

Session 1: Introduction to the Song

We are going to follow a set of notes, and those of you who would like the notes; you can get them on the Internet at <http://www.ihop.org> under Song of Solomon Studies.

The Introduction to the Song of Solomon—in this session tonight we are going to give just the introductory information, kind of an overview of the Song of Solomon, and some of the principles of how to interpret it. I am going to give you a roadmap so that you can be prepared to study this book long term, so that you could get the big picture, go after this book, and stay after it year after year after year. So my goal is to equip you to study this book on your own.

KING SOLOMON IS THE AUTHOR OF THIS EIGHT CHAPTER LOVE STORY

The author of Song of Solomon is obviously King Solomon. Song of Solomon is an eight-chapter love song. It was written before King Solomon's spiritual decline, the decline of his life when he lost his relationship with the Lord. No one knows if Solomon recovered his relationship with the Lord, but the Song was written before his days of difficulty.

There are two primary sections in the Song of Solomon of eight chapters. The first four chapters emphasize the Bride's inheritance in Jesus. The first four chapters talk about how we can enjoy Jesus and what we receive from Him and help us understand what we have in Christ and how God views us.

FIRST FOUR CHAPTERS FOCUS ON THE BRIDE'S INHERITENCE IN CHRIST

The primary revelation of these four chapters is God's desire for us even in our weakness. The revelation—the stunning revelation—that God desires us even in our weakness is a revelation that is unfamiliar when you look through the records of Church history.

There has always been a bright light here or there that has focused on God's heart and His emotion toward His people. God does not just start enjoying us after we mature, but the key to the revelation of the Song of Solomon is that God enjoys us

even while we are maturing. So the first four chapters emphasize the Bride's inheritance in the Lord.

SECOND FOUR CHAPTERS FOCUS ON JESUS' INHERITENCE IN THE BRIDE

The second four chapters is exactly the opposite. It emphasizes Jesus' inheritance in us. In other words, He is seeking for something from us. In Song of Songs chapters one to four, He is giving us His heart, and He gave us His life. In chapters five through eight, we give ourselves back to Him because we are overwhelmed in the love of God.

Right in the middle of the book, Song 4:16, the book shifts dramatically right dead center in the verse 4:16—the center verse of the book. It shifts from the focus of our inheritance in the Lord to the Lord's inheritance in us. Throughout the eight-chapter love song, there are eight specific revelations of Jesus' heart. He shows Himself in eight distinct ways, and I have those eight on the notes. Again, you can get the notes on the website. I do not want to go through those now, but we will develop them as we go through these twenty-four sessions on the Song of Solomon in our progression, the progression in our own soul in growing in holy passion with the Lord.

MY PERSONAL MANDATE AND JOURNEY WITH THE SONG

Roman numeral II. I want to tell just a moment about my own personal mandate from the Lord in my own journey in the book of Song of Solomon. Now the reason I want to tell you this is not because I want you to know my story. It is because I want you to identify some of your own journey in this story, and say, "Hey, that is for me. That is what I want to do."

It began in July 1988; I was at a morning prayer meeting, and after the prayer meeting was over, I went to my office. I was going through some mail, and I opened up a wedding invitation.

On the wedding invitation it had Song 8:6. I thought, "What a cool verse, you know? 'Place Me as a seal upon your heart, a seal of fire that water cannot quench, a seal that is stronger than death, stronger than the grave.'" I thought, "What a great verse."

So I opened the Song of Solomon. I had never read the Song of Solomon in a serious way. I opened Song 8:6, and I began to ask the Lord, “Lord, be the seal of fire on my heart.” I just turned it into a prayer. I began to pray my favorite verse in the Bible, my life theme, which you can make it yours if you want. I have had this verse for years, John 17:26, when Jesus prayed, “Father, I have declared to them Your name”—here it is—“so that the way that You love Me, God, will be imparted to them supernaturally” (Jn 17:26, paraphrased).

THE SAME LOVE THE FATHER HAS FOR THE SON WILL BE IN US

Jesus prayed that the way the Father loves Him would be given to human beings, that the supernatural quality of love would be imparted to us. I cannot think of anything more dynamic and exciting than loving God the way that God loves God. Can you imagine the exhilaration in our spirit we will feel progressively as we love Jesus with the same energy and power the Father does because it is the Father’s love?

So I began to do this and suddenly, surprised, the Spirit of the Lord began to rest on me in a very distinct way. I just began to weep. So I picked up the phone and asked the receptionist, “I just do not want any phone calls at all. The Lord is touching me in a very unusual way.”

In thirty years of ministry, I have only done that one time because it was so unusual. So I was praying, “Lord, be the seal of fire on my heart. Let me love You with supernatural love. Let me love You with the Father’s love.” It was a wonderful time.

Ten minutes go by, and the phone rings. I cannot believe it. I am in the heights of loving God, and then I am carnal and mad. I say, “What? I asked them not to.” Is that not just how we are? We are just a mess. I felt like I could not be closer to God, I mean, that is exaggerated of course. Then one second later, I am in the flesh. I pick the phone up, and said a nice, Christian, “Hello?”

The receptionist said, “Well, I am in a quandary, I am in a dilemma here because you said that the Lord is touching you, and Bob Jones”—as most of you know, is a man that God has used powerfully in my life in prophetic ministry—“just called, and he said that God spoke to him audibly, and he has a message for you. I did not know what to do. I thought I should let God in if it was the audible voice of the Lord.”

I said, “Hey...always. If somebody has heard the audible voice of God, good move. Good call.” I never had anything like this before. I had not of this level.

“Hello, Bob.”

He said, “I only have two minutes,” and he explained why he was in a great hurry. He said, “I have two minutes. I heard the audible voice of the Lord, and He gave me a verse that He told me that is going to be the direction of your entire ministry.”

I said, “Really?”

He said, “He gave me a verse that He said He is going to release in the Body of Christ worldwide through many, through many songs and preachers and writers.”

He explained, “The truth of it is that I have not even looked up the verse. I just heard it and I called you and I am running out the door because I am catching an airplane and I am late. He said, ‘Song 8:6-7.’ I do not know if you have ever read it.”

I am on my knees weeping over it right then. I did not even tell Bob. I just said, “Thank you,” and I hung up the phone. I was overwhelmed

THE LORD WILL RELEASE GRACE TO WALK IN SONG OF SOLOMON 8:6-7

I talked to Bob later, a week or so later when he got back from a ministry trip and he said, “This is going to be a primary theme of your life all your days.” I believe that the Lord is going to make this theme the primary message of a number of you in this room and those who are taking this class through God TV.

The Lord is raising up men and women in whom the message of the Song of Solomon—both parts of it. The first part of it being God’s passion for us and our inheritance in Him, and then the second part being our passion for God, and His inheritance in us. It is not a one-sided message. It is both sides.

Then the Lord told Bob, again, he had not even read the passage. He said, “Whatever is in that verse, the Lord told me He is going to release a supernatural power on it to release it to the Body of Christ worldwide before the Second

Coming. It is a very important theme on God's heart." We are going to pray for you several times through the twenty-four sessions, twenty-four classes of this course on the Song of Solomon to ask the Lord for impartation for those who are called to it. Everyone is going to experience this to some degree.

WORLDWIDE BODY OF CHRIST IS GOING TO FEEL THE HEART OF JESUS

I mean, the whole Body of Christ worldwide is going to feel and experience the heart of Jesus and His passion for us, but there is going to be a number of you who are really focused on this part of the message of salvation. I was excited. I get to read the book for the first time in a serious way. Again, I had read it before, but I do not want to go into it, but it was not very serious how I read it. I will just leave it at that. I called my wife, "Diane, God just spoke audibly. This is the most amazing thing." I said, "This is one of the most dramatic moments of my life," and in thirty years of ministry, it has been one of the two or three most dramatic moments of my life.

So I read the book. I read the eight chapters, and I thought, "Oh no." It was all about flowers and perfume. I said, "This cannot be possible. I cannot do this." I told the Lord, "Give me the book of Revelation or the life of David or the book of Romans, something with some meat to it." I said, "You know, give this to the ladies' ministry." I actually said this to the Lord. I said, "They will love it, Lord."

I was perplexed. That is a soft word. I was actually disturbed, seriously. I said, "I am going to be stuck for my entire ministry focused on this book about flowers and perfume. I am going to be the laughing stock...it is never going to work."

THE LORD WINS OUR WRESTLING MATCHES

Well, I decided that the Lord was going to win this wrestling match, and I know His heart in this sense that whatever God tells you, it is good. Whatever God commands you to do, it might be hard, but it is always good. It always has life in it. So I said, "I am going to start studying Song of Solomon just by faith." So I started studying a bunch of commentaries. I went out and bought as many as I could. It ended up that now I have over 150 of them. I have them from all over the world. I mean, I love the Song of Solomon now. I have for many years.

I just began to read it and study it by faith with zero enjoyment. I was intimidated by the terminology. I want to encourage you that there are only about ten to fifteen

symbols in the entire book. You get the ten or fifteen symbols, and the Bible interprets the Bible. It is not very hard. You do not need to be intimidated by the symbolism in the Song of Solomon. Soon, I felt tremendous pleasure and delight in this book because it was not the book, it was in my encounter with the Lord understanding His heart in a whole new way.

I want to say to men: men—this book is for you—not just for the women’s ministry. It is certainly for the women, but it is for men. Understanding the passion of God’s heart will never, ever minimize your masculinity in any way. It will strengthen and establish who you are before God. David, the great warrior king of Israel was the man who gazed on the beauty of God, and there are many examples of John the Apostle, John the Baptist, men who had this experience, ongoing experience of the tenderness of God’s emotion, these fiery men.

THE SONG REVEALS THE PATTERN OF HOLY PASSION

Roman number III. The purpose of this study, the purpose of this eight-chapter love song at the highest level, I believe, in the Holy Spirit’s mind is to impart the Father’s love for Jesus into the human spirit. I am going to read the verse again. As a matter of fact, we will read John 17:26 several times in the twenty-four classes.

In John 17, Jesus is saying, “I have declared Your name to them, Father.” He is praying to the Father. He says, “I told them about You,” and here is why: “When I tell them about You, what You are like, the love that You have for Me is supernaturally imparted into them.”

Beloved, when you understand what the Father is like, His name, His personality, the love of God is awakened and imparted in your spirit, and Jesus was really specific. He said, “The love that You have for Me will be in them. They will love Me the way You love Me as this thing unfolds throughout all of eternity.” We are on a journey forever of loving Jesus the way the Father does. I am not just thinking about how Jesus deserves it, well, that is true. That is a very important point. I am thinking about how exhilarated our spirit will be as we experience what the Father experiences when He thinks about His Son, which is all the time.

UNDERSTANDING THIS SONG HELPS IDENTIFY ISSUES IN OUR HEART

Paragraph B. This eight-chapter love song is a revelation of God's pattern, its principles, and its seasons in our life as we grow in passion for Jesus. This is not an accident. This eight-chapter love song is a divine pattern that we are to understand so that we can identify the issues that God is dealing with in our life. As I have studied the Song of Solomon, I have located different seasons that are in the divine pattern right there. I look at them. They are right there in the book, and I say, "That is what I am going through." I find that I ebb and flow through the seasons.

Sometimes I have the blessing, and sometimes the testing of the Song of Solomon. Sometimes I find myself in two different seasons at the same time. Anybody ever experience that? I am in two seasons at the same time. We will go back and revisit the same season over and over. Continually growing in the Lord is the will of God. It is His desire for us, but the pattern we experience it again in the cycle of God so we can go deeper and deeper in the things of God.

HOW TO INTERPRET THE SONG OF SOLOMON: NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL

Roman number IV. Again, if you want this set of notes, you can get it on the website (anybody can) on how to interpret the Song of Solomon. There are two basic camps of interpretation, and I think both of them are right.

There is the natural interpretation and the spiritual interpretation. Now, I am being really simplistic and focused because I believe that is what is appropriate. Again, I have 150 commentaries. At last count I have a few more than that I have read. I have not read them all, but I have read through many different chapters and books on it. I love it. It is a hobby, a fascination, but I tell you, there are so many weird ideas in the world on the Song of Solomon.

So when I say there are only two interpretations, which would not be a true statement, there are many angles from really bizarre groups. Many of them are not even Christians. I have a number of Song of Solomon from, you know, New Age cult groups. I mean they have bizarre ideas because it is the subject of passion, and people want to take that subject from the Bible to authenticate and verify their own strange ideas, and then they try to locate it in the Song of Solomon. I am making this narrow and basic. There are two basic interpretations that we care about as believers and those who are going hard after God and love Jesus.

NATURAL INTERPRETATION OF THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Number one, the natural interpretation is the story. It is a natural love song that is extolling or magnifying the beauty of married love, and when Solomon wrote this, he was talking about the beauty of married love. That was what was on his mind.

I have no knowledge that he knew it was the Holy Spirit on people loving the Messiah. I mean, Solomon had more wisdom than any man beside Jesus in history, so maybe he did have insight. I do not know. There is no way of knowing. It is fair to say that he did understand that he was exalting the beauty of married love, and this is a great book about marriage.

TWO BASIC STORYLINES

Now there are two basic storylines that the commentators have taken, and both of them work. I have studied them both ways, and both of them are believable. Storyline number one in the natural interpretation—King Solomon comes through town to Shunem, which is a little town north of Jezreel. It is in the north part of Jezreel, just a little town, and there is a girl working on a farm, and he is passing through.

She is a poor girl, and he is overwhelmed at her beauty. Here is this handsome, wealthy, famous king, and he spends the rest of the Song trying to win over her love, and he does, and she marries him, and it is a great love story. It is a great love story, and it is meant to be understood that way. The Holy Spirit meant for it to be understood as a love story extolling the beauty of married love.

The second interpretation or view of the natural interpretation is a bit different—The Shulamite girl in Shunem, the little town, she is working out in the fields, she is in love with the poor shepherd boy who lives in her town. She loves him and he loves her. Then King Solomon comes marching by in his entourage. He looks at her and goes, “Wow,” and he tries to win her and woo her and dazzle her. She resists all of his temptations and stays loyal in her love to this poor shepherd.

The most amazing thing is that both of those storylines are convincing, you know, there are big thick commentaries on both angles of that, and they are both believable. She remained loyal in love. That was the message either way you interpret the natural interpretation.

SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION

Paragraph B. The spiritual interpretation, which is the way we are interpreting this because I do not have time to do both. The natural one, I do honor the natural one. It is important. The spiritual interpretation is where we are finding symbolic interpretation to reveal spiritual truths. We are interpreting the symbols in a symbolic way to lead us to spiritual truth behind the love story, and the love story, though we know it is about a man and a woman in the natural, the love story is between God and His people.

So understand the great journey to grow in love with God, and that is how we are taking it. That is the most common interpretation. This love song was written over 3000 years ago. Now I think it is probably fair to say, now I do not know the exact number, but I think it is fair to say about 95% of all the commentaries written from a godly point of view take the view, the spiritual interpretation, about 95% of all history.

The Song of Solomon is a book about which tremendous amount of scholarship has focused on the Song of Solomon throughout Church history, a surprising amount. I would have thought it would have been a book that nobody paid attention to, but it is surprising the number of commentaries written on the Song of Solomon straight from the Early Church to modern times.

So the most common interpretation is the spiritual one, and I am just kind of guessing 95% of interpretations are spiritual ones. It is a significant majority plus some of the scholars of history who have taken this to mean God and His people.

JESUS IS THE EXALTED ONE IN THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Roman numeral IV. Jesus is the one exalted in the Song of Solomon. It says in Luke 24:27 that Jesus spoke to the disciples on the Road to Emmaus from all the scriptures about Himself—in thirty-nine books of the Old Testament.

It says that all of the scriptures He opened up the Bible and talked to them about Himself. All thirty-nine books of the Bible talk about Jesus. The Spirit inspired the scripture, obviously. The Holy Spirit has a fierce loyalty, and He has a determination, and He has a jealousy for Jesus, to exalt Him in the human heart.

I have had people say over the years, “Well, this is not about Jesus.” I said, Undoubtedly it is extolling the beauty of married love, but if the Holy Spirit wrote it, which He did, and it is in the Bible, which it is, the fierce loyalty the Holy Spirit has to Jesus, the deep friendship, the eternal bond of love, it is inconceivable that any part of the scripture was written without the Holy Spirit considering magnifying Jesus in the human experience.”

It is inconceivable to me that the Spirit of God who brooded over the face of the earth in Genesis 1, who is absolutely loyal in love to Jesus would forget Jesus in one of the books of the Bible. The book would last forever. You know, we will be reading the book of Romans, Psalms, Song of Solomon, and the book of Revelation. A billion years from now we will still be reading the Song of Solomon, a billion years from now. We will read the same Bible forever and ever and ever.

THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION: THREE COMMON APPROACHES

Roman numeral V. So we are going to look at the spiritual interpretation—Three different views of that, applications or approaches. All three of them are focused on enhancing love for God, and when our hearts are alive in love, we always love one another. I have said this over and over. Some people have this really, it is a superficial debate about, “If that group loves God, what about people?” or, “If that people love people, what about God?”

That is a completely irrelevant debate. If you love God, you will love people, and if you really love people and stay with it, you have been loving God or you do not have power to stay with it. It is two sides of one coin. It is one reality, one river. I bless all the interpretations that are taking this, I mean, the different structures of the book is what I mean by different interpretations. If people take this book to magnify Jesus, I have read all different structures of the book, and some have come to me and said, “Hey, you know, this is wrong.”

I respond, “Nah, these guys love Jesus. They are bragging on Jesus all through the book. Leave them alone. Just be a cheerleader for anybody who is interpreting the book in that way. They do not have to do it the way you do as long as love is growing in the human spirit for God and an overflow of love for people.” So the last thing we want to be scholar, you know, dogmatic debaters about the Song of

Solomon, the great book of love. That is the last thing that we want—a debating spirit on the book of the love of God.

I have just refused to do it over the years. I have had many who have tried to pull me into it because they see a different structure. I respond, “I love your structure. You love Jesus through that structure. I love your structure. I love you. That settles it.”

FIRST APPROACH IS JESUS AND THE INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER

First approach to the spiritual interpretation is Jesus and the individual believer. That is how I do this study, but the truth is not limited to how I am presenting this study. The second is Jesus and the universal Church. It is the corporate Church, and that is a magnificent study. It is not an individual believer relating to God. It is God relating to the Church through history through these eight chapters, a fantastic study.

ANOTHER APPROACH IS JESUS AND THE NATION OF ISRAEL

Another study is God is the Bridegroom and ethnic Israel, the nation of Israel, is the Bride, and that, of course, is how the scribes for 3000 years or the Jewish authorities have read it. They do today, those who have earnestness in their faith before God. When they study the Song of Solomon, God is the Bridegroom and Israel is the Bride. I believe we are going to understand the book of Song of Solomon, and God is going to use it, He is going to anoint it to win Jewish people to Jesus.

ALL BELIEVERS ARE INCLUDED IN THE BRIDE

Roman numeral VI. Now all believers are included in the Bride. I believe this with all of my heart. Theologically, all believers are betrothed to Jesus when they are born-again.

2 Corinthians. 11:2 Paul said: “I have betrothed you to one husband”—that is Jesus—“so that I could present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” This is the most amazing thing no matter what you have done, because of what Jesus did for you, you will be presented before God spotless and clean in every dimension of your life in terms of God’s forgiveness. God will 100% fully forgive anyone who has come to Him sincerely, but the point, that is such a great point that He will present us chaste or a pure virgin before God. It does not matter what you have done in any arena of sin.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST IS GREATER THAN SIN

The righteousness of Christ is bigger than any sin you could ever commit, and we are presented before Jesus on the last day as a pure virgin because of the power of the gift of righteousness that He secured for us in His own death and resurrection. The point I want to make here is that Paul says that we are “betrothed” in 2 Corinthians 11:2. We are engaged. One translation says, “espoused.” It is the same idea. Engaged is the word we use in our culture.

Every believer, born-again believer in this age is in relationship of being engaged to the Lord; however, in the Hebrew tradition when you were engaged, you were legally married. So when somebody was engaged, they broke the engagement, they actually had to go through the legal process of divorce.

Now the marriage was not consummated often for an entire year later. In our relationship with the Lord, the consummation is at the Second Coming, but in the Jewish tradition and culture, they were legally married. We are legally married to Jesus right now, but we are in the status of being betrothed bride to Him. We are engaged, and all of the property belongs to us right now. That is really true, but the consummation of the marriage, the full unveiling of His heart and the full connection and the manifest glory of God does not happen until the Second Coming.

THE BRIDE ARE ALL THOSE WHO ARE MATURE IN LOVE

Paragraph C. The working definition that I use for the Bride is all those who are mature in love. Like even in the eight-chapter love song, she starts off as a maiden, as a young maiden, immature, and she matures in love through the book, so I often refer to her in the first four chapters, I do not know that you have to do this, as a maiden who is awakening to love.

She is growing—by my definition of the Bride—as one who is walking in mature love and mature partnership with the Lord. So from that point of view the whole Body of Christ in heaven, in the resurrection with a resurrected body, everybody is mature in love that is a believer, Old and New Testament believers, because God will bring His work to full completion in the resurrection.

Every believer for billions and billions and billions and billions of years will have a mature love and partnership with Jesus. That is how I understand to be the definition of the Bride. Well let us give a couple reasons why I believe the whole Body of Christ from the first believer, you know, from Adam and Eve straight through to the final one saved is the Bride of Christ.

THE MATURITY OF THE BRIDE IS ULTIMATELY THE FRUIT OF THE CROSS

Paragraph E. The maturity of the Bride, or her being mature in love is ultimately the fruit and the work of Jesus' dying on the cross. It is not like He died on the cross and it was helpful, and then we took it from there. His death on the cross is so much bigger in the equation than anything we are able to produce by our own dedication. I mean, we blow it so many times, and we get a new beginning every single day because of His work on the cross and because of the work of the cross, we have the Spirit wooing us, drawing us, convincing us.

IN HEAVEN THERE IS ONE UNIFIED PEOPLE

Paragraph F. Jesus prayed that the Body of Christ would be one like the Father and the Son are one—the whole Body of Christ. In heaven there will be one unified people. There will not be two classes of believers in heaven. The Church will be unified as unified as the Father and the Son are.

I cannot imagine, you know, half of the Body of Christ not in unity with the other part of the Body of Christ in heaven, as Jesus also prayed that the love wherein the Father loved Him would be supernaturally imparted, and that prayer is going to come to pass for the whole Church. He was praying for the whole Church.

WE WILL BE LIKE JESUS WHEN WE SEE HIM IN GLORY

Third, we will be like Jesus when we see Him in glory. We will be like Jesus when we see Him in glory. The impact of seeing God's glory releases great power that transforms us entirely. When we see Him we will be like Him.

THE BRIDE'S IDENTITY IS ENSURED BY GOD'S RAVISHED HEART FOR HER

Fourth, the Bride's destiny is ensured because God's heart is ravished for us. He is not ravished for part of the Body of Christ. He is ravished for the whole Body of Christ.

THE THREE MAIN CHARACTERS OF THE BOOK

Roman number VII. The three main characters in the Song of Solomon: number one is King Solomon. He is a picture of Jesus, the triumphant, resurrected Jesus as King of kings.

Second, the Shulamite maiden, again, I think of her beginning as a young maiden who matures into the mature bride throughout the progression of her maturity through the book, but I think it is fair to refer to her as the bride all the way through it. The Shulamite, the name Shulamite is only mentioned once, in chapter 6:1. She lived in the city of Shunem. That is why she is called the Shulamite.

The third main group in the book is the daughters of Jerusalem speak of spiritually immature believers, but they are very sincere. They are continually looking to the Shulamite, to the bride, always asking her, “How can we get closer to the king? We want to know what you know.”

There is no one group in the Body of Christ who are the daughters of Jerusalem. You know, I have talked with different people through the years, and they say, “Ok, I get it,” and everybody thinks this way. I mean, people who have with the wrong spirit.

“We are the Bride, and that group over there are the daughters of Jerusalem,” and I say, “No, we are not going to go there. We are not going there. It is not a particular group.”

To bring this to an end here

COMPARING ECCLESIASTES AND SONG OF SOLOMON

Roman numeral VIII. Comparing Ecclesiastes with the Song of Solomon, Solomon wrote three books in the Old Testament. He wrote the book of Proverbs, the book of Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

To the Jewish fathers, this is a very common concept you will run into it many times as you are researching the Song of Solomon, you will notice this parallel. They looked at the book of Proverbs as referring to the outer court, Ecclesiastes is referring to the inner court, and Song of Solomon as the Holy of Holies.

In Ecclesiastes Solomon wrote, “Vanity of vanities—everything is vanity” (v. 1:2). The book of Ecclesiastes proclaims that life without obedience to God, no matter

what you achieve, no matter what you achieve, no matter what you have, life without obedience to God is vain, futile, and empty at the end.

That is what Ecclesiastes says. It is impossible to be satisfied in your spirit if you have the best circumstances, you could have the best looks, the best money, the best abilities, the best gifts, finance, positioning in society, but if your spirit is not connecting with God, man's life is described as endless wanderings on the inside until he finds rest in God. We can have everything, but we have nothing without reality with God. That is the message of Ecclesiastes.

TEACHES LIFE IS FULL WHEN OUR PASSION IS TO LOVE AND KNOW JESUS

Paragraph C. Song of Solomon is very different from that. We can have joy in life without any regard to things working right. Things can be really hard. We can have all kinds of negatives, but our spirit can be alive in God. That is the message of Song of Solomon.

Our spirit is alive when it is our passion to know Him and love Him, and we just measure our own lives because all of us have pockets of discontentment and unsettled issues. I assure you that as we continue in our pursuit to know Him and to be filled with passion for Him, those pockets of emptiness begin to be uncovered and touched by the Holy Spirit.

Ecclesiastes essentially says, "No matter how great your accomplishments are, if they are not pleasing to God, then you have nothing." Song of Solomon says that we find fulfillment in our humility before God, in our obedience, and by the impartation of the love of God in us.

Ecclesiastes says that vanity is the pursuit of the best things the world has to offer, and Song of Solomon says, "Life is in the pursuit of the best things the Spirit realm has to offer," though we are not against the natural realm because God is going to bring the two together.

Amen. We are going to end with that. (No ministry time)