

I. ONE SUPREME PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE

Son 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; For your love is better than wine.

- A. The “*kisses of His mouth*” speaks of receiving from God’s word. When God reveals God to us, it is the greatest gift we can receive. This allows us to experience life and light from Him.

Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

- B. She rightly recognizes that encountering His love by the spirit of revelation is greater than any earthly pleasure - His love is better than anything the world can offer.
- C. One of our greatest difficulties is to believe God wants us and receives our love when we are weak and immature. We love God only because He loved us first and we understand that He loved us first.

1 Jn4:19 We love Him because He first loved us.

Son 1:4 "Draw me after you and let us run together!"

- D. This describes the two-fold theme of our lives with Jesus. We are called into friendship with Him and then run with Him in obedience and partnership. Her prayer sets up the journey that she goes on throughout the rest of the book.

II. THE JOURNEY OF SPIRITUAL WEAKNESS AND CRISIS

Son 1:5 I am dark, but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, Like the tents of Kedar, Like the curtains of Solomon.

- A. Each believer goes through a process of maturity in Christ. The process that the Shulamite goes through is representative of the journey that we all traverse in Christ.
- B. She begins with a revelation of her own weakness and sin. Though she is sincere in her desire for God, she is spiritually immature. There is a vast difference between a sinful heart of rebellion against God and sinful actions as a result of immaturity in Christ. Rebellion has no thought of obeying the Lord while the spiritual immaturity will say “Yes” and repent.
1. The tents of Kedar were made of darkened goats skins and speak of her spiritual darkness and immaturity. The curtains of Solomon were the inner curtains of the Holy Place of Solomon’s temple and speak of the purity and beauty in the heart of a sincere believer.
 2. We receive God’s gift of righteousness and favor because of Jesus dying on the cross, not because of what we do. We must repent of our sins to receive God’s saving grace. Repentance is a change of heart that turns from sin to God. We simply disagree with the darkness and agree with God in our thoughts, words, and the things we do.

3. God wants us to realize that our repentance, obedience, and love for Him are sincere even though we are weak. Our love for Jesus may seem weak but it is very real to Him and He takes it personally.

Son 1:6 Do not look upon me, because I am dark... My mother's sons were angry with me; They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept.

- C. Growing into mature believers requires we understand the weakness of our flesh. God did not over commit Himself to us by loving us in our weakness. He was aware of it when He said: 'I want them, I desire them'. We do not motivate God to like or love us because we overemphasize the darkness of our heart. We come into agreement with Him as we receive His love for us in our weakness and that motivates us to grow in obedience.

Mat 26:41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

- D. She is experiencing shame from spiritual burnout as well as rejection from people in the church.
1. Because of rejection from people and the shame from her own sin, she finds herself in the midst of a spiritual crisis. She desires friendship with the King, yet she recognizes her own inadequacy.
 2. Misunderstanding and rejection from people can often make us feel shameful with God. We remember how we loved God but we find ourselves tired and doing things for God while feeling separated from Him. Many sincere believers give up in their walk with God in these times.

Son 1:7 Tell me, O you whom I love, where you feed your flock, Where you make it rest at noon. For why should I be as one who veils herself by the flocks of your companions?

- E. She turns to Jesus and says, "Where can I experience you again? Please nourish my heart, refresh me and give me rest". She wants to step out of the shame of her weakness and sin.
1. God bases much of His dealings with you upon the cry of your heart. Your actions do not discourage Him because He sees the cries of your heart for more of Him. A heart that hungers for God will translate into actions of righteousness.
 2. She is saying, "I want something real with You! I don't want to be veiled anymore. I don't want to live at a distance. I don't want to only hear others' stories of how they've encountered you. I'm hungry and tired; refresh me again."

III. JESUS GIVES US THE ANSWER TO OUR DESIRE

Son 1:8 If you do not know, O fairest among women, Follow in the footsteps of the flock, And feed your little goats Beside the shepherds' tents.

- A. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, show us different facets of His nature and beauty.
- B. He invites us into authentic relationship with Him in three ways:

1. By finding herself in fellowship with other believers
2. By embracing the spiritual covering of the shepherds
3. By serving and nurturing other believers

IV. JESUS ALWAYS SEES OUR SINCERITY

Son 1:9-10 I have compared you, my love, To my filly among Pharaoh's chariots. 10 Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, Your neck with chains of gold...15 Behold, you are fair, my love! Behold, you are fair! You have dove's eyes.

- A. Jesus affirms to her that she is indeed beautiful to Him despite her spiritual crisis and weakness.
1. Multiple times through four verses Jesus responds about how He feels about us.
 - a. v. 8 “Fairest among women”— (***Unlovable to others, loved by Jesus***) Phil 1:6
 - b. v. 9 “I have compared you, my love, to my filly among Pharaohs chariots.”(***you may feel like a failure but Jesus sees us strong in our heart to love Him***)
 - c. v. 10 “Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck is lovely with chains of gold.”(***Our emotions set after Him more in godly submission***) Is 61:3
 - d. v. 15 “ Behold you are fair, My Love! You are fair! You have doves eyes.”
(***our value to God and his promise that we will understand this truth***)
 2. It is through His affirmation of her that we open up and experience the pleasures of knowing Him and discovering His heart for us more and more. Each metaphor has specific meaning related to her identity in Christ.
 3. “Filly among Pharaoh’s chariots”, vs. 9 - Pharaoh had the most highly skilled, trained and sought after horses in the earth. Solomon bought many of Pharaoh’s horses. He is comparing her to his favorite choice that he had purchased from Pharaoh.
 4. “Cheeks are lovely with ornaments”, vs. 10 – The Cheeks are the part of the face that reveals emotions. The ornaments speak of the grace of God that is impacting her emotions. He says I love the way your heart responds to me.
 5. “Your neck (*is lovely*) with chains of gold”, vs. 10 - The neck speaks of a person’s will, for instance someone who is stiff-necked is rebellious. Her neck is adorned with gold. This speaks of the purity of her desire for righteousness, i.e. the yes inside her heart.
 6. “You have dove’s eyes”, vs. 15 – Doves are monogamous birds. The only mate with one other dove their entire lives. They also have monocular vision which means that each eye is fixed and can’t move unless they turn their head. He is saying that she is faithful to Him and her eyes are fixed on Him.