

Session 1 God's Beloved: Transformed by Seeing Who You are to God

I. THE LORD SEES HIS PEOPLE AS "HIS BELOVED"

- A. The end-time church must be equipped with the revelation of God's love and beauty and see how He sees and feels about His people. This will equip the body of Christ to walk in victory in the midst of the most emotionally wounded and sexually broken generation in human history.

¹⁵*Oh, how beautiful you are, My beloved! Oh, how beautiful you are!... (Song 1:15, NET)*

⁷*To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints... (Rom. 1:7)*

²⁵*... "I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved." (Rom. 9:25)*

¹*Behold, you are beautiful, My love [beloved], behold, you are beautiful! (Song 4:1, ESV)*

¹⁰*I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me. (Song 7:10)*

- B. Being beloved by God includes the Lord relating to His people with affectionate delight as He enjoys their great value and beauty in His eyes. The Bride sees the King as her "beloved" (1:14; 2:3, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17; 4:16; 5:2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 16; 6:1, 2, 3; 7:9, 10, 11, 13; 8:5, 14).

- C. The Lord spoke to me in July 1988 while I was reading Song 8:6 and praying, "Let Jesus seal my heart with the seal of His love." The Lord said *He would release grace to the Body of Christ worldwide to walk in Song 8:6-7*; this speaks of walking out the first commandment in our life.

⁶*Set Me [Jesus] as a seal upon your heart...for love is as strong as death... (Song 8:6)*

II. INTERPRETING THE SONG OF SOLOMON

- A. **Natural interpretation:** This view depicts a love story between King Solomon and his bride, a Shulamite maiden. It sets forth principles that honor the beauty of love within marriage. We take the Song at face value where Solomon mentions his courtship and the various stages of his marriage.

- B. **Spiritual interpretation:** This view employs a symbolic interpretation of the Song to emphasize the Lord's relationship with His people as the Bridegroom King. The majority of commentaries throughout church history have interpreted the Song as an allegorical portrayal of Jesus and the Church. We refuse all sensual overtones in interpreting the Song of Solomon allegorically.

- C. Each book of the Bible was given by the inspiration of the Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16). It is improbable that the Spirit would inspire a book in the Bible that would not ultimately magnify Jesus.

¹⁴*"He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." (Jn. 16:14)*

- D. Jesus spoke of Himself to the disciples on the Emmaus road from all the Scriptures.

²⁷*He expounded...in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. (Lk. 24:27)*

III. FIVE DISTINCTIVES IN THE SONG OF SOLOMON

- A. The Song of Solomon emphasizes the emotional side of God's personality and His work of creation and redemption. It gives us insight into "why" Jesus created and redeemed us. The books of Romans and Ephesians tell us *what* Jesus did on the cross (and they also tell us *why*).
- B. **God's emotions:** His love, affection, delight and enjoyment in relating to His people. Seeing how God sees and feels about His people empowers us to love God (1 Jn. 4:19).
***I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love...I stooped and fed them.** (Hos. 11:4)*
- C. **God's beauty:** especially as our Bridegroom King (Ps. 27:4; 45:2; Isa. 4:2; 28:5; 33:17)
***"Your eyes will see the King in His beauty..."** (Isa. 33:17)*
- D. **Our beauty in God's eyes:** The beauty we possess in God's eyes is because of Christ. The beauty that Jesus possesses is the very beauty that He imparts to His people.
***...the LORD has anointed Me...³to give them beauty for ashes...** (Isa. 61:1-3)
***And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us...** (Ps. 90:17)**
- E. **First commandment:** God created His people to love Him wholeheartedly—with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength (Mk. 12:30). One purpose in studying the Song is to receive a greater understanding and impartation of the Father's love for Jesus (Jn. 17:26).
***"I have declared to them Your [the Father's] name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."** (Jn. 17:26)*
- F. **Partnership:** We need certain principles to grow in mature partnership with Jesus. The Song sets forth, in a poetic way, some of the key principles that we need to grow in partnership with Jesus.
- G. The end-time Church must be equipped with the revelation of God's love and beauty to walk in victory in the midst of the most emotionally wounded and sexually broken generation in history.
- H. It is a great miracle to see and feel about ourselves and others like God does. *Width*—whom it includes (all nations); *Length*—how far it reaches (all sin) and how long it lasts; *Depth*—what it costs Jesus in descending so low; and *Height*—how high it exalts us.
***...that you...¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height...¹⁹to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge...** (Eph. 3:17-19)*
- I. The Spirit gives us the ability to comprehend the delight, value, destiny, and beauty that God feels and sees in us as well as in others. We live in the most powerful way when we can see ourselves and others as God does—when we do not see ourselves through the lens of our sin and brokenness and do not see others only in their brokenness and through our pride or lust.
- J. The Lord values His people as a great treasure. Jesus saw "diamonds" as He walked on earth.
***"They shall be Mine," says the LORD ... "On the day that I make them My jewels."** (Mal. 3:17)*

IV. JESUS LIVED AS GOD'S BELOVED

- A. Just before Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, the Father called Jesus, "His beloved Son."

¹⁷*And suddenly a voice...saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*
(Mt. 3:17)

- B. Just before Jesus went to the cross, the Father called Jesus, "His beloved Son."

⁵*...and suddenly a voice...saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*
(Mt. 17:5)

V. BEING GOD'S BELOVED

- A. Christ's relationship to the Father is the foundation of our relationship to the Father. As Jesus is the Father's beloved, so the Church is beloved of God. We will enjoy intimacy in our relationship with God as we live more and more in the reality of our "belovedness" before Him.

⁹*As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you...* (Jn. 15:9)

²³*...that the world may know that You...have loved them as You have loved Me.* (Jn.17:23)

- B. Paul often referred to the saints as beloved of God.

⁷*To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints...* (Rom. 1:7)

- C. Paul magnified the truth of God's love. The indescribable love of God became fully embodied in the person of His Son. Paul viewed eternity past and future as being "in the Beloved" (1:6). Another translation of verse 6, "He chose us **in love** before foundation of the world to be holy."

⁴*...He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵having predestined us to adoption as sons...⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.* (Eph. 1:4-6)

1. **Before the foundation of the world:** Our very existence is to experience and express love. The creation of man in God's eternal purposes was to express His own love.

2. **Accepted us in the Beloved:** God gives Himself to us in the way He gave Himself to Jesus. God accepted us in Jesus as "the Beloved," giving us insight into the basis, purpose, and quality of our relationship with Him forever.

- D. We are to look first to the Father to find our primary identity or "who we are" instead of looking to receive this from people. A believer who is confident in God's love as His beloved will be far more committed and persistent than those living in condemnation and shame.

- E. This is the place where condemnation, rejection, and despair are overcome and love is awakened. Teaching believers to see that they are His beloved is the most effective way to equip them to seek to live in wholehearted obedience.

- F. The primary battleground in the spirit is Satan's accusations against our identity. The enemy accuses us, telling us that we are not God's beloved, but rather that we are rejected by God. He tells us that we have gone too far or that it is too late to come back.
- G. John wrote of himself as beloved or as "the one Jesus loved" (Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20)
²⁶*Jesus saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by... (Jn. 19:26)*
²*She ran to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said... (Jn. 20:2)*
⁷*Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" (Jn. 21:7)*
²⁰*Then Peter...saw the disciple [John] whom Jesus loved... (Jn. 21:20)*
²³*Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. (Jn. 13:23)*
- H. David saw himself as God's beloved. This was foundational to his trusting and loving God. After 16 months of compromise at Ziklag, he proclaimed that God delighted in him (Ps. 18:19).
⁵*...that Your beloved may be delivered, save with Your right hand, and hear me. (Ps. 60:5)*
⁹*He delivered me because He delighted in me. ³⁵...Your gentleness has made me great. (Ps. 18:19, 35)*
- I. Jeremiah spoke of Israel as being God's beloved.
¹⁵*"What has My beloved to do in My house, having done lewd deeds with many?" (Jer. 11:15)*
⁷*"I have forsaken My house...I have given the dearly beloved of My soul into the hand of her enemies." (Jer. 12:7)*
³*The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you." (Jer. 31:3)*
- J. More references to God's people as God's beloved.
²⁶*...among many nations there was no king like him [Solomon], who was beloved of his God; and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. (Neh. 13:26)*
²*It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late...for so He gives His beloved sleep. (Ps. 127:2)*
¹⁹*Beloved, do not avenge yourselves...for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay"... (Rom. 12:19)*
¹³*...give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God...chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth... (2 Thes. 2:13)*
¹¹*Beloved, I beg you...abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. (1 Pet. 2:11)*
¹²*Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you... (1 Pet. 4:12)*