yet with continual struggle – we are victorious on a regular basis yet still war with our flesh in a particular area of our life (Rom 8:2-13; Gal 5: 16-17)
 3. Substantial breakthrough with sincere desires – our desires are dramatically changed so that we rarely even struggle in a previous area of sin (Rom 6:14-23)
- D. External crisis comes: rejection and shame

"My mother's sons were angry with me."
- Song of Solomon 1:6c

1. Our bride was going full speed and found that some were angry with her (the mother speaks of the church) probably for two reasons: (1) carnal believers don't like fervent believers – zealous people for God bring conviction to dull believers, and (2) Second, the untempered zeal and pride of zealous believers often make spiritually dull leaders angry. Our zeal must be seasoned with wisdom and humility. It is common for those with new fervency for Jesus to be self-absorbed and prideful in the way they call others to be wholehearted.
 2. She was mistreated by the angry sons who overworked her – taking advantage of her fervency ... subsequently burning out
- E. She has a desperate cry to have more of Jesus. She wants Him to personally feed her spirit.

"Tell me, O You whom I love, where You feed your flock...For why should I be as one who veils herself by the flocks of Your companions?"
- Song of Solomon 1:7

1. In the midst of this crisis, she cries out with a desperate prayer. She remembers the kisses of His Word and her chamber experiences. She asks the great Shepherd for counsel, "Tell me, where do you feed Your flock?" We can only offer this desperate cry if we have confidence that we are lovely to God even in our weakness.

2. Jesus longs that we would pray this prayer. He does not want us to give up and give in to a spiritually dull life in God. He does not want us to write ourselves off as a hopeless hypocrite. It pleases Him when we cry out, “Feed my heart like You used to? I am a veiled woman. I am serving at a distance. My own vineyard has weeds in it. Many things are going wrong. I am failing and the people are angry. I need to touch You whom I love.” Regardless what it costs her, she wants the fire of intimacy with God to consume her again. She wants Him to feed her again. She cries out to recover her “first love”.
- F. Jesus tenderly reveals His heart for her. Then He reaffirms her sincerity (1:8-11).

“...O fairest (most beautiful) among women...”

- Song of Solomon 1:8

III. UNDERSTANDING HER IDENTITY (SONG 1:12-2:7)

- A. He tells her that her “eyes are like doves” (1:15c)
 1. Single minded – a dove has no peripheral vision. It only sees straight ahead. It is not distracted by what is happening at its right or left. To have dove’s eyes is to have a good eye (single-minded). (Mt 6:22)
 2. Loyalty – a dove will mate once in its life. If their mate dies, they never mate again.
 3. Perspective – we want the Spirit’s perspective of Jesus and of our life. We to see Jesus as henna blooms or as fragrant and beautiful and to be single-minded in our obedience and in our faith in God's grace that we would be confident by refusing all condemnation.
- B. She has an initial revelation of the beauty of Jesus and the pleasure of knowing Him (Ps. 27:4).

“Behold, You are handsome (beautiful), my Beloved! Yes, pleasant!”

- Song of Solomon 1:16

- C. She receives revelation of her identity in Christ as a beautiful rose in God’s sight.

“I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.”

- Song of Solomon 2:1

- D. Jesus is sweet to her heart as she rests under the shade of the finished work of the cross. She experiences the superior pleasures of knowing God as she feeds at His table and lives under the banner of His excellent leadership. In this she becomes lovesick. The goal of her life is her own spiritual happiness. This happens best when she experiences God's Presence. In the future, her goal will be to walk as His inheritance regardless of the cost.

“I sat down in His shade (resting in the finished work of the cross) with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting House, and His banner (leadership) over me was love. Sustain me...refresh me...for I am lovesick.”

- Song of Solomon 2:3-5

IV. CHALLENGING THE COMFORT ZONE (SONG 2:8-17)

“The voice of my Beloved! He comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle...My Beloved spoke, “Rise up, My love...and come away. Let Me see your face, let Me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.” Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, Turn, my Beloved...”

- Song of Solomon 2:8-17

- A. This passage marks the beginning of a significant turning in the maiden’s life. The depth her commitment as seen throughout Song 4-8 flows out of this new revelation of Jesus. He reveals Himself to her as the sovereign King over the nations (the third revelation of Jesus in the Song). She only knew Jesus as the counseling shepherd (Song 1:7-11) and the affectionate Father (Song 1:12) sitting at the table feeding her grapes and apples with love. Now she sees a different aspect of His personality as she sees Him as one who can easily leap over all mountains (obstacles – human, demonic ... even governments).
 - 1. He is ready for action and deep partnership – He wants her to come with Him to conquer the mountains
- B. She refuses Him by telling Him to turn and go to the mountain without her (2:17). Her painful compromise is due to her immaturity and fear not rebellion. She fears that total obedience will be too difficult and costly. She loves Him, but does not think she has the strength to fully obey Him.
 - 1. She asks, “Is He safe? Is it safe to obey Him 100%”?
 - 2. In the flesh it seems safer to be in the boat without Jesus instead of on the water with Him.
- C. Depth in God does not come in a moment. We must see the times and prepare so that we are ready when He calls.

V. SHE EXPERIENCES GOD’S LOVING DISCIPLINE (SONG 3:1-5)

“By night on my bed I sought the One I love...but I did not find Him. I will rise now...I will seek the one I love...When I found the One I love. I held Him and would not let Him go...”

- Song of Solomon 3:1-4

- A. She experiences the discipline of God as He hides His face from her. The sweetness of Song 2 is gone. He disciplines us out of His affection (Heb. 12:5-12). God’s correction is not the same thing as His rejection. The Father promises to pry our fingers off what holds us in bondage. The Father loves us too much to allow us to come up short of partnering with Jesus as His Bride.

- B. He orchestrates the easiest trial that effectively awakens our heart
 - 1. The least severe method, to produce the greatest amount of love, in the shortest amount of time, to the greatest amount of people ... without violating their free will
- C. The benefits of seasons with Divine withholding ... He withholds His presence to:
 - 1. Drive us into an extravagant seeking of His face.
 - 2. Force us to search our hearts for hidden faults.
 - 3. Speak through a different language the “language of silence”.
 - 4. Forces us to walk by faith, instead of by feeling.
 - 5. Produce humility, by making us see our own weakness and dependence upon God.
- D. She soon “arises” to obey the call to leave her comfort (3:2). Jesus’ manifest presence returns in response to her obedience (3:4). She continued to seek Jesus regardless of the immediate results. This is the kind of tenacity that Jesus rewards.
- E. She then discovers a new holy embrace

VI. A FRESH REVELATION OF JESUS AS A “SAFE SAVIOR” (SONG 3:6-11)

- A. This is the fourth revelation of Jesus in the Song. Jesus is revealed to the Bride as a “safe Savior”. She gains revelation of Jesus’ safe leadership as He leads us out of the wilderness of this fallen world. This does not mean that we will not have difficulties. It means we are in a place where our heart will mature in obedient, grateful, trusting love for God. She received this revelation when she “held on” to Him (Song 3:4).
- B. “Who is this” – similar to Psalm 24
- C. “Coming up out of the wilderness” – The Bride receives revelation of Jesus overcoming the wilderness – this fallen life, difficult times of testing, times of failure and sin, seasons of spiritual warfare, places of intense encounter ... Jesus has victory over the wilderness!
- D. Jesus did all, and is doing all, to bring us safely to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. He is not negligent. He is not overlooking anything. Jesus’ incarnation and death prove He has our good in mind. If He suffered for us, how much more will He protect us (Rom. 8:32)? He knows how to get us through the wilderness. He is the merchant who gave up everything to redeem us. We have no need to be afraid to follow Him.
- E. She now believes that “100% obedience is the only safe place in life. Walking with Jesus on the water is now far safer than being in the boat without Him.
- F. He then exalts the whole church to the Bridal Paradigm in v. 11

VII. THE PROPHETIC HEART OF THE BRIDEGROOM GOD (SONG 4:1-8)

“Behold, you are fair (beautiful), My love! Behold, you are fair.”
- Song of Solomon 4:1

- A. The King reveals how beautiful the maiden is to Him. He describes 8 distinct virtues of her beauty that He sees emerging in her life. (4:1-5). Jesus prophetically proclaims her “budding virtues”. He calls things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4:17). He sees the cry in her spirit, not just her failures. God defines us by the cries in our spirit not just by our struggles.
1. **Dove's eyes:** eyes of single-minded devotion and revelation
 2. **Hair like goats:** dedication to God
 3. **Teeth like shorn sheep:** chewing the meat of the Word
 4. **Lips like scarlet:** speech that is redemptive
 5. **Kisses of the mouth:** intimacy with God
 6. **Veiled temples (cheeks/countenance):** emotions impacted by the grace of God
 7. **Neck like David's tower:** setting our will to obey God
 8. **Breasts like fawns:** the power to edify and nurture others
- B. God's primary method to change weak believers is to cause us to feel how much He cherishes us. In this way, He removes the stain of our sin and shame from our heart. When we feel cherished, we become confident and bold in our love for Jesus. The power of King David's life was found in feeling loved by God. God's cherishing heart is one of the most prominent themes in the Song.

“Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great.”
- Psalm 18:35

- C. A life of total commitment is foundational for all who are to be mature in ministry (4:6). Initially, she refused His call to come to the mountain (2:9-10). However, in this season she commits to go to the mountain. She is only in the initial stages of her obedience. Later she becomes mature.

“I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh...”
- Song of Solomon 4:6

VIII. THE RAVISHED HEART OF THE BRIDEGROOM GOD (SONG 4:9-5:1)

- A. The King is now revealed as a Bridegroom. His heart is ravished with desire for her. Jesus has passionate affection for His Bride. This revelation of His heart, equips her to fully embrace the cross (Song 4:9) ... and be prepared for 100% obedience. Jesus describes His pleasure over her character (4:10d-11).

“You have ravished My heart...My spouse...with one look of your eyes...How fair (beautiful) is your love...How much better than wine is your love...”
- Song of Solomon 4:9-10

1. We tend to look at the failures in our lives Jesus' heart is ravished for us in the single acts of obedience.
- B. Jesus gives her a 7-fold description of her purity (4:12-15). A king's garden was private. This is in contrast to a public one with defiled water. We can speak this to Jesus in our desire for purity.

“A garden enclosed is My sister, My spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.”
- Song of Solomon 4:12

- C. Her garden speaks of her heart before God. She wants the fragrance of God’s spices to increase in her life. The north wind speaks of the cold bitter winds of winter. The south wind speaks of the warm refreshing winds of the summer. She is no longer afraid of the testings of God. She desires that Jesus receive His inheritance in her and cries, “Let my Beloved come to His garden.”

“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.”
- Song of Solomon 4:16

- D. In the first 4 chapters she was concerned with her inheritance (her garden). However, in the last 4 chapters, Jesus’ inheritance in her is her focus. From now on, her heart is His garden not hers. She now defines her life radically different. Nine times He uses the ownership word “My”.

“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.”
- Song of Solomon 5:1

IX. THE ULTIMATE 2-FOLD TEST OF MATURITY (SONG 5:2-8)

“The voice of my Beloved! He knocks, saying, “Open for Me...My love...My perfect one; for My head is covered with dew, My locks with the drops of the night.”

- Song of Solomon 5:2

- A. Jesus embraced the cross in the long and lonely night in Gethsemane. Jesus comes to her as the man of sorrows in Gethsemane (5:2) and invites her to share His sufferings (Phil. 3:10).

“That I may know Him, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.”

- Philippians 3:10

- B. Jesus asks her to, “Open up that He may come to her as the Man of Gethsemane.” Jesus wants to be the goal of her life, and not just the stepping stone to her agenda of success and happiness.
- C. She responds in obedience saying she took off her dirty robes and washed her feet in His grace (5:3). She is not afraid of obeying Jesus and thus, asked for the bitter north winds (Song 4:16). She rises immediately with a heart yearning in love for Him. The locks of her heart have myrrh on them, which speak of her heart commitment to embrace death in her pursuit of Jesus.

“My heart yearned for Him. I arose to open for my Beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh...on the handles of the lock.”

- Song of Solomon 5:4-5

- D. She experiences her first test as God withdraws His presence (5:6). This affects her ability to experience intimacy with God. In this passage, His presence leaves her for the second time in the Song (3:1). However, this time it is not related to disobedience (as in 3:1-2), but rather to her mature obedience. Some medieval teachers called this “the dark night of the soul.”

“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... He gave me no answer.”

- Song of Solomon 5:6

- E. She experiences her second test as her ministry is rejected (5:7). The watchmen or the leaders strike and wound her taking her veil (spiritual covering) so she can no longer function in ministry in the Body. Her ministry is gone. How will she respond to Him now?

“The watchman...struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me.”

- Song of Solomon 5:7

- F. The Lord is asking her, “Will you be Mine even if I withhold the things you deeply desire? Are you Mine when you cannot feel My Presence? Will you still love and trust Me when you are disappointed by circumstances?” She responds, “I am Yours, at the deepest level of love. She responds in humility by asking for help from the daughters of Jerusalem (who are less spiritual).

“O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved...tell Him I am lovesick!”

- Song of Solomon 5:8

- G. Summary: Jesus called her to join Him in Gethsemane. She responded in obedience. He gave her a 2-fold test related to her life vision to be drawn near Him and to run with Him (Song 1:2-4).

“Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth (Word). For Your love is better than wine... Draw me away (intimacy)! We will run after you (ministry).”

- Song of Solomon 1:2-4

X. THE BRIDE’S RESPONSE TO THE 2-FOLD TEST (SONG 5:9-6:5)

- A. The daughters of Jerusalem ask the Bride a question. In essence, they ask, “Why do you love Him so much that you charge us to go find Him? He has abandoned you. He took His presence away from you (v. 6) and lets the elders wound you as they took their ministry from you (5:7).

“What is your Beloved more than another Beloved, O fairest among women?”
- Song of Solomon 5:9

- B. Her answer reveals her love for Jesus. She gives 10 descriptions of Jesus’ majestic beauty (5:10-16). This is one of the greatest proclamations on Jesus’ beauty in the Scripture.

“My beloved is white (dazzling, NAS)...and chief among ten thousand. His head is like the finest gold; His locks are wavy...and black as a raven. His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters...His cheeks are like a bed of spices...His lips are lilies, dripping liquid myrrh. His hands are rods of gold set with beryl. His body is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires. His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of fine gold. His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet, Yes, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my friend...”

- Song of Solomon 5:10-16

XI. JESUS PRAISES HER AFTER THE SEASON OF TESTING (SONG 6:4-10)

- A. Her 2-fold test is now over. Jesus breaks the silence as He lavishes affection on her and describes her beauty. He declares that she is as beautiful as **Tirzah** (became the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel) and as lovely as **Jerusalem** (the capital of Israel, spiritually and politically). He proclaimed that she was as awesome as a victorious army with banners. When an army in the ancient world returned victorious from battle, they displayed their banners in a military procession. She defeated her greatest enemies, those found in her heart.

“O My love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners!”

- Song of Solomon 6:4

- B. Jesus is “conquered” only by His Bride’s extravagant love. Our eyes of devotion deeply touch the King’s heart. All the armies in hell cannot conquer Jesus, but the eyes of His Bride “conquer” Him when they are true to Him in times of testing.

“Turn your eyes away from Me, for they have overcome Me.

- Song of Solomon 6:5

- C. Jesus describes the Bride’s maturity and devotion (6:5c-7).
D. Jesus describes the Bride’s pre-eminence in the King’s court. Jesus’ attendants around His heavenly court are seraphim, cherubim, archangels and angels without number.

“There are 60 queens and 80 concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my perfect one, is the...only one of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her...”

- Song of Solomon 6:8-9

- E. The Holy Spirit describes the Bride's crown of glory (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?”*

- Song of Solomon 6:10

XII. THE VINDICATION OF THE PERSECUTED BRIDE (SONG 6:11-7:9A).

- A. As the Bride walks in this revelation of who she is before the Lord, she is persecuted. Mature love and commitment to serve the whole church (6:11) overcomes her (6:12).
- B. She receives a sincere response from some in the church (6:13a,b) yet a hostile response from others (6:13c,d).

*“Return, return, O Shulamite; Return, return, that we may look upon you! What
would you see in the Shulamite-- As it were, the dance of the two camps?”*

- Song of Solomon 6:11-13

- C. The Bride is vindicated by discerning saints (7:1-5). The Bride is vindicated by Jesus (7:6-9a).

XIII. THE BRIDE'S MATURE PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS (SONG 7:9B-8:4).

- A. In Song 7:9b-8:4, she walks out the 3-fold commissioning of ministry from Song 7:8-9a. We see her enthusiasm for this as she says, “The wine goes down smoothly for my Beloved”.
- B. In Song 7:9b-8:4, the Bride describes 4 aspects of walking out bridal partnership with Jesus. She walks it out in her instant obedience (7:9b-10), her intercession for more power (7:11-13), her boldness and humility in public ministry (8:1-2) and in her unbroken union with Him (8:3-4).

“I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me.”
- Song of Solomon 7:10

- C. The Bride's obedience in Song 7:9 is rooted in this 2-fold spiritual identity. Her spiritual identity #1: She sees herself as one that Jesus desires. Her Spiritual identity #2: She sees herself as belonging totally to Jesus as her Beloved. Note that she is her Beloved's because His desire is for her. Understanding His desire comes first. We love Him because He first loves us.

“We love Him because He first loved us.”

- 1 John 4:19

XIV. THE BRIDAL SEAL OF MATURE LOVE (SONG 8:5-7)

“Set Me (Jesus) as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love (God’s love in you) is as strong as death, (God’s) jealousy as cruel (demanding) as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters (sin, pressures) cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised.

- Song of Solomon 8:6-7

- A. Jesus invites her to receive the seal of fire upon her heart and to walk with Him in holy jealous love. God is a consuming fire and desires to impart His fire into our hearts. This is His supernatural love that seals our heart. It empowers us to live without the fire of our love being quenched.
- B. The seal of God’s love points to the same truth as the First Commandment and union with God’s heart. God will help us to love Him in the way He loves us with all His heart and strength. Jesus wants to reveal Himself to us as more than our savior (forgiver), healer and master but as the jealous Bridegroom God who will not relent in His pursuit of us until He has all our heart. Jesus calls her to set Him as a seal on her heart. He urges us to cry out to know Him as the God of all consuming love. To set Jesus as the seal on our heart means to invite His fiery presence to touch or seal our heart. By the very definition of love, we must invite Him. He will not force us into a relationship of voluntary love. He waits until we invite Him in the matters of our heart.

“Who is this coming up (victory) from the wilderness (testing), leaning upon her Beloved? I awakened you under the apple tree. There your mother brought you forth...”

- Song of Solomon 8:5

- C. The Bride is leaning upon Jesus as her Beloved empowered by love and gratitude. The Church ends natural history with a leaning and loving heart as she is victorious in love. The Spirit prophetically speaks as He declares the Bride's victory in the End-Times as she “comes up” in victory in the testing, temptations and difficulties in the wilderness in this fallen world.

“He might present...glorious church...that she should be holy and without blemish.”

- Ephesians 5:27

XV. THE BRIDE’S FINAL INTERCESSION AND REVELATION (SONG 8:8-14)

- A. The Bride intercedes for the church (8:8–9) and for Jesus’ return (8:14). In Song 8:8–9, her apostolic passion for the church is seen.
- B. In Song 8:10, her 3-fold confidence is as a wall (selfless motives), as a tower (her supernatural abilities to nurture) and as one with peace (emotional hindrances are removed).

- C. In Song 8:11-12, she experiences the power and enjoyment of living before His eyes instead of before the eyes of men. Her sense of importance is rooted in eternity as she has revelation of giving account before God (8:11). The Bride has a revelation of her own spiritual maturity before God (8:12).
- D. Jesus' final commission to the Bride (8:13-14). The Bride's urgency is expressed in intercession.

*“You who dwell in the gardens (the Bride), the companions listen for your voice-
- Let Me (Jesus) hear it! Make haste, my Beloved (Jesus), and be like a gazelle or
a young stag on the mountains of spices.”*

- Song of Solomon 8:13-14

“The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come!’”

- Revelation 22:17