

Jesus Is Overwhelmed by Your Faith and Love

Song of Solomon 6:4-5; Hebrews 2:10

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The church of Jesus Christ is described in Scripture many different ways (for example): as His bride (Ephesians 5); as His garden (Song 6:2); as His vineyard (Isaiah 5); as His flock (John 10); as His temple (1 Corinthians 3:16); as His holy nation (1 Peter 2:9); and His army (Song 6:4).

We must never forget that we are not yet the Church Triumphant in heaven that has ceased from all battles and wars with the enemy, but are presently the Church Militant upon the earth that daily battles the world, the flesh, and the devil. If we should forget that important description of Christ's Church, we will be lulled into a deep sleep when we are supposed to guard against the enemies of Christ, or we will allow the exhaustion of daily battle fatigue to lead us to desert our posts and rather opt for just a comfortable lifestyle in following the path of least resistance.

How we grow weary of all those daily battles. We are not alone. All of the faithful witnesses for Jesus Christ have fought the same battles and some so clearly expressed that exhaustion (Job 10:1; Psalm 6:6; Romans 7:24). In fact, Scripture assumes that the constant battle we face will weary us, but we are encouraged to come to Christ when we are weary and to look to the hope that is before us (Matthew 11:28; Galatians 6:9).

Soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, put on the whole armor of God, faint not, and move not the landmarks of our forefathers, especially as we see more corruption and abuse of power in church and state. And let us remember that though we must stand individually, we must also stand together to uphold the same doctrine, worship, and government as summarized in our Confession of Faith etc. We need Jesus, the Captain of our faith, supremely; but we also need one another to stand with us.

The main points are these: (1) The Beauty of the Bride Described (Song 6:4); (2) The Effects of the Bride's Beauty upon Jesus (Song 6:5).

I. The Beauty of the Bride Described (Song 6:4).

A. As you will recall, the daughters of Jerusalem (professing Christians) have been so affected by the testimony of the bride in describing the glory of Jesus Christ that they desire to seek Him along with the bride (Song 6:1). The chosen bride of Christ then responds with confidence that she knows where Jesus is: Jesus is in His garden (the Visible Church) through His ordinances which He has appointed in His Word (Song 6:2). The bride then lifts up her voice with a renewed faith and love that regardless of what she encounters in this life, there is one truth that will never change—"I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine" (Song 6:3). Everything in this world may be taken from you, except the Lord Jesus. You first became His beloved when you were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4); and He became your beloved when you trusted in Him as your Savior and Lord.

B. The Lord Jesus has been silent since He called to His bride to open to Him the door of near communion (Song 5:2). She rebuffed His invitation (Song 5:3). She was unwilling to inconvenience herself to get out of bed to open the door to Jesus. She then went through a difficult time in which the sense of Christ's nearness was absent, though she had searched for Him (Song 5:4-6:3). And yet after her laziness and unwillingness to commune with Him, He comes in love to her (Song 6:4).

1. Dear ones, you may slight His advances of love to you, but you are His and He is yours even at such times. There in His garden (the Visible Church), the Lord Jesus comes near to her and draws her

to Himself with such lofty words of love and beauty even after she had turned Him away (“Thou art beautiful, O my love”, Song 6:4). The only reason you pursue Jesus is because He pursues you, and the only reason you find Jesus is because He first has come to you and found you. He will not give up on you—You are His and He is yours.

2. Dear wives, if you love your husband, you do not grow tired of hearing from him how beautiful you are to him and how much he loves you (or vice versa). In fact, when you grow weary of receiving such expressions of love (in word and deed), it likely reveals that your own love is cold and indifferent. And if you have grown tired of hearing in this beautiful Love Song the continued and repetitious expressions of love from Jesus to His bride, it also reveals that you either need to be awakened or made alive. And when spending time with Jesus in prayer, in the Word, and in meditation to hear His love expressed for you becomes dull (or the gospel of Jesus becomes boring), do not take that lightly—confess it, grieve over it, look to His mercy and forgiveness, and renew your love for Him.

C. Jesus compares the beauty of His bride to three objects.

1. **Tirzah** (“accepted”). It was an ancient royal city of Israel that was known for its beauty. Dear ones, your beauty before God is that you are accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6).

2. **Jerusalem**. The royal city of David that was also known for its beauty and glory and by the time of Solomon had within it the world-famous temple (Psalm 48:1-2). At that time when the whole world flocked to Jerusalem under the reign of Solomon, it would have been a great compliment to be likened to Jerusalem.

3. **Terrible as an army with banners**. “Terrible” refers here to an army that inspires awe and wonder as it is beheld. It’s awesome. How is the church awesome as an army with banners?

a. To see an army of ancient times filling the countryside with thousands of soldiers clad with shiny armor, some upon horses and some upon foot, holding colorful banners blowing in the wind, and poised for battle would indeed be an imposing sight; so likewise the bride of Christ upon the earth is not here depicted as a weak, frail, disorganized, passive group of people enjoying an afternoon picnic, but as a mighty force with which to be reckoned—not because she is strong in herself, but because her Captain, Jesus Christ is almighty (Hebrews 2:10). The world, the flesh, and the devil tremble not at you or me, but they do tremble at the sight of the crucified, resurrected, and glorified King of kings who leads His Church Militant to victory (the casting out of demons). The enemy trembles before Christ’s Church when she worships Jesus with all of the glory due unto the King of kings. The gospel ordinances are like our banners that give glory to our great Savior.

b. The real spiritual enemy behind the enemies that you can see is Satan and His hosts (Ephesians 6:12). And it is only Jesus, His power, His grace, and His truth that can bring down these enemies that seek our destruction (through wicked governments, tyrannical laws, corrupt organizations and schools, lifeless and backslidden churches that are simply pawns to be used by the government for its own purposes). We may appear small in the eyes of the enemy, and we may shudder at times at the size and force of powers that are arrayed against us. But it is with the eye of faith that we see that Jesus and His heavenly hosts have completely surrounded all our enemies (Elisha at Dothan, 2 Kings 6:16—the little stone that strikes the image and kingdoms of the earth and becomes a great mountain that fills the earth, Daniel 2). Our God brought victory to Jehoshaphat by simply singing psalms of praise to Him so that the enemy that far outnumbered Judah was brought to destroy themselves (2 Chronicles 20). Jesus has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church (Matthew 16:18; Zechariah 4:10).

c. This is not a spiritual war upon earth that consists of one battle (whether considering the Church Militant or whether considering the individual Christian). It is a war that consists of battles every day. And we cannot take off our armor until we have breathed our last breath (when our individual victory will be complete). Do you get up every day ready for the spiritual battle that you will face? It

is the enemy's greatest weapon against us to be ill prepared or unprepared. If we are unprepared, rather than looking terrible or awesome because we are clothed in Christ's strength and power, we will be ambushed and attacked and will find ourselves fleeing out of fear (like the disciples that slept as Jesus prayed and were subsequently overwhelmed).

d. Dear ones, fighting under the banner of Jesus Christ implies: (1) you are willing to endure the insults and ridicule of having a visible and open testimony for Jesus; (2) you bear a loyalty to Him above all relationships on the earth. (3) your life and appearance are characterized by the holiness of Jesus Christ and loving His commandments, which comes from communing with Jesus and spending time daily with Him (Acts 4:13). Dear Christian, to be mocked and ridiculed, slandered and misrepresented, hated and vilified for the sake of Jesus Christ and His truth (not for your pride, anger, foul speech, hypocrisy) is one of the greatest honors you can bear as a soldier of Jesus Christ. For it declares that your banner for Jesus and His truth is waving and that is why you are being attacked (Acts 5:41). Rather than being ashamed to suffer for Jesus, count it all joy to suffer shame for His glorious name as a soldier of Jesus Christ.

II. The Effects of the Bride's Beauty upon Jesus (Song 6:5).

A. The words of this verse convey such a love that Jesus has for His chosen bride that He is overwhelmed and awestruck by her looking to Him with the eyes of faith and love (Song 4:9).

1. It's as if her eyes of faith and love so melt the heart of Jesus that He says, "turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me." He says this not because He finds her eyes of faith and love repulsive to Him, but to the contrary, He is ravished by her faith in Him and love for Him.

2. Have you ever considered that when you look to Jesus and trust His promises to save you and to provide for all your needs, or when you cast your eye of love upon Him in delighting in communion with Him in worship, in prizing Him above all lovers, and in keeping His commandments, that He is overcome in His love for you. That's the effect that your faith and love have upon Jesus.

3. Even when you are struggling and going through a great hardship or loss that has brought you so low, or even when you have failed the Lord and feel so ashamed, understand that what you are hearing from Jesus right now is that He is ravished with your seed-like faith that turns and looks to Him for help and submits to His will and that He is overwhelmed by your repentance and renewed love and obedience to follow and to please Him supremely. Your eyes of a renewed faith and love have pierced His heart and have as it were captured Him, for these are the precious graces He died to give you—it overwhelms Him to see you display those graces (like a husband that buys his wife a beautiful dress—he is filled with love and joy to see her wear it).

B. Dear ones, rather than an angry or bitter Jesus, or rather than an unforgiving or frowning Jesus awaiting you when you flee to Him and look with faith for Him to pardon you and with love to serve Him, you so crush His heart that He says, "Turn away thine eyes, I can hardly bear it."

1. I ask you, which Jesus do you see when you look in faith and love to Him after you have failed Him once again, when you feel like quitting, when you feel like you are carrying the world on your shoulders, when you have suffered so great loss of health, a loved one, or possessions, or when you feel paralyzed with fear: The frowning, angry, begrudging Jesus (an idol of your own imagination), or the Jesus that is smitten and ravished and overcome by your turning to Him in love and faith (the true Jesus revealed here in this Love Song)?

2. If Jesus brings hardship and loss to you, even through your tears, look to Jesus in faith and love cry out to Him, "Though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee." And He will say to you, "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me." Amen.