

We are nearing the end of our sermon series through the Song of Songs. I am so glad the Lord led me to preach through this book. I have read it dozens of times but preaching it has made me dig much deeper and caused me to see it is even more wonderful than I had thought. It is a love song from Jesus to our hearts. The woman's passion for her man is a parallel to the passion that we should have toward the lover of our souls. The expressions we find in the book can speak to our hearts over and over again, calling us to take time to open our hearts to the love of God.

¹¹ Come, my beloved, let us go out into the fields and lodge in the villages; ¹² let us go out early to the vineyards and see whether the vines have budded, whether the grape blossoms have opened and the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love. Song of Songs 7:11,12 Remember that in earlier passages it was the man asking his bride to arise and come away with him. Now in the later stages of their married life it is the woman inviting her husband to get up early and go together to the fields see the promise of future fruit (1 Corinthians 3:9ⁱ). In the early stages of a relationship the man pursues the woman to capture her heart. After years of marriage the woman needs to pursue him to keep his heart. But thankfully, it is not so with our Lord. He is always calling to us, "*Arise my love, my beautiful one, and come away.*" 2:10ⁱⁱ However, He is surely pleased when we pursue Him (Psalm 71:18ⁱⁱⁱ).

Jesus is always pleading for us to come away with Him, but how often do we invite Him to come away with us? The Bible encourages us to seek Him while He may be found and call upon Him while He is near (Isaiah 55:6^{iv}). His Word promises that if we seek Him with all our heart, we will find Him (Deuteronomy 4:29^v). Hear the exhortation in David's song. ⁹ *Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!* ¹⁰ *Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!* ¹¹ *Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!* ¹² *Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles and the judgments he uttered,* 1 Chronicles 16:9-12

Later in chapter 8 we will find she continues to use her farming skills to oversee the laborers in the gardens for the sake of her beloved (8:11-13^{vi}). I believe that this verse is inviting him to come see the product of her labor and to share the joy she has in this season of springtime. Brothers and sisters, if you are laboring for the kingdom, be sure Jesus goes with you into the fields. Take joy in the fact that He delights in your labor for Him. The season of spring and fruitfulness in your life is His gift to you. Share your joy over it with Him. Make sure that as you go into the fields of labor, whether it is your store, your service work, or even your days of retirement from your years of labor. For when He is with us, there is power and fruitfulness in what we do (John 15:5^{vii}). We share our life with Him while singing praises to Him as we go about our day. Whatever our hand finds to do we do with all our might as unto Him, and He brings the fruit (Colossians 3:23^{viii}; 1 Corinthians 10:31^{ix}).

I especially enjoyed early mornings when I worked in the orchards in Oak Creek Canyon. The beauty of the canyon walls, the sweet scent of the blackberries, the sight of a newborn faun, and the apples and peaches forming on the branches, all a delight to experience. It is even more delightful when you share your joy with the One who made it all, giving Him thanks for His goodness. That pales, however, with the joy of Jesus speaking through you to a hungry soul and seeing them born-again into the kingdom of

God. The weight of sin coming off their shoulders is visible in their faces. It is the joy of watching a child for the first time grasp the wonder of the fact that the God who made everything loves them personally.

“Let us go out early,” she says. Jesus arose early before the break of day to be alone with the Lord and so should we (Mark 1:35^x). That is when the renowned men and women of God partook of those fruits as they communed with our Savior. Spurgeon writes, *We never read of one saint engaged in sacred service who rose late. Abraham rose early, David rose early, Job rose early, and so did they all. It is put here as a very type and symbol of an earnest, vigorous service of Christ.* In every biography that I have read of the great men of God there was noted a regular habit of rising early to be with the Lord in prayer and the Word. They all had a passion to be alone with Him and hear Him speak to them. They did not want to go into the fields of labor without Him. They knew that without Him they could do nothing. Only when we abide in the vine will we produce the fruit we can lay up for Him (John 15:4^{xi}).

She promises to give herself to Him there in the vineyards. In the Hebrew culture even to this day, pomegranates are thought of as representing marital fruitfulness. Mandrakes were considered an aphrodisiac. That implies what she wants from him. Does "our doors" mean at the place they lodge in the villages or is it the door of their lips (Psalm 141:3^{xii})? Sweetness and pleasant taste laid up for Him, her beloved (4:11^{xiii}; 5:16^{xiv}). She is seeking a revival of his love for her in this springtime setting where he is away from the business of state that keeps him from her.

She is familiar with the vineyards. It is her territory. She wants to share her pleasure in that special time of year with him. This repeats the idea of her longing to have his undivided attention and the arousal of his passion for her. Her labor has been to please him, and she wants to see him take pleasure in it. That should be the heart we have for our Savior.

Sometimes this song has parallels with Jesus' love for us. But there are also contrasts of great difference between Solomon and Jesus. In these verses we should see the wonder that the One greater than Solomon is never distracted from His attention on us (Matthew 12:42^{xv}). His infinite greatness can know where every created atom is in the entire universe and see all of time at once, and yet, as the psalmist said, have thoughts on each of one of us that outnumber the grains of sand (Psalm 139:17,18^{xvi}). Solomon could not constantly think of her as he worked. He could not always be by her side. His desire for her could wax and wane for he was human. Our God has infinite capacities.

Jesus never leaves us (Hebrews 13:5^{xvii}). He knows the number of hairs on our heads (Matthew 10:30^{xviii}). He knows our every thought (Psalm 139:2^{xix}), and He still loves us more than we can comprehend. How great is our God! We never need to try enticing Him to give us His complete attention or to go with us to our favorite place. **He is, however, always inviting us as the woman did, to leave our busyness and focus on Him, renew our love for Him, and to experience His love afresh.** And when we are at work, He longs to be the life within us empowering us to do our work for His glory.

The song is becoming even more descriptive and sensual, which calls to us with an invitation to experience a greater realization of Jesus' committed love for us. His descriptions of the bride are a call to us to be yielded to His life in us that we might become even more beautiful to Him. The future hope of the completion of His work in us should fill our hearts with anticipation (1 Corinthians 15:51,52^{xx}). Listen to Jesus' words

from John's Gospel as Jesus prayed for us, and hear the oneness He wants us to experience in Him. ²⁰ *"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.* John 17:20-24

That oneness Jesus prayed for, oneness with one another and one with the Trinity, seems to be out of our reach, and yet we know Jesus would not pray it if it was not the Father's will. Two becoming one is the marital language of Genesis 2:24^{xxi}. From the types and shadows of the Old Testament to the full revelation in the New Testament, even to the final pages that speak of the bride coming down from heaven, the Bible is all about this wonder. But right here in the middle of our Bible is this shadow so poetically described in rich metaphors.

This is His love for us, His plan for us, and an increasing reality as we yield our lives to Him. If we could see the future reality of the full answer to Jesus' prayer, I think it would so overload our senses and thoughts that we would just lie prostrate in awe and wonder. Isaiah got a glimpse of it and said He was unraveled (Isaiah 6:5^{xxii}). Ezekiel glimpsed it and sat in silence for seven days (Ezekiel 3:15^{xxiii}).

¹³ *The mandrakes give forth fragrance, and beside our doors are all choice fruits, new as well as old, which I have laid up for you, O my beloved.* Song of Songs 7:13 The verse says she laid up the fruits for her beloved. Remember she comes from a farming family. She wants to share the goodness of her labor with Him. But every good thing comes from Him (James 1:17^{xxiv}). He enables our labor, causes the plants to grow, and brings forth the fruit. Every good thing we give Him came from Him.

Spurgeon's devotional focuses on the fact that she has laid up these fruits for her spouse and compares them to fruits of the attitudes in a redeemed heart. *The spouse desires to give to Jesus all that she produces. Our heart has "all manner of pleasant fruits," both "old and new," and they are laid up for our Beloved. At this rich autumnal season of fruit, let us survey our stores. We have new fruits. We desire to feel new life, new joy, new gratitude; we wish to make new resolves and carry them out by new labours; our heart blossoms with new prayers, and our soul is pledging herself to new efforts. But we have some old fruits too. There is our first love: a choice fruit that! and Jesus delights in it. There is our first faith: that simple faith by which, having nothing, we became possessors of all things. There is our joy when first we knew the Lord: let us revive it. We have our old remembrances of the promises. How faithful has God been! In sickness, how softly did he make our bed! In deep waters, how placidly did he buoy us up! In the flaming furnace, how graciously did he deliver us. Old fruits, indeed! We have many of them, for his mercies have been more than the hairs of our head. Old sins we must regret, but then we have had repentances which he has given us, by which we have wept our way to the cross, and learned the merit of his blood. We have fruits, this morning, both new and old; but here is the point—they are all laid up for Jesus. Truly, those are the best and most acceptable services in which Jesus is the solitary aim of the soul, and his glory, without any admixture whatever, the end of all our efforts. Let our*

many fruits be laid up only for our Beloved; let us display them when he is with us, and not hold them up before the gaze of men. Jesus, we will turn the key in our garden door, and none shall enter to rob thee of one good fruit from the soil which thou hast watered with thy bloody sweat. Our all shall be thine, thine only, O Jesus, our Beloved!^{xxv} CHS

There is an abundance of the fruits of our labor in the Spirit beside our doors. There are the fruits old and new, fruits of the living words from the Old Testament, and the living Word of the New Testament. These are indeed choice fruits, so precious you cannot put a price on them. To put a price on love or joy or peace is to devalue these priceless fruits that come only from the Holy Spirit as we take time to behold the glory of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18^{xxvi}). The Holy Spirit has piled up these most precious fruits by our door so that we might reach out and freely enjoy them. Our lips express those fruits in words of love and gratitude for the lovingkindness of our Savior.

If we will walk in the Spirit, keeping in step with the Spirit, we too will partake of present fruit of the Spirit and see the promise of future fruit (Galatians 5:25^{xxvii}). Whose hearts are beginning to bud and blossom this morning? And there in the vineyard of the Lord, we abandon ourselves to Him. We remain in Him, the vine, and He remains in us, the branches, and we bear much fruit (John 15:1,2^{xxviii}).

¹ *Oh that you were like a brother to me who nursed at my mother's breasts! If I found you outside, I would kiss you, and none would despise me.* Song of Songs 8:1 As public display of affection was only accepted in a familial setting, she wishes he was her brother so she could kiss him any time in public. Women were never alone with a man in that culture unless it was a family member. She is wishing she had grown up with him and had always been near him. Even now, while in public she wants to shower her affection upon him, but the culture did not allow it. That is why they have gone into the vineyards, to be alone together. It is where she can not only give him the fruits of her labor, but also give herself to him.

Again, we have a contrast with our Savior. Thankfully, He is always with us. We can give Him our kisses in words of love, songs of praise, and acts of service empowered and led by the Holy Spirit anytime.^{xxix} *He is more attached to us than we are to Him, that is until we join Him in glory and our transformation is complete* (Philippians 3:21^{xxx}). Then we will realize how great His love is, along with everything else that makes up His perfect character. Then our love will rise to meet the wonder of His love. But until then let us stretch toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God (Philippians 3:14^{xxxi}), to love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength. Let us demonstrate that love in serving one another, for showing that love toward the least is showing it to Him (Mark 12:30,31^{xxxii}; Matthew 25:40^{xxxiii}).

² *I would lead you and bring you into the house of my mother— she who used to teach me. I would give you spiced wine to drink, the juice of my pomegranate.* Song of Songs 8:2 If Solomon was thought to be the Shulamite's brother, then she could lead him into the house of her mother. Remember it is the place where she was conceived that is the place where their marriage is sealed. She is saying she would have married him years earlier.

Spiced pomegranate wine does two things. It lowers inhibitions like all alcohol does, but it also relaxes the artery walls so that blood flows more freely. You may have noticed how a glass of pomegranate juice can be like shot of caffeine. You are energized by it. Her intentions are obvious but declared in a subtle way. She wants him! She is

crazy about him. This theme runs throughout the book, challenging us to be more spiritually excited about our glorious Savior. The intensity of her physical desire is challenging our spiritual desire to rise to new heights of love toward the lover of our soul.

³ *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me!* Song of Songs 8:3 This is a repeat of 2:6,^{7xxxiv}. It is the physical expression of the saying, “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine (6:3^{xxxv}). They are locked in an embrace of love. The two are one. They give themselves completely to the other. It reminds me of the hymn, I Surrender All. Listen to the passionate love in this hymn and compare it to this love of the Shulamite for her lover.

All to Jesus I surrender, All to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him, In His presence daily live. All to Jesus I surrender, Humbly at His feet I bow, Worldly pleasures all forsaken; Take me, Jesus, take me now. All to Jesus I surrender, Make me, Savior, wholly Thine; Let me feel Thy Holy Spirit, Truly know that Thou art mine. All to Jesus I surrender, Lord, I give myself to Thee; Fill me with Thy love and power, Let Thy blessing fall on me. I surrender all, I surrender all. All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all. Judson W. Van de Venter

⁴ *I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases.* Song of Songs 8:4 Each passionate consummation of their love is followed by this warning. The right time for a release of passion is within married life. It should be set free only at the right time with the one’s spouse.

The spiritual parallel is that the right time for our spiritual union is when we enter into the covenant with Jesus which is actually an eternal marriage covenant. Our mother’s house is the church where we hear the gospel as an invitation to this union of ourselves with Christ Jesus. He is the right man, the God/man. He does not need spiced wine, though He said He would drink the fruit of the vine again with us in His kingdom (Matthew 26:29^{xxxvi}). His is the greatest love for God is love (1 John 4:8^{xxxvii}).

If you do not know this gracious, unconditional love that God has for you, let me be your spiritual matchmaker today and deliver His invitation to you. He loves you. He has paid your sin debt so that you can be His. You can join Him today, here in the house of our mother. Let Him take you in His arms and comfort your soul with His love. He is the only One who can satisfy our soul, for He alone is big enough to fill the hunger in our hearts, for He made our hearts to be satisfied in Him alone.

Questions:

- 1 Do you hear the plea in 1 Chronicles 16:11?
- 2 To where does she want to lead him and why?
- 3 Who gets up early to seek the Lord?
- 4 Can Jesus be personal with each of us?
- 5 Are you looking forward to the fulfillment of the John 17 prayer?
- 6 How can we give Jesus our kisses?
- 7 Why does she wish he was her brother?
- 8 Why would she give him spice pomegranate wine?
- 9 Why is His love the greatest love?
- 10 Have you surrendered yourself to His great love?

ⁱ **1 Corinthians 3:9 (ESV)**

⁹ For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

ⁱⁱ **Song of Songs 2:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away,

ⁱⁱⁱ **Psalms 71:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.

^{iv} **Isaiah 55:6 (ESV)**

⁶ "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

^v **Deuteronomy 4:29 (ESV)**

²⁹ But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.

^{vi} **Song of Songs 8:11-13 (ESV)**

¹¹ Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard to keepers; each one was to bring for its fruit a thousand pieces of silver. ¹² My vineyard, my very own, is before me; you, O Solomon, may have the thousand, and the keepers of the fruit two hundred. ¹³ O you who dwell in the gardens, with companions listening for your voice; let me hear it.

^{vii} **John 15:5 (ESV)**

⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

^{viii} **Colossians 3:23 (ESV)**

²³ Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

^{ix} **1 Corinthians 10:31 (ESV)**

³¹ So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

^x **Mark 1:35 (ESV)**

³⁵ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

^{xi} **John 15:4 (ESV)**

⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

^{xii} **Psalms 141:3 (ESV)**

³ Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!

^{xiii} **Song of Songs 4:11 (ESV)**

¹¹ Your lips drip nectar, my bride; honey and milk are under your tongue; the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

^{xiv} **Song of Songs 5:16 (NIV)**

¹⁶ His mouth is sweetness itself; he is altogether lovely. This is my lover, this my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

^{xv} **Matthew 12:42 (ESV)**

⁴² The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

^{xvi} **Psalms 139:17-18 (ESV)**

¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.

^{xvii} **Hebrews 13:5 (ESV)**

⁵ Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

^{xviii} **Matthew 10:30 (ESV)**

³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

^{xix} **Psalms 139:2 (ESV)**

² You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

^{xx} **1 Corinthians 15:51-52 (ESV)**

⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

^{xxi} **Genesis 2:24 (ESV)**

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

^{xxii} **Isaiah 6:5 (KJV)**

⁵ Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

^{xxiii} **Ezekiel 3:15 (ESV)**

¹⁵ And I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, who were dwelling by the Chebar canal, and I sat where they were dwelling. And I sat there overwhelmed among them seven days.

^{xxiv} **James 1:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

^{xxv} -C. H. Spurgeon, Morning and Evening: Daily Readings (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1896).

^{xxvi} **2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

^{xxvii} **Galatians 5:25 (ESV)**

²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

^{xxviii} **John 15:1-2 (NIV)**

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

^{xxix} Kisses in the Proverbs are honest words or words of praise (Proverbs 24:26; 27:6).

^{xxx} **Philippians 3:21 (NIV)**

²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

^{xxxi} **Philippians 3:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

^{xxxii} **Mark 12:30-31 (ESV)**

³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

^{xxxiii} **Matthew 25:40 (ESV)**

⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

^{xxxiv} **Song of Songs 2:6-7 (ESV)**

⁶ His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me! ⁷ I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the does of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases.

^{xxxv} **Song of Songs 6:3 (ESV)**

³ I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine; he grazes among the lilies.

^{xxxvi} **Matthew 26:29 (ESV)**

²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

^{xxxvii} **1 John 4:8 (ESV)**

⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.