

Session 2 Encountering Jesus in the Greatest Prophetic Song (Song 1:1)

I. THE GREATEST SONG

- A. Solomon was a prolific songwriter, writing 1,005 Songs (1 Kgs. 4:32). The Holy Spirit inspired him to name this Song using the ultimate superlative (e.g., 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. *¹The song of songs, which is Solomon's. (Song 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 and strength 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 Genesis 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, the revelation of Jesus' passionate affections and enjoyment of His people.
 - 2. Second, the revelation of the beauty of Jesus, especially as the Bridegroom King.
 - 3. Third, 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, study the Song.
 - 4. Fourth, 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 THREEFOLD INHERITANCE: PS. 2:11-12

- A. King David described God's threefold 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.
- ⁸*“Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance...”* ¹⁰*Be wise, O kings...* ¹¹*Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.* ¹²*Kiss the Son...* (Ps. 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 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 the 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, 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, honest heart before God. One of the Spirit's purposes in the Song is to fill us with the Father's love for Jesus.
- ²⁶*“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.”* (Jn. 17:26)
- B. If we are to receive the full benefit of the Song, we must turn it into an ongoing, 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 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 ten 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. In this way, 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.”
¹⁰How fair is your love...How much better than wine is your love... (Song 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 (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 4:6).
¹⁰My beloved...said to me: “Rise up, my love...and come away.” (Song 2:10)

- b. For example, 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.”

¹²*A garden enclosed is...my spouse, a spring shut up... (Song 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.