

3/24/24

Last week – “Draw Me” → Brought me into His chambers (the secret place)

The secret place is as deliberate & set aside as 1:1 time w/ spouse

Christians who don't have a set prayer time get triggered and defend their prayerlessness

- “I pray when I shop”,
- “I pray throughout the day”

God is always revealing Himself –

- If your intentions in your relationship with Him are pure, He reveals Himself pure
- If your intentions are crooked (carnal), He reveals Himself ‘astute’ – wrestling/contrary

This led to the process of abandonment the Bride was entering

- emptying of self so He has room

**That** (less of me/more of you) has some virtue but as we will see in Song it is quite centered on “ME” doing with what I have been given. “My beloved is mine and I am His” – very self oriented, based on me/mine

Try changing the meaning / concept of your *prayer life* (not a single prayer, obviously) from

- “God I want more of you”
- to
- “God, I want *you* to have more of *ME!*”

The secret of the Kingdom is not based on how much of God I can get

The secret of the Kingdom is based on how much of us the Lord can get

The Bride is on a journey of progressing from “More for me!” toward “less of me and more of you”

or, as John the Baptist when his disciples pointed out that Jesus was stealing his thunder

[John 3: 29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full.](#)

[<sup>30</sup> "He must increase, but I must decrease.](#)

The Bride's focus which *begins with being* largely self-centered and self-satisfaction gradually grows into care for others as she fully partners with the Groom.

Her intimacy with the groom enables her to see the needs of others and to help nurture them into maturity as well.

- without self abandonment *to Him* she would not have this ability

Our role is to identify our own struggles in her journey, to identify with the Bride so we can readily submit those over to Christ in our progression toward His throne AS SHE gradually submitted herself to the Groom

Why? as Wade Taylor writes:

[By divine intention, it is not possible for us to find spiritual satisfaction or fulfillment in anything less than a developing love relationship with Jesus.](#)

More connect-the-dots

By her declarations, you can see her steps, mile-markers, or maybe ‘stages’ of growth when viewed in retrospect / 30,000 ft view

We'll look at each **of these stages**

Stage 1 Declaration – childish / self importance

[Song 2:16 My beloved is mine, and I am his;](#)

- Self importance and possession define her
- Expected of a young child

Stage 2 Declaration – youthful / recognizing Lordship

Song 6: 3 "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine

- Lordship is recognized
- But there is still a selfishness aspect, "my beloved is mine"
- Expected of a young Christian

Stage 3 Declaration – self-abandoned, a mature Christian

Song 7: 10 "I am my beloved's, And his desire is for me.

- Lordship is recognized
- Self has no more say in my life / no sway over her actions
- This is a complete reversal from her beginnings

(see similar stages in 1 John)

### STAGE 1

Let's look more at her first stage, where the Groom first goes after her.

NOTE – this stage or behavior is *not* to be despised, any more than watching a 3-year old behave

- Whereas you might be 40y old, a lifelong Christ follower, you might know another 40-year old who recently was saved.
  - You cannot project where you are in Christ on others, regardless of their natural age.
- Our objective is to observe the growth from a 3-year old to a teenager, to a mature adult capable of reproducing and sustaining a family.
- Often we refer to people in this stage (biblically) as 'babes' or baby Christians.
  - 1Cor3: <sup>1</sup> And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ.
  - Be careful with this phrase when referring to people!
  - It is a disparaging pejorative and makes you look arrogant, like showing you are "better than me".
  - Compared to John or Paul, you are likely no different in 'age' than the guy who calls you "baby Christian"
    - TR mentioned how Christians can be "signal blockers" of the Holy Spirit.
    - Where will someone's attention be whom you called a "baby christian"??

Song 1: <sup>3</sup> "Your oils have a pleasing fragrance, Your name is *like* purified oil; Therefore the maidens love you.

Song 2: <sup>3</sup> "Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, So is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I took great delight and sat down, And his fruit was sweet to my taste. <sup>4</sup> "He has brought me to *his* banquet hall, And his banner over me is love. <sup>5</sup> "Sustain me with raisin cakes, Refresh me with apples, Because I am lovesick.

These reveal her views on the Lord are on a far lower plane of experience than He wants for her

- He seeks fellowship with her
- She seeks that which He supplies to please her

Consider the first stages of Christian growth –

Someone gets excited because they pray for something we would internally scoff at e.g.

- their cat is sick,
- for their broken car to run until they have money for repairs,
- that there would be enough for Christmas presents etc.

Often times God will send simple blessings like that at first,

- then after (some time?) these can begin to dry up
- I believe this is because God wants us to grow/mature, not just stay there in the benefits of this realm
- Because His kingdom is not of this realm

Is there a hazard here, is there a concern?

- Yes, people think, well this is not fun anymore.
- They never make the switch from the purely carnal *toward* the spiritual