

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

Event/Location: EGS, Friday 6pm

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Series: Encountering Jesus in the Song of Solomon S01

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

A. The end-time church must be equipped with understanding of God's love and beauty and 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.

¹⁷*"And the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" (Rev. 22:17)*

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)*

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

Well this course on the Song of Solomon is going to be different than the times I have taught it before. On the website we have two different series but they are both a systematic presentation right through the book. In 2007 I have a twenty-four sessions where we work through it systematically verse by verse. Then in 2014 we do the same thing but we do it in half the time. I make it abbreviated, it is only twelve sessions but it is the same systematic presentation.

This course is going to be thematic, it is going to be themes. We are going to go throughout the book and capture different themes, biblical themes about God's heart and how God feels about His people. Now why would we study a book like Song of Solomon and teach a course on this? Well one reason is that the very first line of the Song, it is called the song of all songs or the Song of Solomon, the ultimate love song in the Bible. When the Holy Spirit titles a song the song of all songs you want to pay attention to it.

I think that this song, this eight chapter love song the Holy Spirit is using it now in the nations. Many people are teaching it and they are teaching it in different ways which is many different ways to approach a love song. It is in poetic language but it is the biblical truths of God's heart. I believe that the greatest love songs in Jesus' heart for His Church are yet to be released to, through the Body of Christ. I want to say that again. I believe the greatest love songs in His heart have not been given yet.

This eight chapter love song each line is a theme. Each line has many implications. The Holy Spirit will inspire many songs out of each one of the, nearly every line from this again statement of God's heart. It is a poetic statement of the biblical truths of God's heart.

Now the end-time Church must be equipped with a revelation of God's love and beauty, that is a standard idea but it is an often neglected subject. Everybody believes in God's love and God's beauty but it is not enough to have it kind of as a passing idea. We have to go deep in these ideas. We want to see what He sees, we want to feel what He feels about us.

Because I believe that this is key, it is essential in equipping the Bride, the Body of Christ to walk in victory. The most emotionally wounded generation in history and the most sexually broken generation in history the Lord is raising up the Body of Christ in her bridal identity, the Spirit and the Bride, the Church and the revelation of the Bridegroom King, the Church and her bridal identity it is in that generation.

There is only one generation in history of which the Holy Spirit emphasizes Jesus as the Bridegroom King. Many generations He is emphasized the King but only one generation does the Church worldwide, the whole Body of Christ see themselves in their bridal identity. Because God strategically is using that revelation in the most emotionally broken and sexually broken and emotionally wounded generation in history. I believe we are in the early days of that generation. The only healing reality will be the Holy Spirit revealing God's heart.

Well Song of Solomon 1:15, we are going to focus on the subject of being God's beloved. That is one of the primary sounds and themes throughout the whole book. Our beloved-ness, the fact that He is our Beloved and we are His beloved. I like how the New English translation says it in Song of Solomon 1:15. This would be the Bridegroom King speaking. Again this is one of the great songs of His heart. Many many songs will come out of this truth in these days ahead of us.

He breaks forth one of the most transforming declarations in the whole Word of God. Imagine the one who is fully God, who is fully Man, the Bridegroom King, how beautiful you are My beloved, how beautiful you are. This truth will explode out of His heart, it will cleanse the Body of Christ. It will satisfy them, it will invigorate them, it will give them hope. Again in a time of unprecedented wounding and sexual brokenness the Lord says, I have a superior message, I have a more powerful truth. You are beautiful and you are My beloved, that is the truth.

The Holy Spirit is going to use that truth, many implications to it. As that love song breaks out of the Bridegroom King's heart as it is captured by the people of God as the Holy Spirit imparts it they sing this in many many different ways. Well this is not just a poetic truth in the Song of Solomon. It is also a truth that is pronounced strong, emphasized in the New Testament.

Paul says, to all the saints in Rome, every believer and he prophesies, he declares over them you are beloved of God. The implications of this are vast. I believe the Church is yet to focus in a consistent way on the implications of this truth. I believe those days are on us and yet unfolding where the Church is going to be intentionally going deep on this subject. It is an Old Testament, it is a New Testament truth.

Look what Romans 9:25 says, Paul is quoting the prophet Hosea in Romans 9. I will call them My people even before they were My people I am going to call them ahead of time My people. Because I am going to prophetically lead them into the truth by declaring it over them before they even understand it. It does not stop there, they are more than My people, they are more than servants in My kingdom. I will call them her beloved when she was not beloved. I will call her the beloved of My heart. This is one of the most intimate and cherished truths.

The Holy Spirit is calling His people beloved even now. Many are not equipped to hear that. I do not mean to hear the sound of it in the physical way, it is not penetrating their heart. I tell you the day is now and it is unfolding where this truth is going to go deeper and deeper. One of the ultimate confessions of the Bride in the Song of Solomon in this great eight chapter love song, Song of Solomon 7:10 I love this. She declares, I am my Beloveds, I belong to Him. The nature of the relationship is rooted in mutually being one another's beloved.

I am not just a servant, I am His beloved and He is mine. That is the nature of the relationship that God has in the new covenant with His people.

Then she breaks out declares one of the great implications of understanding the nature of the relationship rooted in the truth of being one another's beloved. She says, His desire is for me. I understand why I am His beloved, His desire is for me. This is where we discover our identity in its fullness in this confession. We discover our destiny. Beloved our destiny is not only to be citizens in the kingdom in heaven, we are much more than citizens. This where our greatness lies, this is where our security lies, this is where our satisfaction lies. Again it is not enough to kind of be casually familiar with a few terms and a few ideas. These ideas the Lord wants them to get into the language of our heart into our dialogue with the Lord. These are not just truths that we hear here and there but He wants us to talk to us this way and us to talk to Him in this kind of language.

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).

Paragraph B., I will just give you a simple working definition. Being beloved by God or God's beloved this is not comprehensive, this is a simple working definition. The Lord is relating to His people with affectionate delight. What a transforming truth. I remember when it first dawned on me, I have so much to learn and so much ground to gain in this but I have eternity to gain it. I want to go deep now in this age.

When I began I remember when it first dawned on me I was in my twenties that God did not just forgive me, He actually delighted in me. It was startling like, wait what if I believe that and it is not really true? What a terrible mistake. Then I went the other way, what if I do not believe and it is true? What a tragedy for my life.

I remember when from the Bible this truth began to touch my heart that even in my weakness God actually delighted in the relationship with me with affection, with a smile on His face. Even in my weakness not only when I was mature but in the journey. A phrase I have said so many times over the years that when this began to touch me than I would run to Him instead of from Him when I discovered my sin and failure and weakness.

Because the only place of safety was the One who delighted in the relationship.

Well it is not only that He delights in the relationship with affection, He enjoys our value. We are valuable to Him. He enjoys the beauty that we possess, that of course imparted from Him. His own beauty, the very beauty that God possesses He imparts but He enjoys the beauty that He sees in us now. These are themes we will develop through the Song again. We will take different passages and different themes through this course.

Our beloved-ness this is the dominate message of this love song, it will change your life. Most people catch this slowly. I caught it slowly but it builds over the months and years. It will change you. You will read the Bible with a new pair of lenses, a new pair of glasses so to speak. You will see the implications of being His beloved, the beloved-ness that you possess in the relationship. You will see it from Genesis to Revelation.

Many people, ardent students of the Bible they love God for years with sincerity, they know the Bible. This has never, it has never touched them in any kind consistent way because it is a new paradigm, it is a new perspective.

Over the years I have taught the Song of Solomon for almost thirty years and I remember the multitudes of testimonies that I have received. I am not talking about how I taught it; that is not my point because you can teach it, this poetic love song in many different ways. The, it is always the same, I have heard it over and over and over for almost thirty years. All types of people they said, I can hardly believe it that He delights in me, that

He is beautiful, that I possess His beauty, that we enjoy the relationship, that, really? Really? This changes everything. I said, you are getting it, it changes everything.

I have received that testimony and so will you as you teach these truths. Many of you are already teaching them one on one you are still teaching them. Others of you are teaching them through social media. You will get the same response all kinds of people. You know we expect the ladies to like it but I tell you many strong men they like it. You know why? Because the human spirit was created to be loved.

I do not care how big their muscles are and how many Rambo movies they watched they love to be loved. I do not care how, who they are. They love loving. They may have woundings and shyness and hesitations but in their core they love to be loved and they love loving. Every man, every woman, every child, old and young it is the very core of the human heart. It is why you cannot go wrong going deep in these truths.

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.

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

Paragraph C., I remember 1988, I was thirty-three years old. It was the day that changed my life when the Lord spoke audibly. I will not tell the story. I have told it many times in the other series you can, if you want to hear it longer, the long version you can hear it different teachings on the internet that I have given on this. He spoke audibly. He said in essence Song of Solomon 8:6. He is going to put a seal of love which is a progressive seal by the way, it is not a one-time deal. It is a revelation and an impartation of His love progressively touching. He said, I am going to do this worldwide in this generation, I am going to do it worldwide.

The Lord is going to raise up teachers all over the Body of Christ. They are going to teach the truths, the biblical truths that are set forth in this poetic love song. Because in the poetic nature of this there is a unique dimension of God's heart, an emotion that comes out in it. God is raising up hundreds of thousands, millions of teachers. They will teach through song, through drama, through media, through blogs, through social media. They will teach many many different ways.

God is raising up teachers that will capture the unique dynamics of this Song, the beloved-ness they just saturates, it just oozes through every line of the Song nearly. How beloved He is to us and how beloved we are to Him.

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.

Roman numeral two, well this is really a couple quick qualifiers. I have put these in far more detail in the 2007 series that I went twenty-four sessions systematically through the Song. There are two different basic interpretations that are common, the natural interpretation where King Solomon it depicts the love that King Solomon had with his bride. It sets forth the principles that honor the beauty of married love. It is a wonderful book about marriage and that is, it was meant to be.

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.

Paragraph B., it is not only a natural story teaching about love in the context of marriage. There is a spiritual interpretation of King Jesus and His Bride, the Body of Christ. We understand that. Most of the commentaries throughout church history has focused on Jesus the Bridegroom relating to His Bride. There are more commentaries on Song of Solomon than almost any other book in the Bible. I was surprised to discover that years ago.

There are hundreds of different commentaries on this book. There are other books like the book of Psalms and John that have a large number but Song of Solomon is near the top of the list. That surprises me in church history. I thought, really? As I began to see the different titles, I have got about 150 commentaries myself on this book. I just began to collect them and people began giving to me from everywhere. I thought, pretty cool. So it is not a new idea. It is new that the Holy Spirit is emphasizing this in a global way. That is new. The truth itself has been proclaimed all through church history. One thing I would just like to say it every time though I know ninety-nine percent of you do not need to hear this but there is only that one guy or one gal whatever that we must refuse on sensual overtones. This is not about Jesus being someone's boyfriend and they go on date nights with Jesus. It is not about kissing Jesus. I mean I know you know that but I just need to say that every time.

Some people ask the question again I go into more detail in the other times I taught this class is Jesus really in the Song of Solomon? Is He really in this book? Well Jesus said, the Holy Spirit came to glorify Him. The Bible says that every book of the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is inconceivable to me the Holy Spirit would write a book of the Bible by the way which will last forever that was not ultimately and directly about Jesus when fully understood.

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 directly and 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.

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

In Luke 24 Jesus, to the disciples on the road of Emmaus, He said He took all the scriptures and talked about Himself from all the scriptures. I wonder what He said about Himself when He got to Song of Solomon. I wonder if He smiled and said, you have no idea who I am but you will one day.

III. FIVE DISTINCTIVES IN THE SONG OF SOLOMON

A. The Song of Solomon emphasizes God's emotions. It gives us insight into *why* Jesus created and redeemed us. Many scriptures tell us *what* Jesus did in creation and redemption going to the cross.

Top of page two, well I want to kind of tip you off, what to pay attention to when you are reading through the Song of Solomon this eight chapter love song. Five things to pay attention to, Paragraph A., the reason I want to point this out because in this book the Holy Spirit is emphasizing the emotional dimension of God's personality. He is giving the why behind the what. The what—He is a creator, He created the heavens and the earth. The book of Genesis tells us what He did. What? He accomplished redemption on the cross. The book of Romans and all through the New Testament we find out what He did on the cross and what is accomplished. Song of Solomon is focused on the why behind the what. Both of them are very important. I want to know the what. I marvel at His power, I marvel at His justice and what the cross accomplished. When we see the why behind the what, it touches us in a different way.

B. God's emotions: His emotions include love, affection, delight, and enjoyment in relating to His people. Seeing how God sees and feels about His people empowers us to love Him (1 Jn. 4:19).

Paragraph B., right through the book we see God's emotions, we see God's emotions. You know there was a time, it was in my late twenties I made an intentional decision to become a student of God's emotions. I remember I made a, it was a moment where it crystalized in my mind. It was in context to teaching the life of David. I was not a Song of Solomon guy at all at that time. I do not really start the Song of Solomon until that encounter with the Lord. I was thirty-three years old but in my twenties I was a life of David kind of real zealot. David was a student of God's emotions. I remember I said, Lord I want to be a student of Your emotions like David. It was intentional, it was not a casual thing.

I love Allen Hood's testimony when he was just a young man about twenty-two years old. It was a long time ago he came and spent a year, he lived in Florida. He came and spent a year in the church where I was pastoring here in Kansas City. I did not even hardly know him. I made a statement, I said, be intentional about being a student of God's emotion. Go through the whole Bible and mark every verse that gives insight into God's emotions in a direct way. He did it and I have heard him give the testimony. Many times over the years how that study changed his life, set him on a whole different trajectory.

Well the Song of Solomon is a book again that takes in poetic language in the language of song and in a unique way brings forth God's emotions, His desires, His delight, His enjoyment. These themes that are often neglected in the Body of Christ but they are critical, they are essential to equipping a generation to overcome shame and darkness and sexual brokenness, emotional pain, offense. The subject of God's heart that God desires, He delights, He feels, He loves, He has affection. He wants us to see it and to receive it and to be moved by it. I want to encourage you, whatever season of life you are in to make an intentional decision to become a student of God's emotions. Well obviously most of you are because you are here tonight. You are saying, well what do you think we are doing? I honor you for that. I encourage you to stay with it all your life. In the resurrection we are going to understand God's emotions more but I do not want to wait until then. I want to go deep now.

C. God's beauty: Especially seen as our Bridegroom King (Ps. 27:4; 45:2; Isa. 4:2; 28:5; 33:17).

Encountering God's majestic beauty is foundational to enjoying Him and experiencing the spiritual pleasure that comes by being fascinated with Him.

¹⁷“Your eyes will see the King in His beauty.” (Isa. 33:17)

Paragraph C., the second theme of the Song of Solomon is God's beauty. One of the great prophecies for the generation the Lord returns, your eyes will see the King in His beauty, not just His power, His power too. Not

just His wisdom, yes I love God's wisdom and power. You will see His beauty. You will have a new look at old truths and you will see beauty from A-Z being manifest in God's love and His power and His wisdom. This is one of the great promises Isaiah 33:17. You want to be intentional about seeing the beauty of God. That was the verse that, I mean the theme that God gave us here for the establishing of IHOP seventeen years ago was Psalm 27:4, this one thing we gaze on His beauty. That is central to our mandate to keep a 24/7 sanctuary of prayer and worship was people interacting with His beauty. One of the reasons that is so key because through the incredible development of media and media is going to continue to become more dynamic to be used for good or evil but more and more dynamic. Through this tremendous revolution of media so much you know quality of technology and art and all those things that you are aware of there is a counterfeit fascination going on in the earth. The only thing that will be strong enough to overpower that counterfeit fascination is the genuine beauty that only God possesses. It is the very beauty that He imparts.

D. Our beauty in God's eyes: The beauty that Jesus possesses is the very beauty that He imparts to His people in redemption.

***1**"The LORD has anointed Me...3to give them beauty for ashes."* (Isa. 61:1-3)

***17**And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us. (Ps. 90:17)*

That is Paragraph D., that is one of the other themes is how the Bridegroom King repeatedly through this love song says, it is not only that I am beautiful My beloved, so are you. The beauty that I possess I impart. In other words, when I look at you, is what the Lord is saying, I am not repulsed. When I look at you I am not put off. When I look at you I am not hesitant. When I look at you I feel delight, I see value, I like what I see. Because even though many of our virtues are only budding, they are only beginning He sees it clearly and it is beautiful to Him. He knows where it is going. When we understand that He has not just forgiven us but He actually sees beauty in His people He delights, He likes, He enjoys, He values what is going on. That is a whole different way for a relationship to develop. Isaiah 61, the famous verse that Jesus quoted, the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me to proclaim the good news. He has anointed Me. He goes on in verse 3, to give beauty. Part of My mission under the anointing is to impart beauty. Where there was the brokenness of ashes because ashes speak of the burning passions but burning the wrong way and only ashes are left. He goes, I will give beauty. I will take the ashes of your broken life. I will give you beauty. We will develop that throughout this book but that theme is all the way through the book. That is a very important theme. Moses said in Psalm 90, the beauty of the Lord be upon us.

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 Jesus' love for His Bride (Jn. 15:9).

Paragraph E., it is not only that He is beautiful and He imparts it and He loves us, He awakens us to love. I believe that the truths, the biblical truths about God's heart, about His desire that are set forth poetically in this love song but it is all the way established Genesis to Revelation they will awaken love. There is nothing that will make you love God more than seeing the way He loves you.

I wrote a book called *Passion for Jesus* year ago. People have asked me, how do you get passion for Jesus? I go, I can tell you it is real easy, be a student of His passion for you. When you are an intentionally a student of His passion for you, His emotions it will awaken. You cannot see that truth without it moving you, it will move you progressively. Sometimes we go three steps forward, two steps back but we keep moving forward over the months and years. There are setbacks but we overcome them and we keep moving forward.

This is a song about love, this is the Bridegroom King, the King's song about love in the Bible. It is an eternal song. This book the Song of Solomon will last for billions of years. There will not be natural marriage in heaven but this song will still be sang. Again I do not want to wait until the resurrection, I want to see it now, I want to feel it now.

F. Partnership: The Song sets forth key principles that equip us to grow in partnership with Jesus.

24“Father, I desire that they...may be with Me where I am.” (Jn. 17:24)

4“They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:4-6)

Paragraph F., it is about partnership. You will see it through the book particularly the final four chapters. Well no you see it all the way through but more in the last half. Love longs for partnership. He is not only a King who wants workers, He is a Bridegroom King, He wants partnership. Love always wants partnership. He does not want us to work for Him, He wants us to work with Him. The key to not being burnt out in ministry is working with Him not for Him. When you work for Him you can work detached, you can work separated from dialogue and from encountering His heart.

When you work with Him you are dialoguing with Him, you are feeling His heart, you are sharing your heart and you get built up even though you might get weary in your physical strength your heart is being energized. When your body gets weary through the labors of ministry but you are not dialoguing, you are not interacting with His heart that is called burn out because we were made for love.

I love what Jesus says in John 17:24 right before He goes to the cross. He goes, Father, Father I desire that they be with Me where I am. He wants us with Him where He is forever. We find this theme all the way through the Song of Solomon. Then in Revelation 20:4 He says it again in verse 6. It says, they will reign with Him over the earth. Not just reign, reign with Him, Revelation 20:4, it says it again in verse 6. It is the “with Him” that He really desire. We see these five themes, not only these five themes but these five themes over and over in the book.

All of these themes are biblical to Genesis to Revelation but nowhere are they so compacted in one short part of scripture, eight short chapters, just kind of like this fire hose of God's emotion and delight and beauty in the way that He sees us all compacted in a song. Again I believe nearly every line of the Song can become a thousand songs the Holy Spirit gives as the theme from a line in that book.

G. Love longs for partnership that works with another—Jesus with His people, and we with Him. Jesus identified love as God's *first* priority and the way to *greatness* (Mt. 22:38). Paul wrote of it as the more *excellent way* and as that which *compels* us to give our all (1 Cor. 12:31; 13:13; 2 Cor. 5:14).

H. When we see and feel about ourselves and others what God sees and feels about us, we are empowered to love. *Width*: His love includes all nations. *Length*: it reaches far (covering all sin) and lasts forever. *Depth*: it was costly for Jesus to descend so low. *Height*: it exalts us.

17...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)

Paragraph H., I, one of the best summaries of the Song of Solomon is given by Paul the apostle in my opinion in Ephesians 3:18, one of the very best summaries of this book. He says verse 17, that you may be able to comprehend; that is it, comprehend, understand, experience the width, length, depth, and height. Verse 19, to experience the love that passes human knowledge.

Meaning the love is bigger than our ability to grasp it by the, without the Holy Spirit's help. We cannot grasp it, we will never exhaust it ever. A million years from now we will still be receiving more and fresh insights. I love to call it the ocean of God's love, it passes human knowledge. You cannot get it without the Holy Spirit helping you. There will never be enough years to exhaust it even in eternity.

I. The Spirit enables us to comprehend that God sees our value, destiny, and beauty, and feels delight over us and others. We are empowered to love deeper and more consistently as we see ourselves and others as God does, rather than seeing ourselves through the lens of our sin and brokenness and viewing others through the lens of their sin and brokenness.

Paragraph I., the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to comprehend this. Beloved this is the journey, this is the journey you are on, this is the journey I am in. I am not just on a journey to work in the kingdom. I love working because I am working with Him. Now I am working for what He desires. I am working to see people liberated and brought into that glorious two-way relationship with Him.

The Holy Spirit wants more than workers, He wants us to comprehend something. The width and length and depth and height of love, of affection. You could put the word affection there. He wants us to comprehend His delight, the value He sees in us, our destiny. He wants us to go on this journey with Him.

Beloved when we see ourself like He sees us even a little bit we do not look at our lives only through the lens of our brokenness. We see our brokenness, we are honest about it our sin and our brokenness but that is, that is not the dominating narrative of how we see ourself before God. We see ourself through His lens. It does not stop there, we see other people through His lens, through this lens.

I remember I was just overcome one night years ago with Song of Solomon 4:9. It says, He is ravished for His beloved. I go, oh Lord You are ravished for me, oh my goodness. Then I would say like, if I was You I would not be that ravished about me. I thought, well He knows everything so He knows more than I know about me so okay. Ravished, I mean affection and delight. I remember I was caught up in that.

At that particular time I had a particular man who was really attacking me with all kinds of lies and publishing them, I mean they were horrible lies. For a, I just paused and it entered my mind I am ravished for him too. I went ugh ugh, well Lord I mean I want him saved, I really do but ravished? It is so wrong what he is doing. The Lord said, My heart is so much bigger than his weakness and brokenness. I remember it was so clear to me. I paused, I was really glad he saved but not that glad that God delighted in him. I thought, come on Lord let's be straightforward about this.

This idea that my heart is bigger than his brokenness but that is good for you because I never change and that is how I look at you. My heart is bigger than your brokenness. I went, oh that is a good deal. I guess if that is how

You are okay I can go there. It changed the way I looked at that man. What he did I still did not appreciate but I had a different feeling entirely. I said, I would say these words, well I would whisper them. I saw him many times with my eyes and I would pray for him. I would say, Lord You are ravished for him, You delight in him. I go, okay okay I can feel that a little bit, this is easier.

Lord could say, My yoke is easy if you do it My way My yoke is easy. It does not mean there is not a lot of hard work but it means if you, if you relate to me and work with Me My way, through My lens, through My paradigm the yoke is easy. It does not mean the work is easy, the yoke is easy because your heart is enlarged and it is invigorated in the journey.

IV. JESUS LIVED AS GOD'S BELOVED

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

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

Top of page three, well I want to get to this idea. We are again going to develop it through this course, the beloved-ness. Well the anchor to this truth is found in Jesus. I want you to note two things, note something here and then we will look at it from, that one two occasions God the Father so to speak bent over the balcony of heaven, looked down to His Son and audibly, out loud like thunder, You are My Beloved Son. He did it twice. That is remarkable.

The first time was right before Jesus went into the temptation. The temptation of the wilderness for forty days Satan literally appears. I have seen a demon a time or two, I do not like it. I do not like the feeling. I do not like the look of it. I know I have got authority, I do not even like anything about it. Satan appeared to Him with all of His power. Jesus is weakened in His humanity. He is fully God but as a Man He is living as the Holy Spirit gives Him human strength. His strength as a Man is drawn by the Holy Spirit just like you, just like me. He was not living out of the resource of His deity though He never ever lost it. He was living like a Man who lives by faith and in relationship to the Father through the Spirit. He is weak, His body is weighed down, forty days of water. Satan comes and all of his splendor and fierceness to Him. Because Jesus is in the position as the second Adam that Adam was in the garden of Eden.

Jesus gives three temptations in the wilderness, the same three temptations that Adam got in the garden of Eden, the same three. I am not going to go to it right now. Adam yielded and therefore the whole human race went into a different direction. Jesus has to as a Man stand in the same place that Adam stood. It is not a garden of paradise where He is fully refreshed, it is a wilderness, 100 degrees, whatever, parched, no food. The fierceness of Satan, Jesus had to say yes to the Father in the same three temptations that Adam yielded to.

The Father knew what Jesus was facing. Beforehand He says, Jesus My Beloved, My Beloved. The very statement of Jesus' beloved-ness, I do not know how it all works because He is fully God but He is fully Man too. I know that the truths of being God's beloved was a source of warfare in one of the greatest moments of temptation in His life.

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)*

Well then three plus years later right before the cross, the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elijah appear. God speaks audibly again. It says they appeared to speak to Jesus, Matthew 17, about His coming death. I mean can you imagine Moses and Elijah showing up from history. Hi Jesus, like. Peter, James, and John are going, what on earth is going on? They came to talk to Jesus about his death. For the second time the Lord speaks out like thunder. Jesus, You are My beloved. That truth empowered Him in the wilderness and it empowered Him on the cross. We look at that as a, I do not, more than a model. We, I do not know what the word is but we look at that how the Father and the Son related. In the two most intense hours of temptation of course the cross being far more than the other but the other being the second most powerful time of temptation. He was energized and empowered by the truth of You are My beloved.

C. The Church will face an unprecedented measure of temptation and persecution in the end times. Seeing themselves as God's beloved will strengthen them to walk in victory (Rev. 12:11; 15:2).

Beloved the end-time Church is going to be empowered to face the persecution, a type of the cross and to face temptation, the whole Harlot of Babylon reality by the same truth our beloved-ness to God.

I mean, I do not mean we earn anything by persecution but the end-time Church is going to bear the cross not for their own salvation but in that way of standing for truth. We are going to face the onslaught of temptation like no time in history. The two times that Jesus was tempted most the same truth was uttered over Him, You are My beloved.

Beloved the Song of Solomon captures this theme and unpacks it right from the first chapter to the eighth chapter in this poetic love song. I believe again the great love songs of God's heart, the Bridegroom King are going to be released by the Spirit all through the Body of Christ calling them the beloved of God to withstand the fierce temptations and the fierce persecution of the generation the Lord returns.

The Church will stand unified across the nations. The Spirit and the Bride, the Church in her bridal identity, come Jesus we are Yours, You are our King, You are our Beloved and we are Yours. This love song is Song of Solomon is not of secondary importance. Again because it is poetic because it is a song some people go, yeah but. I go, no no no do not do yeah but.

There is only one generation that is the Bridegroom generation where the Church worldwide sees the Messiah as a Bridegroom, only one generation in history because they have to. They have to see who He is, their Beloved, and who they are as His beloved to withstand the temptation and the persecution that type of a cross that the same way that Jesus was empowered. Again the mystery of how a Man is fully God and fully Man how that all works. I do not even pretend to understand the depths of that. We are His beloved.

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 more intimacy in our relationship with God as we see more and more of the reality of our *belovedness* in His eyes.

“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)

Look at Paragraph five, I mean Roman numeral five. The secret to who you are, the secret to your identity, to your destiny, to your greatness, the secret to your satisfaction is in the heart and in the words of the Father over you, in the words of the Son. So many believers because we are humans we are still wanting to get our identity and our definition of success and greatness from the mouth of another person. I believe that is, there are ways where you do that through encouragement. The primary way that we establish our identity, our sense of worth and success is from the mouth of God.

I believe that the Song of Solomon, the truth of our beloved-ness God is going to wash the Church with it. That is why I want to take these themes to this course and highlight on just themes and pull them out of the book of Revelation and see where they are from Genesis to Revelation, I mean the book of Song of Solomon and see where they are established from Genesis to Revelation being God's beloved.

Jesus said in Paragraph A., John 15, one of my favorite verses. Jesus said, in the same way the Father loves Me, I am telling you; that is the way I relate to you, that is how I feel about you. We will enjoy intimacy with God's heart more and more as we interact with this truth. Again it is not just a, we agree with it, we got to stay with it in an intentional way. It needs to get into our lips and into our prayer life, into the language of our dialogue with the Lord.

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

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

Paragraph B., Paul referred to it, He called the saints the beloved of God.

C. Paul magnified the truth of God's love, which was fully embodied in the person of His Son.

⁴He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love...⁶His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. (Eph. 1:4-6)

1. ***Accepted us in the Beloved:*** God accepted us in Jesus as “the Beloved,” giving us insight into the purpose and quality of our relationship with Him forever. God gives Himself to us in the way He gave Himself to Jesus. Paul viewed eternity past and future as being “in the Beloved.”
2. ***Before the foundation of the world:*** God created mankind, in His eternal purposes, as an expression of His love. The meaning of our very existence is to experience and express love. Some translations say, “He chose us *in love* before the foundation of the world to be holy.”

Paragraph C., Ephesians, He choose us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Some translations say, He choose us in love to be holy and blameless. That before the world was ever created in love He choose us that we would be holy and like Him. Look at verse 6, that we would be accepted in the Beloved.

Go down to Paragraph two. God gives Himself to us in a way that He gave Himself to Jesus. He frames out the whole relationship through the grid of Jesus being the beloved of God. We are accepted in that tone and in that spirit of the relationship. The beloved of God accepts us before God we are accepted in that place where beloved-ness is a primary truth and dominating theme of the relationship. We are not just accepted in the King, I

would take that, in the Beloved we are accepted. Because the nature of the relationship is a mutual two-way beloved-ness. It is more than service.

D. Paul understood that we must look to the Father to find our primary identity, rather than looking to other people to affirm “who we are.” A believer who lives with confidence in God’s love, and of being “beloved,” is able to be live more committed than one living in condemnation.

Paragraph D., we looked, I have already said this but we looked first to the Father for our primary identity. We do not look to it from people. Now naturally we do look to people for it but we want to go on this journey where we are saying, that is not enough, they are not giving me the recognition, the honor, the value they really should have. The Lord says, it is never, no one is going to ever do it just right, get it from Me first. Then you will be able to receive it or not receive it from others. Get it from Me first. A believer that is confident in being God's beloved will be far more dedicated, far more consistent.

E. Confidence in being God’s beloved is the place where condemnation, rejection, and despair are overcome and where love for God 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.

Paragraph E., now this is for all of you that teach the Word of God. Again whether you are teaching one on one in your home to your children, whether you are teaching on the internet, through social media, condemnation, rejection, despair is overcome in the truth of being His beloved. You do not have to use that term every time but when I meet somebody they have condemnation and compromise. They are caught in bondage, it is not the only truth but I know that is the dominate truth that is going to liberate them when it is all said and done.

It is not the only thing but I know that is the dominate truth as a Bible teacher and a shepherd. When you get that clear in your heart the condemnation, the despair, the shame, the addiction that is overcome by the truth of His beloved. It is the many facets of that diamond, the truth of His beloved being His beloved has many facets. It is a diamond with many facets.

The most effective way to empower them, to liberate them is to lead them to that truth, that vast diamond of being His beloved of which the Song of Solomon for eight chapters is all about. It is the way to your liberty and mine, it is the way to your greatness, it is the way to your satisfaction, it is the way to your freedom but it is also the way to the people you minister to. When you have that clear then you do not ever want to graduate from this truth.

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.

Paragraph F., just the last minute or two here. The primary battleground in the spirit is Satan's accusations against our identity. He is going to accuse us to get us to yield to the temptations of the generation. He is going to accuse us to try to get us to back away in fear from standing and bearing persecution. He wants to bring temptation and he wants us to cower before persecution by weakening us with accusation. He tells us, we are not God's beloved. He tells us we have gone too far. He tells us it is too late. The truths of this Song will say exactly the opposite. It is like, it is like a weapon in God's hand, I mean in the hands of God's people by the Spirit to break Satan's lies.

G. John wrote of himself as beloved, as “the one Jesus loved” (Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20)

²⁶Jesus saw His mother, and the disciple [John] whom He loved standing by. (Jn. 19:26)

²She ran to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said... (Jn. 20:2)

⁷Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved [John] said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” (Jn. 21:7)

²⁰Then Peter...saw the disciple [John] whom Jesus loved. (Jn. 21:20)

²³Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. (Jn. 13:23)

Paragraph G., look what John wrote about himself five times. Five times, I mean there is nothing in the Bible where a guy talks about himself five times in the same way. He describes himself as the beloved. The term John uses is the one God loves but it is the same truth as the beloved.

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)

¹⁹He delivered me because He delighted in me...³⁵Your gentleness has made me great. (Ps. 18:19, 35)

Paragraph H., David did it. Look at Psalm 60, your beloved. After David struggled in sin and compromise in Ziklag the day he got free, I mean after sixteen months of compromise look what Psalm 18:19. He says, God delivered me from my dilemma and my compromise. Why? Because you repented? Well yeah David did repent. Why did God deliver you? He says, because God likes me. David how could you say that? You have been in Ziklag sixteen months. You ought to say, God delivered me because something, I do not know but not because He delighted in you.

He goes, that is why He delivered me and that is why I did not give up because I knew His heart and His gentleness in my weakness in my sin is what is making me great. Because I did not give up because He was gentle with me. He did not cast me aside. Well the enemy comes and lies and we feel cast aside but we are not. David says, no His gentleness gives me a new beginning every day so I can go on to be great. Meaning I can do the will of God completely in my life.

I. Jeremiah spoke of Israel as “God's beloved” when they were under divine discipline by Babylon.

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)

Look at Paragraph I., Jeremiah, this is intense, he is speaking about Israel when Israel is under the Babylonian discipline, the discipline of God in Babylon, I mean the most severe discipline Israel has gone through in the Old Testament. Look what Jeremiah that God says, He says, what has My beloved to do in My house? Because

they were still in the temple, they were offering sacrifices to demons. He goes, they are doing these lewd things but they are in my temple offering sacrifices to demons but they are still My beloved.

Like I look and I go, wow what language. Lord if that is how You feel about Israel is that how You feel about me? He goes, yes you are My beloved even when I am disciplining you. Look at Jeremiah 12, I have given the dearly beloved of My heart into the hands of her enemy, to Babylon, to discipline her, to wake her up but she is the dearly beloved of My soul.

J. Jeremiah was encouraged by seeing himself as “God’s beloved” when in a season of persecution.

³The 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)

Jeremiah 31, Jeremiah was persecuted by so many of the leaders in Israel in his day because he kept saying, discipline is coming, bondage is coming, Babylon is coming. They said, stop saying that you are getting the whole nation afraid. He goes, they need to be afraid. They need to be afraid. They put Jeremiah in prison a couple of times. Here is what God, here is what Jeremiah said, verse 3, the Lord appeared to me. He appeared to me. He said, Jeremiah I know you are in prison, I know you are hurting, I know everybody is rejecting you but I want you to know I love you. I love you Jeremiah with everlasting love. Keep telling them I love them. Know in your imprisonment, in your difficulty I love you. Then J., Paragraph J...

K. Like Jeremiah, Peter spoke of being God’s beloved to strengthen believers in persecution.

¹²Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you. (1 Pet. 4:12)

L. Paul spoke of being God’s beloved to strengthen those being tempted to act in revenge.

¹⁹Beloved, do not avenge yourselves...for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.” (Rom. 12:19)

There are more references. Look at Romans 12. We are called beloved when we are tempted to take our own vengeance in bitterness. The Lord says, do not, do not. I will repay because you are My beloved, you can trust Me. Look at 1 Peter 2, right towards the end. When we are facing temptation of lust it is the truth of being His beloved that empowers us. 1 Peter 4 when we are facing trials it is the truth of being His beloved like Jeremiah, it sustains us. The book of Song of Solomon is this explosion of God's heart. You are My beloved. I am yours and you are Mine together forever, not just in eternity, now you are My beloved, I am your Beloved.

Amen, let's stand before the Lord. I want to invite people several different situations. You are weary, you are weary in your heart. You say, you know I believe this, I believe this but I have lost hold of it, the enemy is pounding on me, I have lost the hold on this truth that I use to have or I want to have. I want prayer, I want my soul washed.

Maybe you are saying, I am stuck in an area of my life I do not like. I feel tempted to give up. The Lord says, I want to wash you with how beloved you are to Me. Maybe you are a teacher which so many of you are and you are saying, I want to make a commitment to be intentional about going deep in this subject in the years ahead. I want to be intentional about this, not just casual, not here and there. I want to be a student of God's heart like

Allen Hood when he took that challenge in age twenty-two. He said, I want to be a student of God's emotions, I want to know this stuff.

It is not just Song of Solomon that is just the poetic love song version of biblical truths from Genesis to Revelation. I want to invite you to come up if you, any of those apply to you and you would like prayer. Just come up and stand on these lines.

Here we are Lord, here we are Lord, wash me. Lord wash my heart, wash my heart Lord. Renew me in the Holy Spirit tonight Lord. Dearly beloved of His soul, you are My beloved, says the Lord. You are the dearly beloved of My heart, says the Lord. Talk to Me, open your heart, talk to Me about these truths. Here I am oh God.

M. Peter spoke of being God's beloved to strengthen those who were tempted to yield to lust.

*¹¹**Beloved, I beg you...abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. (1 Pet. 2:11)***

N. The palmist spoke of being God's beloved to strengthen those who overworked because of anxiety.

*²**It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late...for so He gives His beloved sleep. (Ps. 127:2)***