

THE BRIDE'S IDENTITY

"I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. (He) As a lily among brambles, so is my love among the young women. (She) As an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Sustain me with raisins; refresh me with apples, for I am sick with love. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me!" Song of Solomon 2:1-6

I. BE THE INHERITANCE OF JESUS

- A. A fundamental premise of the kingdom of God is the promise of the Father to give Jesus an inheritance that He would long for. One aspect of His inheritance includes the obligatory obedience of all creation. Jesus longs for more than this. He longs for an eternal companion, a Wife who willingly chooses to be subject to Him, under the same yoke, in love. (*Ephesians 5:31-32; Rev. 19:7-9*)
- B. The Bride of Christ is the great prize of all eternity that the Lord awaits. The affections of the human heart are, for God, the most precious possession. Jesus died to redeem us, and thus possess the affection of man. The reason we were created and redeemed is to love Jesus with all our hearts. Satan attacks our hearts so that we cannot love God completely, thus preventing us from living as the inheritance of Jesus.
- C. The Bride is presented as a beautiful rose and as a pure lily whose main purpose in life and identity is founded on seeking to love (rose) and obey (lily) completely Jesus. The rose is chosen as the most beautiful of flowers for its beauty and for its fragrance. The lily speaks of purity. The valley speaks of the low and dark places in this fallen world. She lives in purity in the middle of the dark valley of this world.

Song of Solomon 2:2 "As a lily among brambles, so is my love among the young women."

- D. We are the rose and the lily, whose love and obedience rise like a perfume that gladdens the heart of Jesus. We are the only prize that Jesus longs for. The reason we were created and redeemed is to love (rose) and obey (lily) completely Jesus as His inheritance and therefore bring joy and delight to God. The first confession of the Bride was that she was dark in her heart but precious to God through Jesus (Song 1: 5). She sees much more by looking at her life purpose when she confesses, "I am Jesus' long-awaited inheritance." This revelation only comes after seeing the truths of Song 1: 12-17.
- E. Stating our identity is not mere positivism but the proclamation of the truths that Jesus says about us. We are called to love and obey and we must always seek

to do so. Now, we know that we still don't do it perfectly the way we want to do it, but declaring who we are will keep us focused on achieving the standard of love and obedience that God is calling us to have.

- F. God has given us grace as the impetus and refuge where we can keep trying every day to be what God has called us to be. Grace is NOT "overlapping" our sin or our "mediocre Christianity."
- G. We cannot separate love and obedience. The inheritance of Jesus is a people who walk in purity. Our choices in life are a real part of the Father's plan to reward and honor His Son. God has made a huge investment in us by choosing us as the rose and lily that He is growing for Jesus. We are the reward of His sufferings. Many believers scoff at the call to purity by rejecting it as legalism.
- H. We must agree to God's definition of success. Many agree to lies about what success is and therefore feel like a failure and live without a goal. They focus mostly on the external (what they do and possess) rather than the internal (what they really are in their hearts). They see their life in context with their struggles and lack of impact. Jesus rebuked those who put their ministry before loving God.

II. ONLY JESUS CAN SATISFY

- A. There is only One who refreshes the human spirit to the highest level. When we receive the revelation of Jesus as an apple tree or as the main source that satisfies our hearts, then we seek him with all our hearts. This is a fundamental truth in marriage, in business, and in ministry. Jesus is more than our forgiving Savior, more than our healer and provider. It is the apple tree that satisfies. Some in vain transfer the main source of their joy to ministry, money, or relationships.
- B. Jesus is like an apple tree among all the great men on earth. Wild or forest trees speak symbolically of the great men of the earth who tower over others like arrogant trees (Dan. 4: 10-14).

“With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.” Song of Solomon 2:3-4

- C. As Mary of Bethany, sat at the feet of Jesus, we have to sit before Jesus and experience his comforting shadow that protects us from the scorching heat of this world. One of the greatest delights available to the human spirit is when we feed on her word and when we feel her presence. The word brings delight and is sweet to all who continually dine (have communion) with Jesus.
- D. The way to continue growing in our identity as a Rose and a Lily is to sit under the shade of the apple tree, sitting at its table and eating its fruit. He is our only source. We must enjoy our relationship with God if we want to mature

consistently. We can endure through great difficulties if we find delight in His presence. A lover of God will always work better than a worker. When a worker becomes a lover, the paradigm of his work changes greatly. It is impossible to seek God diligently for decades without enjoying Him in the word.

III. HIS LEADERSHIP IS LOVE

"his banner over me was love" Song of Solomon 2:4b

- A. In the ancient world, an army marched in battalions under a specific banner or banner. Each unit had its own flag whose objective was to identify them. The flag or banner over our lives that identifies who we are and where we are going in our life is the good leadership of Jesus (wise, tender and powerful) who directs us to grow in love and in our identity as his inheritance (the Bride).
- B. Jesus has a good and specific plan for each believer. Which is to take us to His table, where we celebrate His love. His main goal in His leadership over our lives is to lead us into the banquet room to celebrate His love for us and our love for Him. We do not know the details of where Jesus is directing our ministries but there is no doubt that He is the one. first to head to dinner at the "wedding table" (the truth about our identity as the Bride of Christ).
- C. The leadership of Jesus often looks very different than we think. There are situations and things that will happen in our lives that are part of his perfect leadership. Our job is to love him and to humble ourselves and then his perfect leadership will direct our lives. "Everything works for good for those who love the son of God."
- D. He brings us to the table using both positive and negative ways because He has a holy zeal to remove everything that hinders love in us. First, the positive way is when we willingly follow His leadership in the banquet hall by feeding on His Word and obeying it. Second, the negative way is seen when we resist His leadership as He tries to lead us into the banquet hall. Therefore, he is forced to discipline us by exposing our sin, taking things away from us, and closing doors that frustrate us.

IV. LOVESICK

- A. Just as apples speak of how Jesus refreshes us (Song 2: 3), raisins also speak of the ministry of the Spirit, as they are dried grapes. Grapes can symbolically point us to the wine of the Holy Spirit. In other words, she cries out, "Sustain me with more of the Spirit and refresh me with more of Jesus."
- B. We are called to live sick with love for God. This causes us to have deep emotions and even painful feelings of love and longing for more of Jesus. When

we play this, we can never go back to "what we used to do." in our walk with God. She is touched by love. There are two aspects of being spiritually love-sick. The first two beatitudes are closely connected to this.

V. GOD'S EMBRACE

"His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me!" Song of Solomon 2:6

- A. The Bride understands the movement of 2 facets of God in her life, her right hand and her left hand of God. The left hand of God can tell us about the move of God that is not so obvious. It is under the head, therefore it is outside of us. view. The Lord does many things for us that we do not see. It holds and unleashes many things to bless, provide, and protect us. It frees us from problems that we do not know or exist in this age. For example, we have been spared accidents that we do not discern.
- B. The right hand of God speaks of the visible or discernible movement of God. The idea is that Solomon was in front of the bride to hug him. She can see it clearly. This speaks of the "sweet" manifest presence of God that can be felt and discerned. At times, we feel our hearts soften by the work of God's right hand.