

Delighting in Jesus' Leadership

A Season of Preparation

Pastor Charlie told me I was going to die and so did the devil!

God is going to remove everything that Hinders Love

- Jesus identified 25 signs of the times – 22 are negative
- Matthew 24 and Luke 21
- Jesus highlighted 12 negative trends as the “beginning of birth pains” that will increase throughout the generation that He returns. (Matthew 24:4-8; Luke 21:20)

Understanding the Times and Seasons

- 33When you see all these things, know that it is near... 34this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place...36Of that day and hour no one knows... (Mt. 24:33-36)

Jesus commanded one generation to “know” that His return was near—this command was for the generation living when all the 22 signs He prophesied in Matthew 24:5-28 occur

The Pressure

- 5“If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with horses? (Jer. 12:5)

Jeremiah complained to the Lord about the message the Lord gave him to deliver in a time of pressure and judgment because it was a difficult message for people to receive. The Lord warned him that this was only the beginning and it was going to get worse (Jer. 12:5).

THE PRESSURES IN THE EARTH ARE GOING TO INTENSIFY

- This current crisis is a period of training for the Church to walk in power, peace and victory in the face of the greater pressures to come. This is a time of preparation and training for what lies ahead
- We must anchor our life in the Spirit now by cultivating a vibrant heart—as we enjoy intimacy with God, trust His leadership, and grow in our understanding of the biblical narrative of what is coming.

Last week I talked about the parable of the Ten Virgins and they had oil for their lamps. The wise virgins had enough oil for the Bridegroom's delay. We must cultivate this relationship with the Lord in this season.

What I believe the Lord is working on is TRUSTING HIS LEADERSHIP! We are not in control. What is leaking out of us right now is that we cannot control what is going on all around us. We will look at that more in a minute

There must be hunger for the word of God. There is a biblical illiteracy problem in the body of Christ.

The Day of the Lord

- 4“Now take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing [includes immorality], drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36Watch...and pray always that you may be counted worthy [strengthened] to escape all these things [immorality, drunkenness, etc.]...and to stand [in victory] before the Son of Man.”

(Lk. 21:34-36)

Preparation includes refusing to be offended at His leadership nor seduced by the sins of the culture

Jesus warned that the Day of the Lord would come suddenly on the whole earth. He calls His people to watch and pray to be strengthened by growing in intimacy with God and confidence in His leadership, refusing to seek comfort or to self-medicate ourselves with alcohol or immorality, etc.

The Bridal Response to Pressure

- “Who is this coming up from the wilderness,
Leaning on her beloved?” SOS 8:5

This is from the place of secure love and trust in His leadership over our lives

Jesus's Safe Leadership

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- ***6Who is this coming out of the wilderness [of this fallen world] like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh(death) and frankincense (intercession), with all the merchant's fragrant powders?(commitment)***
- ***(Song 3:6)***

Jesus paints a picture of His victory to the bride in SOS 3:6

"The kingdom...is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶who, when he found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." (Mt. 13:45-46)

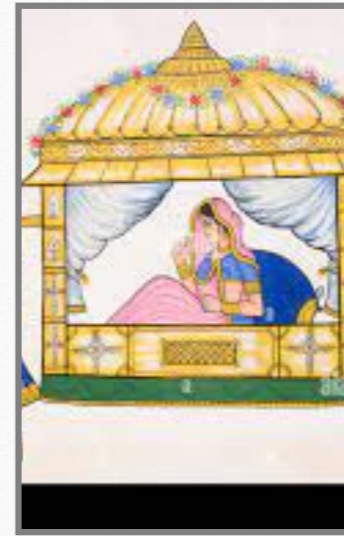
The bride had just gone through a season of the Dark Night of the Soul in SOS 2:10 She got the call to come to the mountains with Him to do what he was doing. She preferred immaturity over maturity.

In Chapter 3 the Lord removes his presence and her heart begins to ache.

He begins to paint a picture of his safety to her and that she can trust Him

Solomon's Couch

*⁷Behold, it is **Solomon's couch**, with sixty valiant men around it, of the valiant of Israel. ⁸They all hold swords, being expert in war. Every man has his sword on his thigh because of fear in the night. (Song 3:7-8)*



We see the protection and security that we have in God's grace as described in military terms

60 valiant men Experts in war extravagant protection

The Couch of Jesus

- 9 Of the wood of Lebanon Solomon the king made himself a palanquin: 10He made its pillars of silver, its support of gold, its seat of purple, its interior paved with love by [for] the daughters of Jerusalem. (Song 3:9-10)

A. The Bride's safety is described poetically as a royal wedding procession (3:9-10). Solomon's gospel couch (3:7) is now described as a palanquin (3:9). He made a palanquin or portable chair enclosed by curtains and carried by soldiers. Jesus provided an "eternal palanquin" for us

B. Made himself: Solomon designed and built a chariot to carry his queen. Jesus Himself made the gospel palanquin in which we rest. He became a man and bore our sin to redeem us.

C. Wood of Lebanon: The cedars of Lebanon were used in building Solomon's temple, which housed God's glory. The wood in the tabernacle spoke of humanity, and the gold that covered the wood referred to Deity. The wood of Lebanon was the most beautiful, fragrant, expensive, and strongest wood. The gospel was "made" by Jesus—the strongest and most glorious Man.

D. Silver and gold: Silver speaks of redemption, and gold speaks of divine character

E. Its interior paved with love: The inner lining or tapestry of the gospel chariot is paved or woven with God's love. The gospel was motivated by God's love. All that Jesus does is paved in love.

F. Daughters of Jerusalem: The "gospel couch" is paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem (instead of by them). The KJV translates this as for the daughters.

Transition

- We talked about our link to the groan in the earth and the fully mature son's
- The secret is in our weak "YES" to the Lord!
- God sees the budding virtues in your life that you may not see yourself.

Two-Fold Test of Maturity

- 16Awake, O north wind, and come, O south! blow upon my garden, that its spices may flow out. Let My Beloved come to His garden and eat its pleasant fruits... (Song 4:16)

The Bride prayed for both the north winds of adversity and the south winds of blessing to come to the garden of her heart so that the spices of grace or God's presence might flow from her to others. The answer to her prayer for the north winds came in the 2-fold test of Song 5:3-7.

. Verse 16 is the turning point in the Song. The Song of Solomon has two main sections.

1. Song 1-4 is focused on God's people as the Bride receiving her inheritance in God.
2. Song 5-8 is focused on God as the Bridegroom receiving His inheritance in His people.
3. C. Jesus has an inheritance in His people (Eph. 1:18). This is the time when the garden of her heart becomes His garden. She sees her life as His instead of her own

The Bride Responds in Full Obedience

- 3 I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on again? I have washed my feet; how can I defile them? 4 My Beloved put His hand by the latch of the door, and my heart yearned for Him. 5 I arose to open for my Beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh... on the handles of the lock. (Song 5:3-5)

Taken off my robe: She responded in obedience by refusing to put on her own robe of righteousness and by washing her feet in His grace and refusing to dirty them again (5:3). She refused to wear her own garments. She is not complaining about the inconvenience of arising, but opens her heart to Him in responsive love. We are clothed with the robe of His righteousness (Isa. 61:10) since our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). She took off her garments and put on His righteousness. Joshua the high priest exchanged his filthy clothing for the garments of salvation (Zech. 3:3-5)

I have washed my feet: Jesus told Peter that he was clean and needed only his feet to be cleansed (Jn. 13:6-14). This spoke of his need for daily spiritual cleansing. She refuses to defile her feet again through compromise (5:3)

His hand by the latch of the door: The hand of God releases grace on the latch or lock of her heart to help her unlock her heart. The lock on her heart speaks of her thoughts and emotions that affect her decisions. God's hand resting on His people speaks of His grace (Acts 11:21-23).

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First Test of Maturity

- 6 I opened for my Beloved, but my Beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when He spoke. I sought Him, but I could not find Him; I called Him, but He gave me no answer.
(Song 5:6)

I sought Him: She sought Him fervently by calling out to Him, but she could not find Him. This season of temporary divine silence was part of His training to cause her love to mature

The Lord temporarily **hid Himself from the Bride on two occasions in the Song (3:1-2 and 5:6)**. In Song 3:1-2, His manifest presence lifted from her related to her disobedience, but now it is related to her mature obedience (5:6). Some Bible teachers in the Middle Ages called this the dark night of the soul referring to God temporarily withholding His manifest presence for those who were walking in obedience. This is not a biblical term

David walked in obedience as a young man (1 Sam. 18-19) and then suddenly entered a season of persecution and great discouragement (1 Sam. 20-31).

While in a place of faith and obedience, Joseph was cast into a pit on two occasions as God was preparing him for leadership (Gen. 37-50)

Second Test of Maturity

- 7The watchmen who went about the city found me. They struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me. (Song 5:7)

The leaders took away the Bride's ministry or her place of function in the body (5:7). This test related to having her ministry rejected by the leaders. The watchmen or leaders strike and wound her, taking her veil (spiritual covering) so she can no longer function in ministry in the Body.

The watchmen: the watchmen and keepers of the walls speak of the spiritual authorities who guard the walls of the city to protect God's people.

Took my veil away: the leaders taking away her veil speaks of removing her spiritual covering and therefore her place of function in the body (1 Cor. 11:10).

Lovesick Instead of Offended

- O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved...tell Him that I am lovesick! (Song 5:8)
- Blessed is he who is not offended because of Me [Jesus]. (Mt. 11:6)

The Bride responded to the King with love and to others with humility (5:8). In essence, the King was asking her, "Will you be Mine even if I withhold the things you deeply desire? Are you Mine when you cannot feel My Presence? Will you still love and trust Me when you are disappointed by circumstances?" She responded, "I am Yours, at the deepest level of love."

Lovesick: She was sick with love for the King instead of being offended at Him (Mt. 11:6). Our confession is that, "I am in it for love because He is so worthy and beautiful (5:8-10).

The Spiritually Immature Question 1

- What is your Beloved more than another beloved, O fairest [most beautiful] among women? What is your Beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us? (Song 5:9)

The spiritually immature daughters asked the Bride questions throughout the Song. They see that she is lovesick for the King in the midst of her troubles, instead of being offended and depressed

What is your Beloved: In essence, the daughters of Jerusalem asked the Bride, “Why do you love Him so much that you charge us to go find Him? He has abandoned you. He took His presence away from you (5:6) and let the elders wound you as they took your ministry from you (5:7).” They wanted to know why she was so loyal to Him. What did she know about Him that they don’t know?

Other beloveds: The daughters had “other beloveds” that were more important to them than Jesus. The other loves in the lives of believers include people, ministry, money, leisure, pleasure, power, prominence, and comfort, etc. Many born-again people love these things more than Jesus

Mature Bridal Response

- My beloved is white [dazzling, NAS]...and chief among ten thousand. 11His head is like the finest gold; His locks are wavy... 12His eyes are like doves...13His cheeks are like a bed of spices... His lips are lilies...14His hands are rods of gold...His body is carved ivory...15His legs are pillars of marble...His countenance is like Lebanon...16His mouth is most sweet, Yes, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my friend... (Song 5:10-16)

The Bride started with a general statement of the King's beauty (5:10), then developed ten attributes (5:11-15) and ended with a summary statement (5:16).

1. His head: the Lord's sovereign leadership over all
2. His locks: the Lord's dedication to God and His Church
3. His eyes: the Lord's infinite knowledge, wisdom, understanding, discernment
4. His cheeks: the Lord's diverse emotional makeup
5. His lips: God's word
6. His hands: the Lord's divine activity
7. His body: the Lord's tender compassion
8. His legs: the Lord's walk and administration of His purposes
9. His countenance: God's impartation to His people
10. His mouth: Intimacy with God
11. He is altogether lovely: His comprehensive beauty
12. He is my Beloved and my Friend

The Spiritually Immature Question 2

- Where has your Beloved gone, O fairest among women? Where has your Beloved turned aside, that we may seek Him with you?
(Song 6:1)

The conversation that began between the Bride and the daughters in Song 5:8 continues here. After the daughters saw the Bride's insight into the King (5:10-16), they concluded she knew so much more about Him than they did. They asked a second question, "Where is your Beloved that we may seek Him like you do?" That is, we want to know Him like you do and have what you have

Where: The Bride's answer in Song 5:10-16 caused the daughters to change their question from "What is He?" (5:9), to "Where can we find Him?" The Bride once asked the daughters to help her find the King (5:8), but now it is reversed as the daughters ask her to help them find the King (6:1).

The Bride's testing results in the lives of others being dramatically changed. We never know who is watching us as we love and trust Jesus in our difficulties. The Holy Spirit is raising up lovesick messengers who know Jesus in a way that will deeply impact others.

Jesus' Praise after the Season of Testing

- O My love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners! Turn your eyes away from Me, for they have overcome Me. (Song 6:4-5)

1. Tirzah: He declared that she was as beautiful as Tirzah, which became the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel.
2. Jerusalem: He declared that she was as lovely as Jerusalem, the capital of Israel spiritually and politically.
3. Awesome as an army with banners: When an army in the ancient world returned victorious from battle, they displayed their banners in a military procession. She defeated her greatest enemies. They were those found in her heart.
4. B. Jesus is "conquered" only by His Bride's extravagant love. Our eyes of devotion deeply touch His heart. All the armies in hell cannot conquer Jesus, but the eyes of His Bride "conquer" Him when they are true to Him in testing. Do you know the way you move Him and catch His eye?
5. Turn your eyes away from Me, for they have overcome Me. (Song 6:5)



Put your handcuffs on (it's the Lord's story and He is writing it.)

Embrace the cactus (Cross)

Thank Him for everything just the way it is! (This disarms the enemy)

Take it one day at a time

Stop waiting on Moses to go up the mountain and meet with the Lord. YOU GO!

Cultivate Intimacy and begin to seek out the urgency of His impending return in the knowledge of His safe leadership over your life