

Christ my Beloved – Song Series

Lesson 3 – Refreshment and Rest

Text: Song of Solomon 1:7-8

Introduction:

1. C.H. Spurgeon on the Song:

Certain divines have doubted the inspiration of Solomon's Song; others have conceived it to be nothing more than a specimen of ancient love-songs and some have been afraid to preach from it because of its highly poetical character. The true reason for all this avoidance of one of the most heavenly portions of God's Word lies in the fact that the spirit of this Song is not easily attained. Its music belongs to the higher spiritual life, and has no charm in it for unspiritual ears. The Song occupies a sacred enclosure into which none may enter unprepared. 'Put off the shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground' is the warning voice from its secret tabernacles.

1. Review of Key N.T. Verses

A. Eph. 5:32 *"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

B. 2 Cor 11:2 *"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."*

C. Luke 24:44 *"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."*

2. **Purpose of this series:** Devotional rather than technical. To launch ourselves out upon the flow of the text and allow its Divine current to carry us nearer to our Saviour.

3. **The Scene:** Changes from the King's palace (Vs. 4) to the realm of the field, the flock and the shepherds. Christ is presented in the Song as the Shepherd-King. Christ is the King of kings but also the Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd of the sheep. He is both the sovereign Ruler over His people but also their tender Carer.

Christ my Beloved – Song Series

I. A Fervent Supplication (Vs. 7a)

In this verse she expresses her desire for fellowship with her Beloved in another way. In verse 2 she said “kiss me”; in verse 4, “draw me”; now she says “tell me”. Her desire goes beyond the experience of intimate love to a desire to understand more of her Beloved’s ways. She desires His instruction. She wants to know where His presence can be found and enjoyed.

A. Her description of Him

1. Expression found 5 times in the Song
2. ‘soul’ = speaks of the inner most being. Speaks of a deep, abiding love.
3. ‘loveth’ = not a self-produced love.
 - a. A love that comes in response to the love of the Bridegroom. She was just a humble, Shulamite maiden. Yet she had become the object of the glorious king Solomon’s love.
 - b. Doctrine/application: A love that is Divine in its origin. 1 John 4:7-10 *“Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* 19 *“We love him, because he first loved us.”*
 - c. Illustration: Wood fired by the sun’s rays. Hymn – “my heart restores its borrowed ray.”
 - d. God delights in our love. Illustration: A child’s expression of love to a parent.
 - e. Question: Do you take time to express your love to Christ? Do you take time to say “My Jesus I love thee”

B. Her expression of desire

1. A desire for unbroken fellowship – ‘where’. “Love would not be love if it did not desire to be continually with the object of its deepest affection.” J.B. Currie
2. A Desire for Refreshment and Rest – ‘feedest’; ‘rest’
 - a. **For Herself:** She is hungry and weary. She seeks shade from the sun that has burnt her (Vs. 6). She seeks rest from her fruitless labours (Vs. 6). The answer to our failures as believers is to seek out fellowship with our Shepherd. He leads us to pastures green and still waters (Psalm 23)
 - b. **For Others:** She is also a shepherdess, responsible for the care of little kids (Vs. 8)

Christ my Beloved – Song Series

- c. Doctrine/Application: The total sufficiency of Christ to satisfy the believer's every need. Colossians 2:9-10 *"For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."*

II. A Searching Question (7b)

- A. She is concerned about **Reputation**: She wants to be known as a wife who is faithful and loyal to her Shepherd-Bridegroom.
- B. She is concerned about **Distraction**. These companions and flocks are not evil as they are associated with the King. However, she is not content to simply be in their company, as blessed as that might be. She wants to be in His immediate presence.
- C. Application: Beware of distractions that rob us of time with our Saviour.

III. A Guiding Revelation (Vs. 8)

* The first time the bridegroom speaks. The pleading of our love will assuredly stir His heart to answer.

- A. The Description of the Bride
 - 1. Chapter 4:7 *"Thou art all fair my love; there is no spot in thee."*
 - 2. Doctrine/application: The imputed righteousness of Christ.
 - a. Romans 4 speaks much of this truth
 - b. 'impute' = means reckoned or counted. It is an accounting term which means "to put down on an account."
 - c. Illustration: Your life represented in a bank account. Before salvation we owe an unpayable debt to God because of our sins. Through salvation, Christ pays that debt with His precious blood; He wipes it clean. Then He credits to our account His own perfect righteousness. His righteousness covers our lives like a beautiful garment. Revelation 19:7-8 *"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be **arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.**"*

Christ my Beloved – Song Series

3. C.H. Spurgeon:

‘O thou fairest among women,’ saith he. My soul, dost thou not feel love to Christ when thou rememberest that he thinks thee beautiful? I cannot see anything in myself to love, but he does, and calls me ‘all fair’. I think it must be that he looks into our eyes and sees, himself, or else this, that he knows what we are going to be, and judges us on that scale. As the artist, looking on the block of marble sees in the stone the statue which he means to fetch out of it with matchless skill, so the Lord Jesus sees the perfect image of himself in us, from which he means to chip away the imperfections and the sins until it stands out in all its splendour.

B. The Instruction to the Bride

1. Follow the Flock

- a. ‘follow’ – speaks of obedience. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” John 10:27
- b. ‘flock’ - Christ is found in the company of His sheep. There are times for intimate communion (the King’s chambers) but there are also times for fellowship in the company of others.
 - i. Matthew 18:20 *“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”*
 - ii. Christ walks in the midst of his churches (Rev 1:13 & 20)
 - iii. Christ appeared to the disciples when they were assembled together after His resurrection.
 - iv. “To be near to the Shepherd stay close to those who are closest to Him.” J.M. Flanigan

2. Feed the Young (Service)

- a. ‘feed’ = shepherd. She is commissioned to service that is close to the Shepherd’s heart in contrast with the empty works enforced upon her in Vs. 6 (keeping the vineyards). “She has taken character from the One whom her soul loves, and is engaged in the same kind of service of love.” C.A. Coates
- b. ‘kids’ = lambs. She is viewed as a shepherdess. She is not only to be concerned about her own desire for feeding and rest but to be careful to guide and help the young immature ones. In so doing, she will find herself in the company of the Shepherd.

Christ my Beloved – Song Series

- c. Illustration: Christ's words of commission to Peter (John 21:15-17). Love for Christ will be expressed in love for His sheep, especially the young and tender. The way we treat God's sheep is a thermometer of our love for Christ.
 - d. Watchman Nee: "Our attention here focuses on service and warns that in seeking for Christ in fuller measure for herself, the duty to the younger and more immature ones must at the same time be met so as to avoid an exclusive attitude toward them. The mere betterment of oneself may become a peril to those pursuing higher states of spiritual affections."
3. Fellowship with the Shepherds
- a. Refers to the Shepherd's under-shepherds.
 - b. "While sharing with the other under-shepherds in caring for His flock she will find the Chief Shepherd at her side, and enjoy the tokens of His approval." Hudson Taylor Pg. 18
 - c. "The Lord's intention, then, is for her to be alongside His true under-shepherds, those who shepherd under the Lord's direction." Nee Pg. 37

Conclusion:

1. How is your love for Christ? Are you seeking intimate communion with Him?
2. To what or to whom are you looking for rest and comfort?
3. Are you following Him?
4. Are you serving Him?