

Christ my Beloved – Song Series

Intimate Communion with Christ

Text: Song of Solomon 4:8-5:1

Introduction:

1. In this chapter, the Bridegroom is speaker with the exception of Vs. 6 and Vs. 16b. Her growth in maturity is revealed in her willingness to listen more than speak. It contains a heart-gripping love song revealing the deep admiration and affection the Groom has for His bride.
2. He has praised her beauty in very specific terms in the first 7 verses. Now, He calls her to deeper fellowship with Him (Vs. 8), speaks further words of commendation (Vs. 9-11) and then likens her to a flourishing garden. There are some precious truths for the church and the individual believer contained in these fervent expressions of the Bridegroom particularly emphasizing growth in spiritual intimacy and communion.
3. The text divides naturally into 3 divisions.

Look firstly at the Bridegroom's...

I. Invitation for Her Fellowship (Vs. 8)

A. A Call to Communion (Vs. 8a)

1. The call of salvation – Christ's first call to us was "come and take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). This is where our relationship with Christ began! He drew us to Himself in love and made us His very own.
2. The call of sanctification – now as His bride, Christ calls us to a life of communion and fellowship with Him.
3. The call of glorification – in the future Christ will call us to Himself when He returns for His children.

B. A Call to Elevation (Vs. 8b)

1. The Bridegroom calls his bride to a special place of communion, a mountain range from which she can see with clarity and perspective. Believers are seated with Christ in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6) and our Lord calls us "to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. 10:19)
2. The old hymn expresses the truth well – "Lord lift me up and let me stand; by faith on heavens table land; a higher plane than I have found; Lord plant my feet on higher ground."

Look secondly at the Bridegroom's...

II. Commendation of Her Fairness (Vs. 9-11)

A. The Praise of Her Love (Vs. 9-10)

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1. In this position of nearness, He communicates His love to her.
2. “ravished my heart” = strong words of affection meaning she had captured or stolen His heart.
3. “with one of thine eyes...one chain of thy neck” = her eyes capture his heart as they are towards Him.
4. “how fair is thy love” = the Groom loves her love! In Vs. 1-7 he is captivated by her beauty. Now he is taken with her love. In like manner, Christ loves our love. Therefore, we should seek to express (prayer and praise) and demonstrate (obedience and service) our love to Him often.
5. “the smell of thy ointments than all spices” = her fragrance is wonderful, surpassing the most precious of spices. He also compares the fragrance of her garments in Vs. 11 to “the smell of Lebanon.” Lebanon was famous for its scent producing trees (e.g. frankincense). Oriental women would perfume their garments by sprinkling them with precious fragrances or sometimes by sowing pieces of scented wood into them.
 - a. Her ointments picture the work of the Spirit in her life. Her life is sweetened by the Spirit’s presence and workings.
 - b. Her garments picture the work of salvation. Gone are the filthy, wretched garments of her self-righteousness that reeked with the scent of sin. Now she is clothed in His perfumed garment and is thereby acceptable in His sight.

B. The Praise of Her Lips (Vs. 11)

1. Her lips are likened to a fresh piece of honeycomb dripping with fresh honey. Honey and milk are under her tongue. Her mouth is a vehicle for praise, prayer and witness for her Beloved.
2. Before salvation our sin nature was manifested through our speech. “Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.” (Rom. 3:13-14)

Look thirdly at the Bridegroom’s...

III. Description of Her Fruitfulness (Vs. 12-5:1)

The Groom now describes His bride in terms of a garden. She is a fruitful, flourishing oasis in a dry place. Note several truths about this garden and how they apply to Christ and His church.

A. The Privacy of the Garden (Vs. 12)

This is a walled garden with a protected, guarded water source. We learn 2 principles from this:

1. Separation – the church (and the individual believer) is set apart from the world for Christ. We are marked out for Him and His purposes. The wall denotes ownership. We are his special treasure. “To a locked garden and spring no one has access but the rightful

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owner, and a sealed fountain is shut against all impurity. Thus, she is closed against the world, and inaccessible to all that would disturb her pure heart, or desecrate her pure person.” (Delitzsch)

2. Security – she is encircled by a wall and guarded with a covering and seal. She is kept from the defilement and damage an unwallled garden would be prone to (e.g. thieves and wild beasts). Our life is “hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3) and we are “sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:13)

B. The Productivity of the Garden (Vs. 13-14)

Separation to God and fruitfulness for God are complimentary principles that work together. The saint who is separated unto Christ will flourish for His glory producing:

1. Fruit (13a)
 - a. ‘orchard’ = signifies the abundance of the fruit being produced. Not an isolated few trees but a whole orchard of trees! Interestingly the word translated ‘orchard’ is very similar to the Persian word ‘paradise’. What a picture! When our lives are fruitful for Christ, we become a paradise for Him to enjoy.
 - b. These fruits are the “fruits of righteousness” (Phil. 1:11) and the “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22-23).
2. Fragrance (13b-14)
 - a. At least 8 precious spices are specifically mentioned but there are more as he mentions “with all chief spices” (Vs. 14)
 - b. These speak to us of the many graces that are produced in our lives by the life of Christ working in us.

C. The Provision for the Garden (Vs. 15)

The secret to the exceptional productivity of this garden is found in its water source. That is the only way it can flourish in the midst of a harsh and barren climate.

1. The spring – “living waters” This is not a stagnant reservoir but a well feed by an underground spring. There is a quiet, unseen and yet very real supply of water that keeps this well fresh and full.
2. The source – “streams from Lebanon” This spring finds its source in the snow topped mountains of Lebanon which release fresh, pure water down into the valley. “The picture is of the melted snow waters descending from the mountain range, sinking into the ground and then coming up in springs here and there bringing refreshment to thirsty soil.” (Ironside)
3. The significance – the work of the Holy Spirit is powerfully in view. When the Spirit of God floods our inner lives with the life of Christ, we become a flourishing, fruitful and fragrant oasis for His glory.
 - a. John 7:37-39 *“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, **out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.** (But this spake he of **the Spirit**, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.”*
 - b. Isaiah 27:2-3 *“In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. **I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest***

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any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.”

4. Challenge: The degree to which our lives are filled with God's Spirit will determine the measure of our fruitfulness. Is your life dry and barren as a believer? Where are the blockages that are hindering the nourishing work of the Spirit in your life? Are you filling the well with rubbish, thus hindering the outflow of the Spirit in your life? We can never lose the Spirit's indwelling but we can hinder His filling in our lives by quenching and grieving Him.
5. Ironside refers to these hindrances as the "great boulders of worldliness, selfishness, pride, carnality, sinful folly and covetousness."

D. The Perfecting of the Garden (Vs. 16)

1. In wisdom, the Bridegroom summons the North and South winds to blow upon the garden to bring forth the sweet fragrances of the flowers. The North winds would be cold and frigid coming of the snow-capped mountains. The South winds would bring heat (Luke 12:55).
2. This trials and testings of the believer is in view. Our loving, all knowing Saviour, providentially and purposefully directs the winds of adversity into our lives so that we might grow in fragrance for Him.
3. Illustration: Charles Spurgeon told of a man who had the words, "God is love," painted on his weather vane. Someone said, "That is a queer text to put there. Do you mean to say that God's love is as changeable as the wind?" "Oh, no," said the other, "I mean that whichever way the wind blows, God is love."

E. The Pleasure of the Garden (Vs. 5:1)

1. At the end of 4:16, the bride speaks, inviting her Groom to come and enjoy the fruit of the garden. His response as described in this verse is immediate.
2. The fruitfulness of the garden is first and foremost for the enjoyment of the Bridegroom but it also has a role in blessing others as revealed in the words "eat, O friends". The best way to be a source of refreshment to others is to be wholly consecrated to Christ, workings of the life of Christ in our inner man. When we do this, there will be an outflow of blessing to others as well. "The consecration of all to our Master, far from lessening our power to impart, increases both our power and our joy in ministration." (Hudson Taylor)

Conclusion:

1. Will we answer the call of Christ to deeper communion with Him?
2. Do we express our love to Him with our lives and our lips?
3. What is hindering your fruitfulness for the Lord? Is it a lack of separation? Is your heart wholly surrendered and committed to Christ? Are you sold out for Him? Or is the wall of separation down and your heart overrun with sin and temptation?