

Session 7 The Fragrance of Jesus (Song 1:3)

I. REVIEW: JESUS' LOVE IS BETTER THAN THE WINE OF THIS FALLEN WORLD

- A. The theme of the Song is the Bride's cry for the kiss of God's Word to touch the deepest place in her heart. This refers to encountering the Word in the deepest and most intimate way. In other words, the Word reveals the King's emotions for His Bride and awakens our heart in the threefold love of God (love from God, then for God which overflows to others).

²Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—for your love is better than wine (Song 1:2).

- B. She experiences the superior pleasure of encountering Jesus. His love (affection) "is better than" or "is more delightful than" (NIV) the inferior pleasures of sin (the wine of this fallen world).
- C. Affection-based obedience is obedience that flows from experiencing Jesus' affection for us and then giving it back to Him. It is the strongest kind of obedience. It results in the deepest and most consistent obedience. A lovesick person endures anything for love.
- D. Duty-based obedience is obedience that does not feel God's presence. God's Word requires that we obey God even when we do not feel inspired to do so.
- E. Fear-based obedience, or shame-based obedience, is obedience that flows from the fear of being put to shame or the fear of suffering negative consequences. This is biblical; however it is not enough to motivate us to consistently resist the pleasures of sin for many years.

II. THE GOOD PERFUME OF CHRIST JESUS

³Because of the fragrance of your good ointments [perfumes, NIV], your name is ointment [perfume, NIV] poured forth; therefore the virgins love you. (Song 1:3)

- A. The fragrance of a rose comes from its internal properties and qualities. In a similar way, the King's perfume in the Song speaks symbolically of His internal life (what He thinks and feels). God's perfume speaks of His thought life and emotional makeup, especially His affection for His people. The Bride enjoys the sweet perfume of God's affection. When perfume is in the air it can powerfully stir our heart. We feel its impact without being able to see it or take hold of it.
- B. Paul spoke of the fragrance of Jesus. It is figurative for the knowledge of God. It is also literal. The fragrances around God's throne are surely awesome. All heaven can smell them forever.
- ⁴Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. (2 Cor. 2:14)***
- C. Its use of perfume in the Song is reasonable since it speaks of love in context to a bridal metaphor. She is saying, "Because of Your perfumes my heart is stirred." If a scientist was to express excitement in God, they might write, "Because You are so brilliant, my heart is stirred."
- D. The Bride is saying, "Because of the fragrance of Jesus' good perfumes (His internal qualities) two significant things will occur throughout history.

- E. First, God will pour Jesus' name forth; He will exalt and reveal it in the nations. God has chosen to pour forth only one name. Why? Because Jesus' life is a good perfume before God. She understood that Jesus' name will ultimately be the supreme reality over all the earth.

⁹Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... (Phil. 2:9-10)

1. When God pours forth Jesus' name, He openly reveals it or draws attention to His beauty or character. God will highly exalt Jesus' name by filling the earth with it.

¹⁴The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord... (Hab. 2:14)

2. God will pour forth Jesus' name in the Church by filling it with the knowledge of Jesus.

¹¹He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets...¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God... (Eph. 4:11-13)

- F. Second, we will love Jesus more as God pours forth (reveals) the beauty of His name to us.

III. WE LOVE JESUS MORE AS THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS Poured FORTH

- A. The Church will love Jesus as the Father pours forth (reveals) more of the beauty of His name. The Bride knows that the beauty of Jesus will cause all believers (virgins) to love Jesus. God's name is like good perfume. Its mystery, beauty, and wonder powerfully impact us.

³Your name is ointment [perfume] poured forth; therefore the virgins love you. (Song 1:3)

- B. The virgins speak of the daughters of Jerusalem in the Song. They are genuine, yet immature believers who seek Jesus throughout the Song but are never fully committed as the Bride is. All the Church will eventually become extravagant lovers of Jesus, even if not until eternity.

- C. She understands how God changes the human heart. There is only one "perfumed name" that effectively transforms us. Do you see Jesus' name as a "perfumed name" that can change the most broken and spiritually dull person to an extravagant lover of God? If you do, then you will do anything to know more about that Name. This is the only Name that causes us to love God.

*²In that day [end times] the Branch of the LORD [Jesus] shall be beautiful... (Isa. 4:2)
*When God reveals God to the human spirit, it exhilarates us. There is nothing more powerful or pleasurable than when God reveals God to the human spirit. To understand Jesus more is to love and enjoy Him more. Our zeal for Jesus is strengthened by receiving the knowledge of God. This motivated Paul to suffer loss and endure hardship.**

⁸I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus... (Phil. 3:8)

- D. Jesus declares the Father’s name (personality) to awaken our hearts to love God. We will love Jesus with the love that the Father loves Him with. Loving Jesus in the overflow of the Father’s affection for Jesus is our inheritance, our destiny. There is nothing more glorious than loving God by the power of God. The Bride will love Jesus just as the Father loves 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)
- E. Jesus, the “ultimate psychologist,” gives us insight on how the human heart works. He explained to Simon that when people experience much forgiveness, they overflow with much love.
⁴⁷“I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” (Lk. 7:47)
- F. Satan accuses God in people’s hearts, convincing them that God is like a cruel father. He tells many they are rejected by God so they run from God instead of to Him in weakness.
- G. The Christian life is a life of being loved and enjoyed by God. This is more exhilarating than any pleasure, position, or possession. She understands the impact of encountering God’s emotions.
- H. The revelation of God’s affections militates against our pride and religious formalism. It causes us to grow in gratitude instead of pride and it renews our love so we do not merely go through the motions or mechanics in our spiritual life.
- I. I wrote a book called *Passion For Jesus*, therefore, I am regularly asked, “How do we grow in passion for Jesus?” The answer is simple and straightforward. We do this by understanding the passion of God’s heart for us. The revelation of God’s desire empowers us to desire God. If you want to love God more then fill your mind with truths related to His love (affection) for you.
- J. The whole earth is currently full of the glory, or beauty, of Jesus. It takes the spirit of revelation to see the perfume or glory of God, which is manifested in the natural in many places.
³One [seraphim] cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!” (Isa. 6:3)
- K. David lived with a spirit of revelation so he saw God’s beauty even when he looked at the sky.
¹The heavens declare the glory of God...²Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge...⁴Their line has gone out through all the earth... (Ps. 19:1-4)
- L. Throughout the Song, the perfume of God is imparted to the Bride. His perfume becomes her perfume. The turning point in the Song is in Song 4:16. The Bride prays for winds to blow on the garden of her heart so that God’s perfumes would be imparted to her, causing her to feel how God feels. We may study the progression of God’s perfume in the Bride throughout the Song. She discerns His perfumes and they are imparted to her in a progressive way.
¹⁶Awake, 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 4:16)

IV. THE SWEET PERFUME OF GOD’S PERSONALITY: FIVE VERBS

A. Jesus emphasized the sweet perfume of the Father’s affection and personality (Lk. 15:20). This is one of the most comprehensive yet concise statements of God’s emotional makeup in Scripture. We rest in the God who sees, feels, runs, embraces, and kisses our heart.

²⁰*“And he arose and came to his father. When he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on [embraced] his neck and kissed him.” (Lk. 15:20)*

B. The father saw the prodigal son: God’s view of His people

C. The father felt compassion for the prodigal son: God’s tenderness for His people

D. The father ran towards the prodigal son: God’s action and initiative for His people

E. The father embraced the prodigal son: God’s affection for His people

F. The father kissed the prodigal son: God’s desire for nearness with His people

V. APPLYING THESE TO OUR LIVES

A. First, we learn these truths. 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. It is not enough to be a connoisseur of the Song of Solomon; we must allow this book to fill our heart.

B. Second, these truths become revelation in our heart as we speak them back to God. We must engage in long and loving meditation on the Song with a hungry and honest heart before God. 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. 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).

D. Confess that His affections are better than the wine of this fallen world. Declare that the fragrance of His good perfumes (the personality of God) make you love Him.

E. 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.