

**LOVING THE LORD AND LOVING ONE ANOTHER
FOR THE ORGANIC BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH
AS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

(Friday—Second Morning Session)

Message Two

**Song of Songs—the Progressive Experience
of an Individual Believer’s Loving Fellowship with Christ
for the Preparation of the Bride of Christ**

Scripture Reading: S. S. 1:2-4; 2:8-9; 3:8-10; 4:12-16; 6:10, 13; 7:11; 8:13-14

I. The subject of Song of Songs, a poem, is the history of love in an excellent marriage, revealing the progressive experience of an individual believer’s loving fellowship with Christ for the preparation of His bride in six major stages:

- A. In the first stage of Song of Songs, the lover of Christ is drawn to pursue Him for satisfaction (1:2—2:7); the Lord wants His seeker to have a personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual relationship with Him:
1. *Draw me* is personal (1:4); the Lord said, “I drew them with cords of a man, / With bands of love” (Hosea 11:4a); this indicates that God loves us with His divine love not on the level of divinity but on the level of humanity; the cords of a man through which God draws us include Christ’s incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; it is by all these steps of Christ in His humanity that God’s love in His salvation reaches us in a personal way (Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:9-10).
 2. *Kiss me* (S. S. 1:2) is affectionate; after believing in Christ to receive Him as the divine life (John 1:4, 12), we need to love Christ in a personal and affectionate way that we may pursue Him and enjoy Him as our satisfaction; Psalm 2:12 commands us to “kiss the Son”; kissing Christ is the enjoyment of Christ.
 3. In her pursuing of Christ the seeker is brought by Him into her regenerated spirit as the Holiest of all (his chambers—S. S. 1:4) to have fellowship with Him; His chambers indicate a private relationship with the Lord.
 4. Furthermore, because Christ visits us in our regenerated spirit as His inner chambers, our relationship with Him must be spiritual; He visits us in our spirit privately, coming to us in a spiritual way, not in a physical way.
 5. All the spiritual principles are contained in this first stage of the seeker’s overcoming life in Song of Songs; the lessons that follow are not new, but they are old lessons repeated in a deeper way; regeneration brings the gene of God into us, and all the experiences of our whole Christian life are in this gene—1 John 3:9.
- B. In the second stage of Song of Songs, the lover of Christ is called to be delivered from the self through her oneness with the cross of Christ—2:8—3:5:
1. Song of Songs 2:8-9 speaks of the vitality of resurrection; in these verses Christ is likened to a gazelle or a young hart “leaping upon the mountains, / Skipping upon the hills”; mountains and hills refer to difficulties and barriers, but nothing is too high or too great to stop the resurrected Christ; we need to seek for and know Christ’s mountain-leaping and hill-skipping presence.

2. The lover of Christ falls into introspection, which becomes a seclusion as a wall that keeps her away from the presence of Christ (v. 9b); hence, Christ encourages her to rise up and come out of her low situation to be with Him (v. 10).
 3. The lover of Christ also hears the Lord telling her that the time of dormancy (winter) is past and that the trials (rain) are over and gone (v. 11); He also tells her that the springtime has come; thus, she is entreated and encouraged by the Lord with the flourishing riches of resurrection (vv. 12-13).
 4. It is by the power of resurrection, not by our natural life, that we, the lovers of Christ, are enabled to be conformed to His death by being one with His cross (vv. 14-15); the reality of resurrection is the pneumatic Christ as the consummated Spirit, who indwells and is mingled with our regenerated spirit; it is in such a mingled spirit that we participate in and experience the resurrection of Christ, which enables us to be one with the cross to be delivered from the self and to be transformed into a new man in God's new creation for the fulfillment of God's economy in the building up of the organic Body of Christ (Rom. 8:2, 4, 29; Gal. 6:15; 2 Cor. 5:17).
- C. In the third stage of Song of Songs, the lover of Christ is called to live in ascension as the new creation in resurrection—3:6—5:1:
1. To live in ascension is to live continually in our spirit; when we live in our spirit, we are joined to the ascended Christ in the heavens—Eph. 2:22; Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51; Rev. 4:1-2; Heb. 4:12, 16 and footnote 1.
 2. "King Solomon made himself a palanquin / Of the wood of Lebanon. / Its posts he made of silver, / Its bottom, of gold; / Its seat, of purple; / Its midst was inlaid with love / From the daughters of Jerusalem"—S. S. 3:9-10:
 - a. By the Spirit's transforming work in us, we become the moving vessel of Christ, the carriage of Christ, the "car" of Christ, for the move of Christ in and for the Body of Christ—cf. 2 Cor. 2:12-17.
 - b. We are rebuilt with the Divine Trinity so that our external structure is the resurrected and ascended humanity of Jesus, and our interior decoration is our love for the Lord—S. S. 3:9-10.
 - c. Our inner being should be "inlaid with love" (v. 10); loving the Lord will keep us in the realm of having Christ as our humanity, safeguarding our humanity in the constraint of His affection (2 Cor. 5:14).
 - d. Through our loving the Lord in a personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual way, our natural being is torn down, and we are remodeled with Christ's redeeming death (posts made of silver), God's divine nature (base), and Christ's kingship as the life-giving Spirit ruling within us (seat of purple)—S. S. 3:10; cf. Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Cor. 4:16-18.
 3. Through her living in Christ's ascension as the new creation in resurrection, the lover of Christ becomes mature in the riches of the life of Christ so that she can become a garden to Christ for His private enjoyment (S. S. 4:12-15); she is prepared to give forth Christ's fragrance in any circumstance or environment; she wants the difficult environment (north wind) and the pleasant environment (south wind) to work on her as a garden that its fragrance may be spread (v. 16).
- D. In the fourth stage of Song of Songs, the lover of Christ is called more strongly to live within the veil through the cross after resurrection—5:2—6:13:

1. By living within the veil, the lover of Christ is transformed into the heavenly bodies; she looks forth like the dawn, she is as beautiful as the moon, and she is as clear as the sun—v. 10:
 - a. The path of the overcomers is like the light of dawn, shining brighter and brighter until the full day—Prov. 4:18; John 1:5.
 - b. The light of dawn, the sunrise, signifies both Christ in His coming and our being revived every morning; the Christian life is like the dawning of the sun—Luke 1:78; Prov. 4:18; Psa. 110:3; Judg. 5:31.
2. In the maturity of Christ's life, the lover of Christ becomes the Shulammitte (the feminine form of "Solomon"), signifying that she has become the same as He is in life, nature, expression, and function (but not in the Godhead) as the reproduction and duplication of Christ to match Him for their marriage—S. S. 6:13; 2 Cor. 3:18.
3. The Shulammitte is likened to the dance of two camps, or two armies (Heb. *mahanaim*), in the sight of God; after Jacob saw the angels of God, the two armies of God, he named the place where he was Mahanaim and divided his wives, children, and possessions into "two armies"—S. S. 6:13; Gen. 32:1-2:
 - a. The spiritual significance of the two armies is the strong testimony that we more than conquer, we "super-overcome," through Him who loved us, according to the principle of the Body of Christ—Rom. 8:37; 12:5.
 - b. God does not want those who are strong in themselves; He wants only the feeble ones, the weaker ones, the women and children; those who are counted worthy to be overcomers will be the weaker ones who depend on the Lord—1 Cor. 1:26-28; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; 12:9-10; 13:3-5.
- E. In the fifth stage of Song of Songs, the lover of Christ shares in the work of the Lord—7:1-13:
 1. In verse 4 the Spirit reviews the loving seeker's beauty in her submissive will (neck) wrought by the Spirit's transforming work through sufferings for the carrying out of God's will, in the expression of her heart, which is open to the light, clean, full of rest, and accessible (eyes like pools—cf. 1:15; 4:1; 5:12), and in her spiritual sense of high and sharp discernment (nose—cf. Phil. 1:9-10; Heb. 5:14).
 2. Song of Songs 7:11 shows that Christ's lover wants to carry out with her Beloved the work that is for the entire world (fields) by sojourning from one place to another (lodging in the villages); this indicates that she is not sectarian in carrying out the Lord's work but keeps the work open, so that others can come to sojourn there and she can go to sojourn elsewhere; this is to keep one work in one Body.
 3. To share in the work of the Lord is to work together with Him (2 Cor. 6:1a); to work with Him, we need the maturity in life, we need to be one with the Lord, and our work must be for His Body (Col. 1:28-29; 1 Cor. 12:12-27).
 4. The Shulammitte works as Solomon's counterpart, taking care of all the vineyards (S. S. 8:11), the churches and the believers on the whole earth; we must have a work that is for the entire world; this is what Paul did by establishing local churches and then working to bring them into the full realization of the Body of Christ—Rom. 16:1-24.

5. Song of Songs 7:12 says, “Let us rise up early for the vineyards; / Let us see if the vine has budded, / If the blossom is open, / If the pomegranates are in bloom; / There I will give you my love”; at this time she is able to relate the Lord’s work to the Lord Himself; now she can express her love to the Lord at the place of His work.
- F. In the sixth stage of Song of Songs, the lover of Christ is hoping to be raptured (8:1-14); she is coming up from the wilderness (the earthly realm) by “leaning on her beloved” (v. 5):
1. *Leaning on her beloved* implies that, like Jacob, the socket of her hip has been touched, and her natural strength has been dealt with by the Lord—Gen. 32:24-25.
 2. *Leaning on her beloved* also implies that she finds herself pressed beyond measure, and this seems to last until the wilderness journey is over—2 Cor. 1:8-9; 12:9-10; 13:3-4.
 3. She asks her Beloved to set her as a seal on His heart of love and as a seal on His arm of strength; at this point she is conscious of her powerlessness and helplessness, and she realizes that everything depends on God’s love and preserving power—S. S. 8:6-7.
 4. The lover of Christ asks Him who dwells in the believers as His gardens to let her hear His voice—v. 13; cf. 4:13—5:1; 6:2:
 - a. This indicates that in the work that we do for the Lord as our Beloved, we need to maintain our fellowship with Him, always listening to Him—Luke 10:38-42.
 - b. Our lives depend on the Lord’s words, and our work depends on the Lord’s commands; the central point of our prayers should be our longing for the Lord’s speaking—Rev. 2:7; 1 Sam. 3:9-10; cf. Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6.
 - c. Without the Lord’s words, we will not have any revelation, light, or subjective knowledge of Christ as the mystery of God and of the church as the mystery of Christ (Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4-5; 5:32); the life of the believers hinges totally upon the Lord’s speaking (vv. 26-27).

II. As the concluding word of this poetic book, the lover of Christ prays that her Beloved would make haste to come back in the power of His resurrection (gazelle and young hart) to set up His sweet and beautiful kingdom (mountains of spices), which will fill the whole earth—S. S. 8:14; Rev. 11:15; Dan. 2:35:

- A. Such a prayer portrays the union and communion between Christ as the Bridegroom and His lovers as the bride in their bridal love, in the way that the prayer of John, a lover of Christ, as the concluding word of the Holy Scriptures, reveals God’s eternal economy concerning Christ and the church in His divine love—Rev. 22:20.
- B. “Come, Lord Jesus!” is the last prayer in the Bible (v. 20); the entire Bible concludes with the desire for the Lord’s coming expressed as a prayer.
- C. “When He comes, faith will be turned to facts, and praise will replace prayer. Love will consummate in a shadowless perfection, and we will serve Him in the sinless domain. What a day that will be! Lord Jesus, come quickly!” (Watchman Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 23, “The Song of Songs,” p. 126).