

Session 13: Challenging the Comfort Zone

We are continuing in our studies in the Song of Solomon for twenty-four sessions. This class we are in session thirteen, challenging the comfort zone where Jesus challenges the comfort zone of this devoted, very sincere, yet still spiritually immature maiden. Sincerity and maturity are not the same thing. We are sincere for years before we are spiritually mature. The Lord enjoys us in that season, even in our immaturity, He still enjoys us. He sees the cry of our spirit. This is one of the classic passages in Song of Solomon where the Lord reveals His tenderness toward the sincere maiden who is falling short.

I am going to begin with a little review of the last session, session twelve, because Song of Solomon 2:1-7 which was the last session or session twelve, creates the context of understanding Song of Solomon 2:8-17. What she declared, the seven confessions of her faith in Song of Solomon 2:1-7, are now being put to test. They are being tried.

THE BRIDE'S IDENTITY AND LIFE PURPOSE: BEING JESUS' INHERITENCE

Roman numeral I. The bride's life purpose in Song of Solomon 2:1, she said: "I am the rose of Sharon, and I am the lily of the valleys." She understands that her life purpose was found in being Jesus' inheritance. Jesus' inheritance is more than just the mandatory obedience of all creation. Jesus wants more than obedience because even the unbelievers obey when they go to hell. They go in obedience to His Word. Jesus wants more than obedience. He wants voluntary love.

He wants the response that is given freely because the person adores the Lord. I call it adoring obedience. This is really what He is after. This is the ultimate dimension of His inheritance. This is the description of who we are. This is what makes sense of our life. We were created to give ourselves to Him.

The affections of the human heart, this is what Jesus longs for more than anything. This is the only thing that He would die for is to utterly possess the affections of the human heart. Again, not just he obedience because the unbelievers will obey even in judgment, they go to judgment in obedience. He wants the voluntary affection, the adoring obedience given to Him freely.

JESUS WILL BRING EACH TO FEAST AT GOD’S BANQUETING TABLE

Paragraph C. She confessed that the Lord brought her to the wedding table, the banqueting house, the place where she celebrated the revelation of His love for her, and she celebrated the reality that she loved Him back. That is what the banqueting house is all about. The Lord has a purpose in everyone’s life to bring us to this celebration where we discover the love of God, and we give ourselves back to Him in love by the power of the Holy Spirit.

She declared that He brought me to the banqueting table. She understood the Lord’s leadership in her life, and then she adds another confession. She says in Song of Solomon 2:4, “His banner”—His leadership over her is to produce this reality of love in her heart. The banner over your life that describes Jesus’ leadership in your life, that describes what He is doing in your life even more than your ministry or your circumstances, He is leading you in order to reveal His love to you, and then impart it in you. The banner over our life is to grow in love. When we understand that it makes sense in our journey because many believers, the banner over their life is to have a big ministry, or to have successful circumstances.

There is nothing wrong with those two things and certainly those things are within the will of God for many people. The banner over our life is different, the primary purpose is that God would reveal love to us and then impart it in us.

Paragraph E. The Holy Spirit charged the others not to disturb the bride in this season of devotion. What is going to happen, this is Song of Solomon 2:7 and in verse 8, which is the passage that we are looking at tonight, Jesus now disturbs the bride because the season has changed. There are seasons in the spirit in our life. Now, He is going to come to her, stir her, disturb her, awaken her, and call her to another dimension of experience.

OVERVIEW OF SONG OF SOLOMON 2:8-17

Roman numeral II. We are looking at the overview of Song of Solomon 2:8-17, just a quick snapshot of it, and then we will break it down verse by verse. Of course, I will leave more on the notes that we will not cover, so you can study it in your personal life. I really encourage you to do that. What the essence of this chapter is that Jesus reveals Himself to her as the Sovereign King. He is the one who effortlessly conquers all the mountains, has authority over every obstacle, and

that nothing can get in the way which He cannot conquer effortlessly because He has all power.

Now, she is not accustomed to this kind of relationship with Jesus. She has been sitting at the table under the shade tree eating grapes, eating apples, and singing love songs. She is seeing Jesus as the One who feeds her heart, but is going to now disturb her. He is going to call her to the mountains. She does not like mountains, and she does not like heights. He is going to call her to the hills, the big areas are the mountains, and the smaller areas represent the hills. He is going to call her to arise to the mountains. Then the second part of this passage, He is going to call her to obey Him, and to love Him in even the small, and the secret areas of her heart.

So there are two challenges that are going on here: He is going to call her to the big mountains—to the costly obedience. And He is asking her to believe Him in such a way where she will obey Him in the areas that even tear her heart—even that one area that has a hold on your heart, and you say, “Lord, I will obey You in anything besides this one area.”

He says, “I want you to meet Me in the mountains, on top of that mountain.”

It is like, “Oh Lord, anything but that area. I will give You every other area, but not that area.” That is what the mountain is about. The mountain is not only the issues of the heart, the mountain is also assignments. There are many of you when God called you to be Anna’s, or intercessory missionaries, that was a mountain. I remember when He called me to do this, it was troubling. I said, “Ok”—kind of long pause—“Ok, I will do this.”

He said, “I want you to resign the church and the ministry I was at for near eighteen years.” He says, “I want you to turn it all over, resign from it, and I want you to believe Me for your finances, and just start with ten of you. Start over. You are all going to be intercessory missionaries.” I remember when I came to the mountain time in my life, I said, “Huh?”

Many of you have experience that very dimension—what you left, and the change of your lifestyle to be sitting here in these chairs, you were called by Jesus to ascend a mountain, a place of difficult obedience. It was a challenge. The assignment was challenging, but there are also other issues of the mountain, again it is the issues of the heart. It is that most costly area that as Joel 2:13 says “tears”

the heart to obey. That is the mountain. He is also going to call her to the hills. He is going to call her to catch the little foxes—the little areas of compromise in her life. So really it is a two-fold challenge.

SPIRITUAL CRISIS FROM FEAR, SIN AND LEAVING THE COMFORT ZONE

Paragraph B. Back in Song of Solomon 1:4, the bride prayed, “Draw me, and we will run after You.” She has been experiencing the drawing of the Spirit at the heart level in intimacy, and now she needs to run after Him on the mountains. This is a new experience for her. It is a spiritual crisis because the Lord is going to require her to run with Him in a new way on the high places. She is used to sitting at a table under a shade tree just enjoying His presence, and now He says, “If you do not obey Me, now that the season has changed, you will not experience My presence like you did in the former season.”

She is really in a difficult position. She is in a position that she does not really get to have it both ways. She has to obey Him in the difficult areas now for the presence of God to continue in her life and to increase. She does say “yes” eventually (initially she says “no” and the presence of God diminishes in her life). She is terrified, and she is disturbed, she is in anguish, and in pain. The Lord is saying, “I am only getting your attention. I am only withdrawing My presence not because I have lost interest in you, but because I am so committed to you and I being close together. It is time to go to the next level of our experience together.”

Sometimes, we would just like to get to a certain level and get comfortable with it, a certain assignment in God, in terms of a ministry assignment, and a certain place of obedience. You know it is one which is pretty diligent, but it is not total obedience. It is mostly obedient. It does not get real invasive in terms of our speech, our thought life, our words and our time, but it is mostly obedient in the other areas.

The Lord says, “Time is up, and I am now bringing you to a place. I am requiring that of you now to go on with Me in maturity.”

It is a crisis because she draws back, and says “no” in fear she draws back. It is not in rebellion, as she is essentially saying, “I cannot do it. I do not like mountains, I am afraid of heights, I cannot do it. No...ahh...no...oh I love You, but no! I do love You.” It is real. She really loves Him, but she really says “no.” Then, she is

troubled because the Lord's presence lifts, and then she is miserable, and then she ends up obeying Him. The Lord shows His kindness to her.

JESUS CALLS HER OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE TO PARTNER WITH HIM

Paragraph C. He calls her out of the comfort zone because He desires a deeper level of intimacy with her. He is not just testing her like a coach would test an athlete. He is calling her forward in jealous love. Where He wants to bring her is to the seal of Song of Solomon 8:6, where He reveals Himself as the jealous Bridegroom who wants her to love Him with all of her heart, in the way that He loves her with all of His heart. This thing is going to the place where Jesus reveals Himself in the seal of love, the jealous Bridegroom who will not allow any area in her life to go contrary to His heart.

Beloved, that is where we want to go because that is where life is, and that is where safety is. That is where power is. That is where we want to go, but in our flesh we draw back, and we hesitate. The Lord is wooing her forward chapter by chapter.

DO WE BELIEVE JESUS' LEADERSHIP IS GOOD OR NOT?

Paragraph D. The real issue is does she believe that Jesus' leadership is good? If we believe His leadership is good, then why would we be afraid to go to the mountain? Why would we be afraid of an obedience that demands our speech, our thought life, our time, and our money entirely? Why would we be afraid of it if His leadership is good? The enemy comes and says, "If you obey at that level, you will miss out on life. You will miss out on fun. You will miss out on life." That is a lie.

That is what he told Adam and Eve in the garden. If you obey God, you will miss out, but if you eat the apple, if you eat the fruit of the tree, you will know good and evil. You will experience more if you get outside of the will of God. Beloved, I want to tell you that the richest place of experience is right in the center of the will of God, and that is what God wants to teach us.

How about when the obedience is costly? Is it still good, meaning will it bring life to us? Of course the answer is "yes." It is good, meaning obedience will bring life, and joy to our spirit. It really will be in a moment. Not always the first moments of it, but just a minute down the road, and that minute stretches out sometimes for a few months and sometimes longer.

Song of Solomon 2:8-9: Jesus now reveals Himself as the Sovereign King. Now we are going to break it down verse by verse. She says, “The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes—He is coming to her but He leaping on mountains and skipping hills (Song 2:8-9). She has never seen this face of Jesus. Leaping on mountains, boundlessly going from mountain top to mountain top, and she says, “I have only seen You with a guitar singing love songs under a tree. I have never seen this side of You.” Boundless energy, power and ability, behold my beloved He is like a gazelle or a young stag. He is like the deer boundlessly leaping, or the gazelle on the mountains. Nothing can stop Him, and nothing can slow Him down. He being revealed as the One, the King nothing can stop. Mountains in the Bible often speak of obstacles. There are demonic mountains, human mountains, and there are obstacles that get in our path.

Nothing can stop or slow down Jesus, the resurrected Christ. She recognizes that it is the voice of her beloved. He speaks tenderly. He loves her. He is saying, “Come up, come with me to the mountains of risk, to the mountains of full obedience.” He speaks tenderly.

THE WALL OF SECURITY AND PROTECTION

Roman numeral IV. “Behold, he stands behind our wall; He is looking through the windows, gazing through the lattice,” as He comes leaping over the mountains, and now He gets the house (Song 2:9b). She is looking out the window and she is thinking, “Yes, where is this going? You came so powerful, what is happening?”

He stands behind our wall, and he is looking through the window gazing at her. Of course, He is wooing her to come, and He completely has her attention because she has never seen Jesus in this way. The Holy Spirit has never required her to go to a mountain yet. It is true that many believers who are in a season where the Lord challenges certain issues of their heart, but there are only a few mountain challenges in a lifetime. I am not talking about everything that is a little bit difficult. I am talking about those really unusual few times in your life, where the Lord comes and calls you to another level requiring faith and obedience.

When Jesus is pictured as standing in Scripture, He is ready for action because almost always in the Bible He is pictured as seated. When Stephen, the first martyr in the New Testament, when he was stoned in Acts 7:55, Jesus is “standing at the right hand of God,” the Father. Stephen said, “I see Him standing” (Acts 7:55). When Jesus stands, something dynamic is about to take place on the earth. When Jesus stands before the Laodiceans, remember in Revelation 3:20, I have it in the

notes here. He knocks on the door. He stands and knocks. When Jesus stands on the outside knocking He wants in. Something dramatic is about to happen when Jesus stands.

IT IS “OUR” WALL—NOT THEIR WALL OR HER WALL

Paragraph C. She identifies the wall as our wall. It is the wall of their mutual making. She does not say it is her wall. She goes it is our wall, and it is right. She has been in a place of isolation in a real focused way for a season. Sometimes the Lord calls people to that season for an extended period of time like Moses in the wilderness for forty years. John the Baptist, his entire life until He was thirty years old, David was there for seven years. He was not ruling as king. He was in the wilderness and before that as a boy just singing his love songs to God.

The reason that she is right that it is “their” wall, and not just “her” wall is because it was the wall of isolation—and that might not be the perfect word—it was a wall of protection, and the Lord hemmed her in. It was a wall of focus and kept her focused in a particular way because the Spirit mandated that no one disturb her in the verse just before in Song of Solomon 2:7. It was a result of her obedience to the Holy Spirit that she finds herself behind a wall. Up until now the wall of focus, this wall of being locked in only before the Lord was a good thing. It was an issue of obedience. Now the wall, if she does not obey the Lord in this change of season, this becomes a point of her disobedience.

CALLED OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE TO DEEP PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS

Roman numeral V. Now, He speaks to her and He says to her, “My Beloved” (Song 2:10). He is speaking tenderly. He says: “Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away”—you could put the word there —“my beautiful one.” It is the same word as He is saying, “I want you to come away with Me.” In other words: “Come with Me back to the mountain tops. We are going to leave the house where you are walled in in the safety zone, the comfort zone and you are going to go with Me.

Paragraph B. You are going to follow Me to the mountains of faith and obedience, to costly obedience and to that risky, even difficult assignment where you do not have certainty like you had in the season before. You might not end up looking good. You might not end up with honor in the new season. You might end up in a whole different place, but you are dear to God and His eyes are upon you.

See we would like just in our flesh. We would like a contract with the Lord. Lord, I will obey in the next season, but I want to make sure that circumstances will be better. Many people make all of their life choices based on circumstances becoming better. That is the only grid they have.

They have no grid of going to a mountain of risk. Many believers do, and many do not. So they would like to make a contract with the Lord, I will obey in this next season, but I would like some kind of certainty that I will have more honor, a little bit more comfort, and a little bit more money. If it adds up that way in the charismatic church we say, it is God, and everybody claps. The way that we tell it is because there looks like the guarantee of more honor, more comfort, and more money, it has to be God. So somebody tells it, and that is the proof. Everybody says, “Yea, God is good.”

Well, I tell you that His banner over you is to bring you to the experience of love and not necessarily to make your life easy. He says come to the mountain top. Sometimes, it does result in more honor, and many times it does not. I will say it differently. The honor is always there it is just delayed. It is a deferred payment program. Sometimes the honor is in the age to come, but the honor is always there is a more accurate way to say it.

FAITH IS SPELLED “RISK”

John Wimber said that faith is spelled “risk.” John Wimber was a man who made a real impact on my life for a number of years, and one of the most, I believe, influential leaders in the twenty century in the Body of Christ in the Western world—just the impact that he made on so much of the Church. He said this over and over: “faith is spelled RISK.” He had a dynamic healing ministry. One of the oddest things that he told me many times, and he had tremendous healings, was, “I never feel the presence of God when I am healing the sick, never. He said, I never feel anything, ever.”

I said, “Oh come on.”

He said, “Never ever do I feel anything. I get an impression, and I speak it out, and then power moves, and sometimes nothing happens. I feel the Lord’s presence in my personal life, but when I am ministering I do not. It is just somewhere the Lord just wants me on that kind of relationship with Him.”

I thought, “Oh man I do not like that.” He had this idea that faith is spelled risk. So here is the question of the hour: Is it safe, is it safe, is it good, will you have life at the heart level, if you obey the Lord one hundred percent?

It is safer to be on the water: Peter was in the boat, and he got out of the boat, and he walked on the water. It is safer on the water with Jesus than it is in the boat without Him. Many people are committed to the boat, their knuckles are white, and they are hanging on the boat. If Jesus is not in the boat, the boat is not safe. You want to be in the will of God where Jesus is. If Jesus is on the water, it is safer in the water, than it is in the boat. That preaches easy, but it lives different. I do not always obey that. As I speak it I am just saying, “Oh Lord, I got to really obey that one hundred percent.”

THE PROPHETIC SIGNS OF FRUITFULNESS

Roman numeral VI. The prophetic signs of fruitfulness, now He is going to woo her by giving her signs of future fruitfulness that is coming. This is a very amazing passage. I love this passage, Song of Songs 2:11-13. The Lord is speaking: “For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, the voice of the turtledove is heard in the land. The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with tender grapes gives a good smell”—the fragrance of the grapes.

Then the Lord says again in Song of Solomon 2:13, “Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away!” He is still speaking, Jesus, and essentially is saying: “My beautiful one, I am saying it for the second time.” He sees her hesitation. Actually He knows that in Song of Solomon 2:17, she is going to say, “turn and run to the mountains yourself. Turn and go back to the mountains, I am staying here.” She refuses Him in verse seventeen, but He knows it is coming, so He gives this second exhortation to rise up. The first one is in verse ten, and the second one is here in verse thirteen. He gives this encouragement about what is happening in terms of in the Lord’s vineyard. He appeals to the signs of the times.

First, He looks at the past. He says, “My beloved, think about it: You have been in winter seasons before, but the winter is past. That bitter season is over and I am here with you and you love Me and I love you. You made it.”

She realizes, “Yeah, I guess that is true.” The Lord speaks to us that way. Many times, He appeals to our past and His faithfulness in our past to prepare us for our

future. He says, “Is it not true that I was with you in that winter season? That winter season came and now it is past, and we are still together and the wisdom of God was established in your life?”

We would all say, “it is true,” unless you are just brand new walking with the Lord, and you do not have that history in the Lord yet. Most of you can remember a difficult time, and it is past tense, and you see the wisdom of it. The logic is that if that is true then, why will I not be with you in the next season on the mountains?

THE QUESTION IS IS IT SAFE TO RISK, AND OBEY ONE HUNDRED PERCENT?

Paragraph D. The logic is :“If I was faithful to you in the past, why would I not be with you in the future? My banner over you is still the same. My purpose is to reveal love, and to impart it in you, to reveal it to you, and impart it in you.” There is no reason to hide behind the wall because He is faithful and He is God. Now He is going to change directions.

Paragraph E. Now, He is going to point to the future. When He said, “The winter is past” (Song 2:11). He appealed to the past. Now, He is going to appeal to the future. He is going to give her five different signs from an agricultural point of view that the harvest is right around the corner.

He says the flowers are appearing because the flowers appear before the apple. There is first a little flower, and then the apple comes forth. There is the little flower, and then there are the grapes. He says the flowers are appearing, and that means the fruit is coming in a minute.

He says the time of singing has begun in the land. The time of singing meant the singing that happened in an agricultural society right before the harvest. He is saying they are already getting the bands together to organize the celebration. The singing practices are taking place. The notices have gone out, and the singing season is now which is always the harvest.

He says, “the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land” (Song 2:12). The turtledove always sang, you could hear the voice of the turtledove just before the harvest time. He said that the green figs, the green appear right before the ripe ones do. They are all five saying the same thing.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES REVEALING THAT THE HARVEST IS NOT FAR AWAY

We are minutes before the harvest. Beloved, when I look across the nations right now, it is so obvious that we are right before the greatest harvest in the history of all of human experience. The signs of the harvest are everywhere. The point that Jesus is making, the harvest is coming, you need to know Me—you need to get a history in Me. You need to get experience with Me in obedience. Do not wait until the harvest time to be dedicated because I need mature seasoned people of the Spirit in the time of the harvest.

This is the logic He told the twelve apostles. He told them to look. He said the harvest fields are coming. They sold their business and left their houses. They did not know that in three years the book of Acts revivals were going to begin through their own ministries. They had no idea what Jesus meant when He said the harvest is right around the corner. He meant, “Peter, you are going to be leading the day of Pentecost revival.”

Peter is just a young guy and he does not know anything about preaching. He says, “Well, what do You mean?”

Jesus responds, “It is important that you obey Me. You do not really understand that the harvest is moments away. It truly is moments away.”

Beloved, right now the voice of singing is in the land. Now in the context here, it is the singing of the music groups that they organized before the great harvest festivals. Beloved, the houses of prayer are emerging across the earth so fast. Days of prayers, we are approaching the Global Day of Prayer. They are expecting one hundred million people world wide on one day singing to Jesus. “The voice of the turtledove is heard in the land” (Song 2:12). All over the world, not in every nation of the world but in various parts stadiums are being filled with days of worship and prayer and singing. Beloved, the voice, the sound of singing is already in the land for the end-time harvest right now. It is a remarkable reality.

WE ARE SECURE BEFORE A TENDER GOD THROUGH THE CROSS OF JESUS

Roman numeral VII. Now, He is going to appeal to her confidence to cry out. He is going to give her a basis for confidence because He sees her hesitation. Again, He knows she is going to say “no.” So, He is going to lay the foundation, and this

foundation is critical. If she can stay confident with the Lord even in her weakness, she can maintain the relationship with the Lord to get through this season of compromise. Her compromise is not because of rebellion, but her compromise is not because she does not want to bother with the Lord. Her compromise is rooted in her weakness and in her fear.

It is in her fear of the mountains, and it is in her weakness of the little areas—the little foxes that are ruining the vineyard of her heart (Song 2:15). Her resistance is not rooted in rebellion, or defiance. It is rooted weakness and it is rooted in fear. He is going to tell her in Song of Solomon 2:14, “O My dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let Me see your face, let Me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.” I mean this is such a significant passage. What is he saying?

First of all, as she is hesitating, she is not responding, and He has called her twice in verses ten and thirteen. Now in verse fourteen, she is hesitating, and He knows her well. He is basically saying, “You are My dove. Nothing has changed.” The dove is the picture of the sincere one, the pure one, the loyal one. He says, “I know that you love Me. I see your spirit. I mean another person in the same situation would have said, ‘Oh, you little rat, or oh you little snake.’” He does not say that. He says, “You are My dove. I know you are hesitating right now, but it does not change the fact that I see that it is in your heart to give yourself to Me.” Then, He calls her to the reality of the cross, and the resurrection of Jesus. He says, “in the clefts of the rock, which speaks of Jesus’ death on the cross (Song 2:14). I have a page of notes here, and I am not going to go through that because we do not have time. It is clearly speaking of Jesus on the cross.

GOD HID MOSES IN THE CLEFT OF THE ROCK TO PROTECT HIM

When Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock, when the glory of God was revealed, God hid Moses in the cleft of the rock, and He put His hand over him. He said, “Moses, I am going to hide you from My glory because if I do not hide you, My glory will kill you.” It was a picture of Jesus on the cross with a cleft in His side with the wounds in His body that made provision for us so that the glory of God does not kill us when we encounter it on the last day.

“SECRET PLACES OF THE CLIFF” IS THE MYSTERY OF HIS RESURRECTION

The secret place of the cliff and I have a couple paragraphs of notes on that, it is a reference to the resurrection, the mysterious ascent into the heavenly places. One translation calls it “the secret place,”—the mysterious place of the stairs that ascend into the presence of God. You can read that on your own how the symbolism references that. I do not want to go into that here, and that is why we have the notes.

Here is the point: I want to see your face, and I want to hear your voice. As her heart is trembling, the devil comes with condemnation when we hesitate. Satan says, “you are just a hypocrite anyways,” but the Lord says, “No, I want you to cry out for help right now.”

She thinks, “How can I cry out for help? I am not obeying, I am not following through in the way that I know.”

He says, “I want to hear your voice, cry out for help. I want to see your face. Stand before Me in worship. Do not back out of my presence. Move into My presence.” What the spirit of religion does is if something is unsettled in our life, that spirit will make you feel that you have no right to be in the presence of God. The truth is opposite. You need to be in the presence of God because it is there where you will find your strength.

OUR WEAK AND BROKEN LOVE CAUSES US TO RUN TO HIM NOT FROM HIM

Then the Lord says the most amazing thing. He basically is saying here, “your voice, when I hear your love songs, even though I know you are wavering, I know that you are hesitating, your voice is sweet, it moves Me. Your face is lovely, you are beautiful to Me. When you stand before Me with unsettled issues, with hesitation, with trepidation, I love you. You tremble because you know I have called you to a place of obedience that you do not in your own strength have the ability to do it, and you tremble before it. Do you know what? Your voice is sweet to Me. Your face is lovely.”

Beloved, dead religion says exactly the opposite. It says stand not in the cleft of the rock, in the secret place of the cliff. Do not stand in the confidence of the cross and resurrection. Stand in your own deeds. Instead of saying, “Let God hear your

voice, and see your face.” The spirit of religion tries to get us to leave the presence of God, and try to get your act together, and come back later. The gospel says exactly the opposite. Jesus is essentially saying in Song of Songs 2:14: “Stand in the cleft of the rock My dove, let Me hear your cry for help even the cry that you offer is sweet to Me and you are beautiful to Me even in the season of the unsettled issues in your life.”

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMENE AND PETER’S TIME OF TEMPTATION

Paragraph I. This is the very message that Jesus told Peter. Peter is in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus is warning Peter that he is going to deny Me tonight just like the maiden in the Song of Solomon in Song of Solomon 2:17. She is going to say “no” to Him. Jesus knew Peter was going to deny Him and He says, in Matthew 26:41 (paraphrased): “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. I know your spirit is willing. I see the cry in your heart.”

Beloved, the cry in your heart, the willing spirit is sweet to God. You are not a hopeless hypocrite. You are not a false lover of God. Your love is not false until it becomes mature, even weak love is true love before God. He looked at Peter, and He said, “Peter, you have a willing spirit, I see your heart. You are going to deny Me tonight.”

Peter says, “Not a chance.”

Jesus says, “Well we will work through that later. You have a couple issues going on here Peter. I want to hear your voice.” When Jesus said, “Watch and pray” in Matthew 26:41, which is equal to Song of Solomon 2:14: “Let Me hear your voice, and let Me see your face, for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.”

Beloved, when you are struggling with condemnation for failure, and the enemy says, “just curse God and die, just give up,” you declare the Word of God: “My voice is sweet, my face is lovely because I stand in the cleft of the rock. I stand before Him in the righteousness of Christ.” Beloved you have confidence to cry out.

PRAYING FOR DELIVERANCE FROM COMPROMISE

Song of Songs 2:15, now she offers the prayer. It is interesting that she prays for the little issues in her life. What about the mountain? Well the good news is, I will

tell you the end of the story. She makes it to the mountain in Song of Solomon 4:7. We will get there in a few classes. She makes it to the mountain. She does obey the Lord. She cries out. The Lord says, “Let Me hear your voice” (Song 2:14).

She says, “Ok, here is my voice. Here is my prayer.”

Jesus looks at her and is saying, “let me hear your voice and see your face. I want you to worship and pray while you are going through this.” Now, she obeys that exhortation, and now she prays. She says in Song of Solomon 2:15, “Catch the little foxes”—catch those little areas in my life that are ruining my love. They are spoiling her fellowship with God. She wants to go deep in God, the little foxes, it is the little issues. They are not going to forfeit our place in eternal life, but it is the little foxes that keep us from bearing fruit, the mature fruit in the vineyard of our heart. They are spoiling our relationship with God.

In Song of Songs 2:15, she says, “for our vines have tender grapes”—tender grapes were immature. They are not prepared yet. They are not fully mature. So she is saying, “Jesus, help me catch the foxes so that my love will not be spoiled, and so that my fruit will be mature, the grapes will be mature. I will offer You a mature offering.”

EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE SMALL COMPROMISES THEY KEEP HER FROM THE DEEPER WALK IN THE SPIRIT

She sees the seriousness of the small areas in her life. Now notice that they are really hurtful. It is a revelation in your life when God, by revelation, shows you that the little foxes are what are keeping you from a deeper walk in the Spirit. She is not just content to be free from a scandalous sin. It is not ok to just live moral. She wants to live deep in the Spirit. Beloved, you cannot go deep in the Spirit, I cannot go deep in the Spirit, except the issue of our thought life, our words, our use of time, our use of money is clearly under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

We can be in the kingdom, but we cannot go deep in the love song. I want to go deep in God. I do not want to just have a ministry, and I do not want to just get by with a little bit of blessing, and a little bit of anointing. I want to offer mature love from my heart. That is the purpose of our life on the planet. She prayed for God to catch the foxes.

SHE EXPRESSES HER SINCERE LOVE FOR JESUS

Song of Solomon 2:16, look at her confidence even though she knows she is hesitating in her trouble. She is saying, “Catch the foxes, catch the foxes,” and then she says, “Jesus, You are mine, You are accessible to me. You love me and I love You. You love me and I love You” (Song 2:16, paraphrased). Look at the confidence. Look at the connection that she has while she is gaining strength in the Spirit.

Many people because of their image of God, when something goes wrong, they lose the connection and their confession would be, “Jesus was mine and I used to be His.” Right in the midst of the struggle, she is worshiping: “You are mine, You are accessible to me. Your heart is open to me. You are mine. You reign, and You open Yourself, and I am Yours. I am struggling in this area, but I am Yours. I live for You. I am going to get through this. Help me, help me.” You can see her confidence in her struggle and her prayer.

Her prayer is continuing here in Song of Solomon 2:16. Verse fifteen and verse sixteen are her prayer, as she has the revelation that God is going to feed His people among the lilies. She knows that God is only going to feed her, and take her to the next level in the context of purity. Beloved, we can know that we are forgiven, and we can have confidence in being forgiven. You have to know He will only feed you at the highest level when you are saying yes to purity.

There are all of these kind of false doctrines floating around the Body of Christ about how it is ok to sin. It is a big difference of sinning, repenting, and getting free forgiveness, and having confidence. That is what we are declaring. You sin, you genuinely repent, and you can have confidence literally that moment, right away, you are clean. That is a very different doctrine than God is so good that it does not matter what I do. I will live in immorality because I want to because He will forgive me anyway. That is called presumption against the grace of God. I am not talking about that. I tell you He feeds your heart, He feeds you in the place of the lilies, in the place of purity.

HER PAINFUL COMPROMISE IN SONG OF SONGS 2:17

The final verse and we will end with this in Song 2:17 with the painful, the painful refusal: “Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.” She is in the nighttime, and there is darkness in her heart. She says, “Until light breaks in, no, just go, go on without me to the mountains.”

This is terrifying. She says, “be like the gazelle or a young stag upon the mountains of Bether” (Song 2:17). The mountains of Bether—you will look at the notes as the word “Bether” in Hebrew—and even some Bible translations translate it this way—it says it is the word “separation.”

She says, “I accept the fact that there will be some separation from what You wanted to give me. You wanted to bring me to the next level. I understand that I can not go to the next level.” Then the chapter ends and the class ends. Stay tuned for the next class, and her anguish and in her discipline, where the Lord calls her, and she arises and this separation is removed.

Amen, let us stand.