

## ***Session 12 The Bridal Seal Of Mature Love (Song 8:5-14)***

*For additional study material pertaining to this session, see [mikebickle.org](http://mikebickle.org)*

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. Song 8:5-7 summarizes the journey and destination of the Bride who cultivated a leaning heart while becoming victorious in love and describes the pinnacle of our experience in the love of God.

<sup>5</sup>***Who is this coming up [victory] from the wilderness [testing], leaning upon her Beloved?... Set Me [Jesus] as a seal upon your heart...for love is as strong as death... (8:5-6)***

- B. The theme of the Song is the King sealing the heart of His Bride with His fiery love (8:5-7, speaking of the anointing of the Spirit to reveal and impart God's love to His people.

- C. The Bride's life vision (1:4) is fulfilled as the King sealed her heart with His fiery love (8:5-7). The Song is an eight-chapter love song showing how love developed between the Bride and King. Her journey began with a cry for the kisses of God's Word (1:2) and ended with a seal of love. This passage ends the progression of holy passion as the Bride lives victorious in mature love.

- D. The Spirit's first agenda is to establish the first commandment in first place in the Church. The command to love God with all our heart does not begin with us. It is one expression of the ultimate reality of the kingdom that existed long before the creation of the world, namely, God's heart burning with perfect love within the fellowship of the three persons of the Trinity.

1. From eternity past, God has loved God with all of His heart. The Father loved the Son, Jesus loved the Spirit, etc. God is fully satisfied in the fellowship within the Godhead.

2. We understand the first commandment best by seeing it in its eternal context of the fellowship in the Godhead, rather than seeing it as one aspect of kingdom ethics.

- E. Our greatest destiny is to participate in the burning love in the family dynamics of the Trinity. Jesus declared that He loves the redeemed with the same intensity with which His Father loves Him (Jn. 15:9). He said that the Father loves the redeemed with this same intensity (Jn. 17:23).

<sup>9</sup>***As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (Jn. 15:9)***

- F. In July 1988 while reading Song 8:6, I began to pray, "Jesus, seal my heart with Your fiery love." Bob Jones called to tell me that at that very time the Lord spoke audibly to him promising to release grace to walk in Song 8:6-7 across the Body of Christ worldwide. *This speaks of the message of God's love, Jesus as the Bridegroom King, and the first commandment being embraced as first in the body of Christ.* (The first and second commandments are deeply connected to each other and cannot be walked out separately.) The Lord also told Bob that I was to focus on this message.

- G. We must not settle only for the early stages of experiencing God's love where Jesus reveals Himself to us as **Savior** (who freely forgives us), as **Provider** (who blesses our circumstances), and the **Lord of Hosts** or Captain of the armies of heaven (who uses us in ministry in His war against darkness). He also wants to know Him as the **Bridegroom King** who loves us with all His heart and mind.

## II. COMING UP IN VICTORY (8:5)

- A. The Bride is described as coming up out of the wilderness leaning upon Jesus as her Beloved. We know the end of the story—we will come up from the wilderness leaning on our Beloved.
- <sup>5</sup>*Who is this coming up [victory] from the wilderness [testing], leaning upon her Beloved? I awakened you under the apple tree. There your mother brought you forth.... (8:5)*
- B. **Wilderness:** This speaks of the testings and temptations that God’s people experience in the wilderness of this fallen world. In wilderness testings, the Lord reveals our pride and weakness.
- C. **Coming up:** This speaks of the Church being victorious in love (8:5). She will come up in victory over wilderness seasons. It is a sign of spiritual maturity to see more of our pride and weakness. The paradox of grace is to see ourselves as weak in the flesh, yet strong and beautiful in grace (1:5). Paul saw himself counted faithful by God, but chief among sinners (1 Tim. 1:12-15).
- <sup>12</sup>*...He counted me faithful...*<sup>14</sup>*The grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant...*  
<sup>15</sup>*Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. (1 Tim. 1:12-15)*
- D. **Leaning:** This speaks of the Church cultivating a “leaning heart”—abiding in Christ (Jn. 15:4). We are to lean on our Beloved as we live in union with Jesus as our life goal and life source. To lean on Him includes talking with, looking to, and trusting His loving leadership over our lives.
1. Leaning involves looking to the indwelling Spirit as our source of power as we feed on God’s Word. We do not trust our self-discipline, nor in our past victories or failures.
  2. The Bride, like Jacob, wrestled with God, thus she limps, leans on, and loves God (Gen. 32). She cultivated leaning, limping, and loving. The Lord’s strategy in our lives is to produce an attitude of dependency on Him and union with Him (Jer. 9:23; 1 Cor. 1:31).
  3. The Spirit is preparing the Church in her spiritual identity as a cherished Bride with a loving and leaning heart. We have a natural resistance to leaning on Him. The Lord will “knock away the props” that we lean on for false comfort, success, and significance.
  4. The Lord’s strategy is to cause us to be totally dependency on Him (Jer. 9:23; 1 Cor. 1:31).
- E. The Spirit reminded her of her journey when He awakened her under the apple tree (8:5). The Bride was to remember that the *King is her source* of refreshing and life and that she will experience Him most when she is nurtured in context of the fellowship of the Church (mother).
- <sup>5</sup>*I awakened you under the apple tree. There your mother brought you forth.... (8:5)*
- F. The Bride remembers how the King awakened her heart to love early in her journey when she sat under the shade of the refreshing apple tree at the banqueting table (2:3-4).
- <sup>3</sup>*Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my Beloved among the sons [human race]. I sat down in His shade [resting in grace] with great delight...<sup>4</sup>He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner [leadership] over me was love. <sup>5</sup>Sustain me with cakes of raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am lovesick. (2:3-5)*

### III. SEALED WITH FIERY LOVE (8:6-7)

- A. The Bride asked the King to seal her heart and arm with His fiery love (8:6-7). The King invited her to receive the seal of fire on her heart and to walk with Him in powerful, holy, jealous love.

<sup>6</sup>***Set Me [Jesus] as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for [God's] love is as strong as death, [God's] jealousy as cruel [demanding] as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters [sin or pressures] cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised. (8:6-7)***

- B. This passage consists of a command, a description, a promise, and an encouragement.

1. **The command:** to set Jesus as a seal of fire upon our heart and arm
2. **The description of the seal:** being as strong or comprehensive as death
3. **The promise:** that nothing can quench this fiery seal of love if we yield to it
4. **The encouragement:** that this quality of wholehearted dedication will exhilarate our heart in love, leaving us with no regrets for giving so much of ourselves to God.

- C. **Seal:** The seal is a *progressive* impartation of the Spirit pouring God's love in our heart (Rom. 5:5). The seal of love on our heart is our present tense relationship with the Spirit. Thus, our fellowship with the Spirit is the seal, not our record of spiritual victories or failures.

<sup>13</sup>***In whom, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise... (Eph. 1:13)***

1. In the ancient world, kings put a seal of wax on important documents. They poured on melted wax, then stamped it with the king's signet ring. The royal seal spoke of the king's ownership, protection, and guarantee that was backed up by the power of his kingdom.
2. This seal is our inheritance and destiny. We must determine that this is ours to walk in. The release of God's seal in our life is the glory of the New Covenant (Heb. 10:16).

- D. **Set Me:** To set Jesus on our heart is to intentionally ask Him to strengthen us by His Spirit until the influences of His love are *progressively* imparted more to our mind, emotions, and ministry.

1. By the very definition of love, we must invite Him. He will not force us into a relationship of voluntary love. He waits until we invite Him in the matters of our heart.
2. Paul referred to this as putting on the Lord Jesus or putting on the new man. God requires us to cooperate with Him in the grace of God.

<sup>14</sup>***Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh... (Rom. 13:14)***

<sup>10</sup>***...put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him...***

<sup>14</sup>***Above all...put on love, which is the bond of perfection. (Col. 3:10-14)***

<sup>24</sup>***Put on the new man which was created...in true righteousness... (Eph. 4:24)***

- E. We put Jesus as the seal on our heart by seeking Him earnestly in various ways including prayer, fasting, meditation on the Word, and obedience—these activities, when done in faith and with confidence in grace, *position our hearts* before God to freely receive more the Spirit’s work in us.
- F. These activities do not earn us God’s favor. **Analogy:** we put our cold heart before the bonfire of God’s presence by seeking Him in the Word in spirit and truth. God opens His Word to us progressively (little portions) and in accordance to the time we feed our spirit on His Word.
- G. Prayer and fasting are not our seal. The power of God tenderizes and changes us, not spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines *only position us* to receive. They do not earn us God’s power.
- H. **Strong as death:** God’s love in us is as strong or comprehensive as death. Death claims everything in the natural realm. *Its grasp is comprehensive.* Nothing in the natural order escapes the power of death. God’s love will not allow any areas of darkness to escape its grasp.
- I. **Jealousy:** God is a consuming fire and desires to impart His fire into our hearts. Jesus’ jealous love is as *comprehensive in its demands* as both death and the grave are. He wants all of our heart. We pray, “Lord we want more of You.” Then Jesus responds by saying, “I want more of you.”

<sup>14</sup>**For the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God... (Exod. 34:14)**

- J. **Cruel as the grave:** God’s jealous love is “cruel” or as demanding as the grave. In other words, God’s love will not allow any areas of brokenness in our lives to escape its grasp. God’s love poured in our heart will conquer every area of sin that we continually yield to Him.
- K. **Its flames:** Its flames of fire are a most vehement or powerful flame. The anointing to love God is the most powerful gift that the Spirit imparts to a believer’s heart. The 120 believers in the upper room received a token of the baptism of God’s fiery love (Acts 2:3).

<sup>5</sup>**The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit... (Rom. 5:5)**

<sup>16</sup>**He [Jesus] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Lk. 3:16)**

<sup>3</sup>**There appeared to them...tongues, as of fire, and sat upon each of them. (Acts 2:3)**

- L. **Many Waters:** God’s seal is a flame of divine fire that cannot be quenched by the waters of sin, pressure, or persecution. Water always puts out fire unless it is God’s supernatural fire.

<sup>7</sup>**Many waters [sin or pressures] cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised. (8:6-7)**

1. The enemy sends the waters of temptation, disappointment, or pain, to put this fire out. God’s love, when continually yielded to, is more powerful than the floods of temptation. This fire is stronger than floods of bitterness, addiction, anger, or immorality, etc.
2. A flood speaks of great troubles including end-time persecutions (Rev. 12:15; Isa. 43:1-2)

<sup>2</sup>**When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you... (Isa. 43:2)**

**IV. THE REWARD OF LOVE IS FOUND IN POSSESSING THE ABILITY TO LOVE (8:7)**

- A. The highest reward of true love is found in possessing the ability to love more. The anointing to receive and express God's love is our greatest reward. Those who are wealthy in love do not look at price tags. No sacrifice is comparable to what He gives us in His love.

<sup>7</sup>*If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised. (8:7)*

- B. Paul spoke of this love that will pay any price. Paul laid down his status, prestige, honor, and open doors of opportunity. He laid down his open doors of opportunity.

<sup>8</sup>*I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ...for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ... (Phil. 3:8)*

- C. We are the only one who can give God all our love. God will not force us to love Him. It is our gift to Him that we give voluntarily as we cooperate with the Spirit's work in our life.
- D. Anybody can quit, except a person in love. When we are tempted to quit, the obstacle in our path is that we love God. God is raising up a people who will not quit. People quit because they do not have all the information. When we are fully informed, then we no longer desire the recognition that we did something extraordinary by obeying God with zeal. We are so filled with gratitude and love when we see the whole story, instead seeking special recognition for extravagant commitment.

**V. THE BRIDE'S FINAL INTERCESSION AND REVELATION (8:8-14)**

- A. The Song tells the story of how the young maiden grew until she became a Bride filled with the fire of God. Now she reveals how she sees herself in God (8:8-14). *She knows who she is.*
- B. In Song 8:8-9, we see her passion and intercession for the Church.
- C. In Song 8:10, we see the Bride's confidence or the revelation of how God sees her. Her threefold confidence is as a wall (selfless motives), as a tower (her supernatural abilities to nurture), and as one with peace (emotional hindrances removed). She enjoys living before His eyes. Her identity allows her to enjoy a radiant confidence to walk in her place before God.
- D. In Song 8:11, she has revelation of her accountability before God. Her sense of importance is rooted in eternity as she has revelation of giving account before God (8:11).
- E. In Song 8:12, she has confidence in her faithfulness to God. The Bride experiences the power and enjoyment of living before His eyes instead of before the eyes of men.
- F. In Song 8:13, the King gave His final commission to the Bride.
- G. In Song 8:14, she intercedes with urgency for the King's [Jesus'] coming.

## VI. JESUS' FINAL COMMISSION TO THE BRIDE (8:13)

- A. The King's final commission to the Bride commends her faithfulness in serving the Church.

<sup>13</sup>***You who dwell in the gardens, the companions listen for your voice—Let Me hear it! (8:13)***

- B. ***Dwell in the gardens***: The King refers to the Bride as, “*You who dwell in the gardens*” to affirm that she is still in the midst of His garden, serving people. She neither quit nor retreat into selfish isolation. The gardens (plural) refer to various parts of the body of Christ, the Lord's garden.
- C. ***Listen***: The Bride has authority and credibility until the end. This is seen in the companions whom she served eagerly listening for her voice because they saw spiritual reality in her life.
- D. ***Let me hear it***: The King again called the Bride to worship and intercession. He wanted to hear her voice. The enemy wants to silence our voice, but the Lord wants to hear our voice in four ways.
1. In ***worship*** as He forever wants to hear us declare our love to Him.
  2. In ***intercession*** as we join Jesus who makes intercession forever (Heb. 7:25).
  3. In ***teaching*** as we speak the Word to one another (Mt. 28:19-20; Col. 1:28).
  4. In ***evangelism*** as we share the gospel with unbelievers.

## VII. HER URGENT INTERCESSION FOR THE KING TO COME QUICKLY (8:14)

- A. The Bride responds to the King's request to hear her voice as she intercedes for Him to come. She prayed that the presence of the King come quickly to her and the others (8:14). The King was compared to a gazelle and stag because they move so quickly. The New Jerusalem is described as the mountains of spices.

<sup>14</sup>***Make haste, My Beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices. (8:14)***

- B. ***My beloved***: Her love for Him stayed fresh and strong until the end.
- C. Revelation 22:17 is one of the most significant prophecies describing the end-time church.

<sup>17</sup>***The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come”...<sup>20</sup>Surely I [Jesus] am coming quickly. Amen. (Rev. 22:17-20)***

- D. The prayer “Come, Lord Jesus!” has at least three applications:
1. ***Come near us in intimacy***: an individual breakthrough of my heart in God
  2. ***Come to us in revival***: a regional breakthrough of healing, revival, justice, and transformation
  3. ***Come for us in the sky***: a historic breakthrough at the second coming of Jesus

## VIII. QUESTIONS FOR SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION (e.g., FCF FRIENDSHIP GROUPS)

1. Identify one point that inspired or challenged you. Why? What will you do differently to apply it?
2. Identify one point that you want to impart to a younger believer. Why? How will you approach this?
3. Identify one point that you would like to gain more understanding of. How will you seek to gain it?