

SONG OF SONGS YOU ARE VERY LOVED AND THEREFORE YOU LOVE OTHERS!

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I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Throughout the four chapters of the book of Song of Songs we have seen the expressions of love of the Beloved for His beloved bride. And the goal today is to apply the kind of love we see in this book to our relationships with those around us whether we are married, single, or in whatever marital status we find ourselves.
- B. When we experience God's love we are called to give that same kind of love. No one can give what we have and no one who experiences God's love stops expressing it to those around him.

1 Jn. 4:11 *"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."*

II. HOW IS THE LOVE OF THE BELOVED IN THE BOOK OF SONGS?

- 1. **LET THE MAIDEN KNOW THAT SHE IS LOVED DESPITE HER STRUGGLES: v.1:5** *"Dark am I, yet lovely, daughters of Jerusalem..."* The Beloved knows that she has darkness in her soul and she herself is aware of this reality but is secure that she is loved in her growth process. The question for us is **how much do we show others that they are loved in the midst of their struggles?** Our human tendency may be to claim, pressure or make others feel guilty but we rarely respond as God responds in the midst of our struggles..

Jer. 31:3 *"the Lord appeared to him[a] from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you."* (ESV)

- 2. **HE CONSTANTLY AFFIRMS HER WITH HIS WORDS v.1:9-11** *"I compare you, my love, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots. ¹⁰ Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with strings of jewels. Others ¹¹ We will make for you[b] ornaments of gold, studded with silver."* The Beloved calls those virtues that are just forming in his heart to emerge, that is, He creates an environment of love for the best in us to emerge, **how much do we use our words to affirm what is still incipient in others?**

Eph. 5:25-26 *"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word."*

- 3. **PROVIDES YOU WITH WHAT YOU NEED TO GROW v.2:4** *"He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."* That is exactly what Jesus does with the church and is the example for husbands. He also shows her His love publicly demonstrating that He is proud of her. The question here is **how much do we focus on seeing what others need to grow in all aspects?**

Ef. 5:28-29 *"In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church."*

- 4. **INVITES HER TO GROW v.2:10** *"My beloved responded and said to me, 'Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, And come along,'"* A fundamental part of God's love is His tender call for us to grow in all respects. While the love that the world raises speaks simply of unbalanced acceptance, God's love transforms us to go further to the fullness of who we can be in Christ. The question here is: **How much are we calling on those we love to grow even if it seems very difficult at times or they resist going further?**

5. **CORRECTS HER IN LOVE v.3:1** ***"On my bed night after night I sought him Whom my soul loves; I sought him but did not find him."*** True love does not exclude loving discipline. God loves us so much as not to leave us as we are. One of the purposes of God's love is not only our comfort but our holiness and that is precisely what true love does when He sees failure in those He loves.

Heb. 12:5b-7a ***"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are punished by Him; ⁶ For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He punishes every son whom He accepts."***

Gal. 6:1 ***"Brethren, if a man is [a]overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."***

6. **HE INSISTS ON AFFIRMING HER IDENTITY v.4:1-4** ***"How beautiful you are, my darling, How beautiful you are! Your eyes are like doves behind your veil... Your hair... ² Your teeth... ³ ...Your lips are like a scarlet ribbon; your mouth is lovely Your temples... ⁴ Your neck..."*** The Father does not give up on us and that should be our attitude towards others, to continue affirming them in what they are in Christ.

Rom. 12:10 ***"Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other."***

7. **ALWAYS ENHANCE THE POSITIVE IN HER v.4:7** ***"You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you."*** Through the work of Christ on the cross, the Father canceled our sins and this must also be our constant attitude towards others, a real and total forgiveness.

1 Cor. 13:4-7 ***"Love... ⁵ ...t keeps no record of wrongs... ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres..."***

8. **APPRECIATES THE LOVE RESPONSE OF THE BELOVED v.4:9** ***"You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace."*** Many of us have an excessive expectation of what others should do for us and a very low expectation of what we should do for them and therefore we are never satisfied with what they do for us.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. We are learning from the book of Song of Songs the kind of love so intense and immense with which God loves us and this is the kind of love that should flow from us to others, even those who seem unworthy of this love. In fact, this kind of love towards others is what allows us to recognize if someone really knows God.

1 Jn. 4:7-8 ***"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."***

IV. REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How much do you consider that you have received God's love and that you are expressing it to those around you? Explain
2. In which of the aspects mentioned in this teaching do you consider that you need to grow more? Be more expressive in your love for others, or more positive, etc.?