

Session 16 The Cherished Heart: Equipped to Love Jesus (Song 4:1-8)

I. REVIEW OF SONG 2:8-3:11

- A. Jesus called the Bride out of the comfort zone to the mountain tops to experience more of Him. However, she does not obey but tells Jesus to turn and go to the mountains without her.
⁸He comes leaping upon the mountains...¹⁰My beloved said: “Rise up, my love...and come away...”¹⁷Turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle...on the mountains. (Song 2:8-10, 17)
- B. She experiences God’s loving discipline as He removes His manifest presence. She sought Him but did not find Him. The Lord is not angry but jealously wants a deeper partnership (Heb. 12:6)
¹By night on my bed I sought the one I love; I sought him, but I did not find him. (Song 3:1)
- C. In Song 3:6-11, the Bride gained revelation of Jesus’ safe leadership as the Bridegroom King who could enable her to walk in one hundredfold obedience in facing the mountains. She sees Jesus as the King who desires her love. We can crown Jesus with our love as King of our heart. The “wedding crown” of love makes Him glad. He desires that crown the most.
¹¹Go forth, O daughters...and see King Solomon with the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, the day of the gladness of his heart (Song 3:11).

II. OVERVIEW OF SONG 4:1-8

¹Behold, you are fair, my love...you have dove’s eyes...your hair is like a flock of goats...²Your teeth are like shorn sheep...³Your lips are like...scarlet, and your mouth is lovely. Your temples...are like a piece of pomegranate. ⁴Your neck is like the tower of David...⁵Your breasts are like fawns...⁶I will go my way to the mountain...⁷You are all fair, my love, there is no spot in you. ⁸Come with me...my spouse...look from the top of Amana...from the mountains of the leopards. (Song 4:1-8)

- A. After a season of divine discipline, Jesus calls the Bride fair, or beautiful, while she was yet maturing in her obedience and faith. In Song 4:1-5, Jesus prophetically affirms eight “budding virtues” in the young Bride’s life. Jesus equips us in our weakness by affirmations that overpower Satan’s accusations against us (Rev. 12:10).
- B. This passage outlines eight character traits that God wants to come forth in His Bride. The symbolism used here is developed throughout the Scripture.
Dove’s eyes: Eyes of single-minded devotion and revelation
Hair like goats: Dedication to God
Teeth like shorn sheep: Chewing the meat of the Word
Lips like scarlet: Speech that is redemptive
Kisses of the mouth: Intimacy with God
Veiled temples (cheeks/countenance): Emotions impacted by the grace of God
Neck like David’s tower: Setting our will to obey God
Breasts like fawns: The power to edify and nurture others

III. SETTING OUR HEART ON JESUS

- A. In Song 4:1-5, we see the cherishing heart of Jesus our Bridegroom King. She responds by setting her heart to fully obey and believe His Word (Song 4:6-8).
- B. Jesus washes and releases His glory in the Church by cherishing us.
²⁶that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the Word, ²⁷that He might present her to Himself a glorious church...²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. (Eph. 5:26-29)
- C. God's primary method to change weak believers is to cause us to feel how much He cherishes us. In this way, He removes the stain of our sin and shame from our heart. When we feel cherished, we become confident and bold in our love for Jesus. The power of King David's life was found in feeling loved by God. God's cherishing heart is one of the most prominent themes in the Song.
³⁵Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great. (Ps. 18:35)
- D. Jesus cherishes us by esteeming us as His Bride and by treating us with gentleness and affection as He affirms the budding virtues in our lives (even in our weakness when we stumble).
- E. Jesus does not define our life by our struggles. He sees more than our failure. He defines us by the seeds of virtue that are in our heart and what we set our heart on, not only by what we attain. He sees a willing spirit in us (Mt. 26:41). He defines us by our longings to love and obey Him.
- F. Seeing how Jesus defines us determines how we think and feel about ourselves. He sees the seeds of character in our life. He sees the end of our journey with clarity.
- G. When Israel was being attacked by the mighty Midianites, Gideon hid in fear in the winepress (Judg. 6). An angel appeared to him and said, "O mighty man of valor." The Lord saw in Gideon what he could not see in himself. The Lord saw seeds of faith and courage that he was not yet operating in. The Lord named Gideon according to what he would become in the future. Gideon went on to become one of Israel's great military leaders.
- H. Jesus called Peter the rock (the unmovable one; Mt.16:18), knowing that he would deny Him in his fear. Peter outwardly looked like a compromiser. Peter's instability was manifest again. The Lord saw the seeds of courage, stability, and faithfulness in Peter and named him the rock.
*¹¹ When Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;
¹²for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew...fearing those of the circumcision. ¹³The rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him...even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. (Gal. 2:11-13)*
- I. We see the Lord's "editing process" in Abraham's life saying that he never wavered in his faith.
²⁰He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief... (Rom. 4:20)

- J. God's testimony of David is that he did all of God's will and fulfilled God's purpose.
²²*He raised up David...concerning whom He testified and said, "I have found David...a man after My heart, who will do all My will..."* ³⁶*For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep... (Acts 13:22, 36; NASB)*
- K. The Lord calls sincere believers the disciples whom God loves (Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20).
²³*There was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. (Jn. 13:23)*
- L. The devil calls us hopeless hypocrites. The enemy wears down many with accusation and condemnation. He wants us to feel like hopeless hypocrites so that we give up. He wants us to confuse immaturity with rebellion so that we give up.
- M. Many spend excessive emotional energy fighting the fires of condemnation and worthlessness. The baggage of condemnation and rejection takes a lot of energy to manage. This prevents us from effectively walking with the Lord because we are preoccupied with failure and shame.
- N. Many focus on measuring their attainment of maturity instead of being focused on setting the intentions of their heart to obey and believe. When we measure our attainment of maturity, we become vulnerable to two spiritual problems.
1. If we measure up well, we can feel proud and criticize others who fail.
 2. If we fail, then we feel condemned and thus, feel like quitting.
- O. Our primary focus is to be on God's emotions (beauty) and in setting the intention of our heart to fully love Him (obey and believe His Word). He will work mature victory in us in His timing.
¹³*It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. (Phil. 2:13)*
- P. Cherishing is the way a man changes his wife or children. All of God's discipline occurs as He cherishes us. Parents often do not rightly interpret the budding virtues in their children. They see failure instead of the budding seeds of dedication and greatness.

IV. WE ARE BEAUTIFUL TO GOD EVEN IN OUR WEAKNESS

- A. Immediately after the maiden's season of discipline (Song 3:1-2), the Lord declares that she is beautiful to Him. Jesus emphasizes the importance of this revelation of her beauty by repeating it two times. The Holy Spirit blasts this divine trumpet before us, "Behold! You are beautiful and I love you." We are changed by the revelation that we are beautiful and loved with affection.
¹*Behold, you are fair [beautiful], my love! Behold, you are fair! (Song 4:1)*
- B. The revelation that a sincere believer is beautiful to God even in their weakness is foundational to growing in God's grace. The word *fair* is translated in most Bibles as *beautiful*. This is one of the primary themes in the Song (Song 1:8, 15, 16; 2:10, 13, 14; 4:1, 7, 10; 6:4, 10; 7:1).
- C. The progression of the theme of our beauty throughout the Song of Solomon is important.

- D. When we see Jesus as a King who is filled with gladness in loving us (Song 3:11) and who sees us as beautiful, then we will arise to embrace every sacrifice. This empowers us to ascend any mountain or to face any obstacle.
- E. Next, Jesus affirms eight “budding virtues” in her life (Song 4:1-5). Each characteristic starts out only in seed form and then they need to be called forth with affirmation. Jesus equips us against Satan’s accusations by affirming the seeds of our love and obedience that He sees in our heart.
- F. Jesus speaks blessing on eight different aspects of her life. He gives us a new name so that we might grow up into it. Every phrase is God’s poetic divine romance that aims at the heart in a specific way. These eight virtues are reflections of the Lord’s beauty imparted to us and they make Jesus glad as we love Him in these ways (Song 3:11). These eight virtues will also make our heart glad.
- G. The king spoke to her in agricultural language that she is familiar with since she tended goats and kept vineyards. Each symbol is interpreted by the Scripture.
- H. The King tells her to go to the mountain. Up to this point, she only said yes to arise to go to the city not the mountain (Song 3:2). The Bride does not fully walk it out until Song 5-8. She has only said yes. The Lord values the yes, knowing that she will mature in time.
- I. Three things work together to cause us to come to 100 percent commitment to obey (Song 4:6). First, she receives divine discipline (Song 3:1-2). Second, she receives fresh revelation of Jesus (Song 3:6-11). Third, she receives fresh revelation of herself in Jesus’ eyes (Song 4:1-5).

V. EYES: SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING AND REVELATION (SONG 4:1)

¹You have dove’s eyes behind your veil. (Song 4:1)

- A. Eyes speak of spiritual insight. Paul spoke of the eyes of our understanding (Eph. 1:18). Seeing was Paul’s first priority because seeing is the doorway to growing spiritually (Phil 3:8-10; 2 Cor. 3:18). Obedience flows out of perceiving. When we see differently then we feel differently.
- B. Dove’s eyes speak of purity and loyalty. The Holy Spirit is pictured as a dove. A dove never mates again when their partner dies. They are known for their loyalty. Dove’s eyes cannot focus on two things and have no peripheral vision. This speaks of singleness of mind. Instead of being dedicated and secure in God’s love one moment then compromising or feeling condemned the next, she was single-minded. Her eyes are fixed upon Him instead of on lusts, failure, or success.
- C. She has humility in her revelation. She “hides” behind her veil or holds back some aspects of what God tells. Her secret life in God (her life behind her veil) is private. Abundant revelation tempted Paul to pride (2 Cor. 12:7-9). Paul taught that knowledge often led to pride (1 Cor. 8:1).

VI. HAIR: DEDICATION TO JESUS (SONG 4:1)

- A. The Bride's hair spoke of her dedication to God. The hair of the Nazirite was an outward sign of their consecration or dedication (Num. 6). Anyone who took a Nazirite vow was not permitted to cut their hair. Samson cut his hair and thus broke his vow of dedication and lost his power. Hair also speaks of the beauty of submission to God. Paul spoke of a woman's hair as showing forth her glory and dedication to God's authority (1 Cor. 11:5, 6, 15).

¹Your hair is like a flock of goats, going down from Mount Gilead. (Song 4:1)

- B. The maiden has a majestic and stately walk as represented by a flock of goats.

²⁹There are three things which are majestic in pace, yes, four which are stately in walk...³¹a male goat also, and a king whose troops are with him. (Prov. 30:29-31)

- C. We walk out our dedication with stateliness or as coming from godly wisdom with dignity. It is common for our dedication to be tainted with fleshly zeal that draws attention to self.
- D. Her stately hair (dedication) is the result of being well fed (on Scripture). The goats on Mount Gilead were abundantly fed. It was a fertile area with bountiful places where goats were known to eat in abundance. She was well fed on the love of God and the Word of God.

VII. TEETH: HER LIFE IN THE WORD (SONG 4:2)

²Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep, which have come up from the washing, every one of which bears twins, and none is barren among them. (Song 4:2)

- A. Teeth speak of the ability to chew meat and, thus, to receive nourishment. Infants have no teeth to chew meat. Babes in Christ cannot receive the meat of the Word (1 Cor. 3:1-2; Heb. 5:12-14). This virtue refers to her ability to receive the meat of God's Word. This four-part description of her teeth is from an agricultural perspective. Her teeth are strong, abundant, and effective.
- B. The wool of an unshaven sheep grows unevenly (unbalanced). Uneven wool speaks of fleshly zeal. The priests of Zadok had to wear linen garments and were forbidden to wear wool because it made them sweat (Ezek. 44:15-18). Our fleshly zeal must be under control of the Holy Spirit.
- C. To come up from the washing speaks of being cleansed from the dirt. As we eat the Word of God our teeth are like sheep that came up from the washing. The Word washes us (Eph. 5:26).
- D. Diligence in the Word results in an abundant impact on others. Her teeth were like a flock of shorn sheep in which every one bore twins and none is barren. Her ministry impact is fruitful without spiritual barrenness. To bear twins speaks of abundant fruitfulness. By meditating on the Word, we can keep our lives as clean as sheep who just emerged from the washing. This cleanliness of teeth speaks of her commitment to meditate on God's Word (1 Tim. 4:6-16). Song 4:1-2 describes her eyes, hair, teeth, and temple as does Song 6:5-6.

VIII. LIPS: GODLY AND ANOINTED SPEECH (SONG 4:3)

³*Your lips are like a strand of scarlet... (Song 4:3a)*

- A. Her lips speak of her speech. Her words being like scarlet speak of words that bring redemption to others. The scarlet strand pictures God's redemption from the blood of Jesus. When the spies came to Jericho, Rahab placed the scarlet ribbon in her window to receive redemption (Josh. 2:21). Moses took the blood of calves with scarlet wool to sprinkle the people (Heb. 9:19).
- B. The scarlet strand must impact our lips as we speak in an edifying way (Col. 4:6). Wholesome speech is an indication of the grace of God on our lives (Eph. 4:29; Jas. 2:3).

IX. MOUTH: HER INTIMACY WITH GOD (SONG 4:3)

³*Your mouth is lovely. (Song 4:3b)*

- A. In Song 1:2, the mouth was introduced in the Song in context to the kisses of His mouth, which refers to intimacy with God. Our communion with Jesus is lovely to Him. In the Song of Solomon, the lips speak of speech as the mouth speaks of intimacy. The king is not being repetitive or redundant in this affirmation to the maiden.
- B. When we give our love to Jesus, it often seems weak. However, God declares that it is lovely to Him, even in our immaturity. The Lord delights in the communion He has with us.

X. TEMPLE: HER EMOTIONAL MAKEUP (SONG 4:3)

³*Your temples behind your veil are like a piece of pomegranate. (Song 4:3c, d)*

- A. The temples (cheeks or countenance) reveal one's emotions. The Hebrew word translated as temples can be translated as countenance or cheeks. Several translations use the cheeks instead of temples. Our emotions are expressed by our countenance or cheeks. We can see anger, joy, gladness, and sadness on the cheeks or countenance. They are windows into one's emotions.
- B. Her godly emotions were like a piece of sweet pomegranate. They were sweet to God. The pomegranate was a common fruit in Israel that was very sweet. They were represented on the gown of the high priest or on the ephod.
- C. When pomegranates are broken they are red. Red speaks of her modesty, her propensity for blushing in the presence of shameful things.
- D. A prostitute does not blush when acting immodestly. A red countenance speaks of one sensitive to shameful things (red from blushing). Behind her veil speaks of her hidden life in God as being modest. It is genuine and not just a show. There is a hidden life of modesty and tenderness.

XI. NECK: HER RESOLUTE WILL (SONG 4:4)

⁴Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an armory, on which hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. (Song 4:4)

- A. In Scripture, the neck often speaks of the will that can be stiff-necked (resistant) or submissive. When one put his foot on the neck of a conquered enemy it symbolized their submission.
- B. The Bride's will is like the heart of David who set his heart steadfastly before God (Ps. 57:6). This is in contrast to being double-minded.
- C. David's towers were strong and high to make them effective in defending the city of Jerusalem. Her choices were strong like the tower of David.
- D. An armory stored weapons for war (Neh. 3:19, 25). A resolute will to obey God is like a storehouse of weapons against Satan's kingdom. A buckler was a small, round shield often worn on the arm. 1,000 shields spoke of abundant protection against the enemy. Her will was like the shields of 1,000 skilled warriors that were proven in battle. They provided protection from the enemy. This refers to the shield of faith that is used to protect us (Eph. 6:16).
- E. Our unwavering resolution to obey Jesus is an essential aspect in our spiritual victory. There is no substitute for exercising our will to say yes to God. The Lord will not violate His own boundary lines of redemption by forcing us to say yes to Him.

XII. BREASTS: ABILITY TO NURTURE OTHERS (SONG 4:5)

⁵Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, which feed among the lilies. (Song 4:5)

- A. Breasts speak of nurturing others as a mother nourishes her babies. Fawns are youthful animals. Her breasts are like two fawns that are twins. This speaks of a double portion, or a double ability to nurture others in giving them the milk of the Word. Breasts like fawns speak of the milk of a young mother that does not run dry. This is in contrast to an aging woman.
- B. The maiden's ministry is likened to fawns that feed among the lilies, speaking of purity. He promised to make her an ornament of silver (equip her in ministry) (Song 1:10).

XIII. HER COMMITMENT IS FOUNDATIONAL FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (SONG 4:6)

⁶Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense. (Song 4:6)

- A. She responds to these affirmations of her beauty by embracing the cross, committing to go to the mountain of myrrh. The mountain refers to obstacles that hinder her obedience (Song 2:8-9).

- B. Myrrh is a burial spice that is costly yet has a great fragrance. It speaks of Jesus' death. It is only a burial spice to our flesh but it is a fragrance to our spirit. It is a mountain of myrrh (not comfort). It is a mountain, not a small hill. Jesus ascended the mountain of myrrh in His own life when He went to the cross. We take up our cross to deny ourselves (Lk. 9:26) to ascend the mountain.
- C. Frankincense or incense throughout Scripture speaks of prayer (Ps.141:2; Rev. 5:8). We ascend the hill of frankincense to receive strength to ascend the mountain of myrrh. Jesus exhorted Peter to pray to receive strength to face temptation (Mt. 26:40-41). The mountain of myrrh is too difficult to ascend without living on the hill of frankincense. Our prayer life empowers our heart to embrace the cross with self-denial. We can only embrace the mountain of self-denial to the measure that we go up the hill of prayer.
- D. The hill of frankincense is smaller than the mountain of myrrh. A small amount of prayer is sufficient to prepare us for a higher mountain. The impact of our prayer exceeds our efforts on the mountains. Short prayers go a long way. We get more than we deserve from our prayer life.
- E. The maiden makes a firm decision to leave the comfort zone to go up the mountain or to walk in all God's will without fear. ***"I will go!"*** How glorious these words are to God!
- F. She refers to it as ***"my way."*** We must follow the unique path God has chosen for us. God calls each of us on our own tailor-made journey. Our unique way to the mountain of myrrh involves difficulties unique to God's purpose in our life.
- G. She commits to continue on the mountain of myrrh until all compromise is gone, until the day breaks and the shadows flee away. The shadows speak of the areas of weakness or compromise, like the little foxes (Song 2:15). The morning light brings a new day, a new season of victory, after struggling through the night. It speaks of both the day of eternity when we will live in the full presence of God and it speaks of a time of victory where we live in greater light on the earth.

XIV. JESUS' FRESH WORD OF AFFIRMATION (SONG 4:7)

⁷***You are all fair [beautiful], my love, and there is no spot in you. (Song 4:7)***

- A. He calls her beautiful 13 times throughout the Song. He has called her beautiful (fair) eight times up to this point in the Song. "All fair" is translated "altogether beautiful" in the NASB. He adds the word "all" for the first time in the Song. This is because she set her heart to go to the mountain. She had only said yes. She had not yet gone to the mountain. He sees no spot in her or no area in which she consciously resists His leadership.
- B. She does not go up the mountain until she faces the two-fold test (Song 5:2-8). He sees her willingness to embrace the cross. The Lord defines her in terms of her willing spirit, not in terms of her weak flesh or her maturity.

XV. THE CALL TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE (SONG 4:8)

⁸Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. (Song 4:8)

- A. The king calls her his spouse (bride) for the first time in the Song. With her new commitment to go to the mountain, she is now living from her heart like the Bride. She now carries her heart as a loyal Bride. For the next four chapters in the Song, we see her development into mature love.
- B. Jesus' inheritance is an eternal companion that is an affection-filled Bride that will be equally yoked to Him in love. The Cross is not an end in itself. It provides Jesus with His Bride and the Father His family. The Church will live with a bridal identity in loving obedience (Rev. 22:17).
- C. Jesus invites her to come with Him from the mountains of Lebanon of spiritual warfare to follow Him wherever He was to go. He calls her to follow Him to Gethsemane (Song 5:2-7).
- D. She now obeys the original challenge given to go to the mountain (Song 2:10, 13). Solomon called his bride to his house in the forests in the mountain range of Lebanon in northern Israel. Lebanon is filled with fragrant flowers (4:11; Hos. 14:6). Its glory is mentioned in Isa. 35:2.
- E. Lebanon is both a geographical area and a mountain range. Senir and Hermon are two different mountain peaks within the mountain range of Lebanon. Mt. Hermon is on the east side of the Jordan River. It was also called Mt. Senir by the Amorites (Deut. 3:8-9). Mt. Amana is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible, but is believed to be next to Mt. Senir and Hermon (Deut. 3:9; 4:48; 1 Chr. 5:23) which are both a part of the Hermon mountain range.
- F. She is to look from the top of Amana, Senir, and Hermon, or from His point of view (heavenly perspective). If we see difficulties from only a natural point of view, then we lose heart. We must look from His point of view to prevail in spiritual warfare.
- G. After Israel conquered the Ammonites on the east side of the Jordan River, they climbed to the top of these eastern mountains to see the promise land on the west side of the Jordan River. Israel had to defeat two Amorite kings (Og and Sihon) before they could climb this mountain (Deut. 3:1-11). She is a warring Bride engaged in spiritual warfare and seated in heavenly places.
- H. There are lions and leopards on the mountaintops. She must war against lions and leopards, which are animals that devour humans. Satan is a roaring lion who seeks to devour us (1 Pet. 5:8). This speaks of spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10-12).
- I. The "mountains of prey" had wild animals that stalked the people of Israel (Ps. 76:4). Habakkuk wrote of plundering the beasts on the mountains of Lebanon that made Israel afraid (Hab. 2:17).