

Session 12 The Seal of Fiery Love (Song 8:5-7)

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Song 8:5-7 describes the maturity of the body of Christ who cultivated a “leaning heart” and overcame even in the wilderness by walking in the fire of God’s love. We know the end of the story—the Bride will “come up” out of the wilderness in victory leaning upon the One she loves—Jesus.

⁵Who is this coming up [victory] from the wilderness [testing], leaning upon her Beloved?...

⁶Set Me [Jesus] as a seal upon your heart...for love is as strong as death... (Song 8:5-6)

Well Song of Solomon 8:5-6, just to get the feel for the passage and we will break it down more throughout the session. The question is asked, who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning on the one she loves, leaning on her Beloved. So the question, somebody is seen coming in victory out of the wilderness, not destroyed, not distraught but coming up. She is leaning on the one she loves.

Then the verse 6, the King says, set me as a seal upon your heart. For love, rather My love is as strong as death. Well here in Song of Solomon 5 which is the final part of her life because it is an eight chapter love song. I, there are various ways to interpret this eight chapter love song of Song of Solomon. I look at it as the progression of holy passion. This is the epitome, this is the ultimate experience that is being described in this poetic language of love. It describes the maturity of the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ coming up.

Now I am going to give an eschatological application or that is a fancy word for end-time because this passage obviously applies at any time through history. I believe there is a unique application of this poem on the Church coming up out of the most intense season of wilderness called the Great Tribulation. The Church is empowered in love. She has a love that is stronger than the power of death.

Because Satan's number one weapon is the fear of death. Well he accuses us night and day but when he pulls out his most intense weapon against the Church it is the threat of death. He wants to intimidate people by the threat of killing them, martyr them. At the end of the age in that generation there will be more martyrs at that time than at any other time in history.

What this poem is telling us prophetically is there will be an experience of love that is superior to the fear of death. This issue of the seal of love upon the heart, again that is a poetic language but it is the Holy Spirit imparting the revelation of God's love for us and imparting love in us back to God. Then of course it overflows to other people as well.

This love will be an issue of life and death. Meaning the Church through history has not faced the kind of persecution it is going to face in one final hour that is yet future. It will be love that will be the power, it will be the secret power of the Church. It will not be just gritting our teeth and hanging in there, it will be overcome with love where the power is greater than the escalating temptations in the culture.

Because sin and lust will reach a level never seen in history. There will be a people all over the earth that where their love for Jesus and their experience of love will be greater than the temptations of the lust in the culture. It will be greater than the fear of persecution and even the intimidation of death.

For it says in verse 6, for this love is as strong as death. This has echoes of that famous passage in Revelation 12 where it says, the saints in the end of the age they will love their life even unto death. I mean they will not love their life but they will love Jesus even more than death. They would consider it a privilege to give their life for love is the idea.

B. Wilderness: This speaks of the temptations and persecutions in the wilderness of this fallen world. We will consider an eschatological application to this passage—victorious in the Great Tribulation. The Church as Bride will “come up” victorious in love over all that will test her (Rev. 15:2).

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb...they did not love their lives to the death.”
(Rev. 12:11)

“...a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast...” (Rev. 15:2)

Paragraph B., the wilderness now poetically is the wilderness of this fallen world, you know all 6,000 years of recorded human history since Adam. The wilderness speaks of temptations that lure us outside of the will of God. The wilderness speaks of the persecutions that attack us because we do the will of God. The wilderness speaks of just our natural weakness as we are facing the challenges.

John the apostle described the Church coming up in victory at the end, in Revelation 5, I mean Revelation 15:2. He said, I saw a great multitude on the sea of glass standing before the throne a multitude, I mean millions and millions and millions. Here is the part I like, I mean I like being on the sea of glass; that is really good. It says, they are standing in victory over the Antichrist.

The book of Revelation 12 says that the Antichrist overcomes the saints physically, not all of them, but they will be the largest number of martyrs. The saints overcome him spiritually because their love does not waver, their love prevails over his threats. So when you first read in the book of Revelation it says, the Antichrist overcomes the saints. You think, wow but the saints overcome the Antichrist. Which is it? They overcome or the Antichrist will overcome the saints physically.

Many I do not believe it is most but I believe the number will be very significant but he will not overcome them spiritually. Their love will prevail in the face of threats. They will come up leaning on the one they love, coming up in victory out of the wilderness season. Not just all of history, yes that too but in that particular time frame. Again walking in love, the first commandment will be an issue of life and death. It will not be kind of a casual thing. If you are growing in love you will prevail. If you are not growing in love you will be swept into the temptations of the culture and its growing lust and the fearful threats of persecution.

C. Leaning: We are to lean on our Beloved as we live in union with Jesus as our life goal and source. Like Jacob, the Bride will wrestle with God; thus she limps, leans on, and loves God (Gen. 32).

To lean on Jesus includes talking with, looking to, and trusting in His leadership over our lives.

Paragraph C., she is leaning, that is a very important word, that the Bride is pictured like Jacob. Remember Jacob wrestled with the Lord and then he was limping and leaning on a staff afterwards but he was transformed. So the Church is going to be transformed in one generation from a Laodicean church where compromise is very common. There is going to be a tremendous outpouring of the Spirit and a tremendous shaking in the nations and a tremendous persecution, all of them coming together.

Jacob is going to wrestle with the Lord, he is going to be transformed as he was in Genesis 32. That is a picture of the people of God transformed through wrestling with the Lord. He was leaning and limping at the end. I will add one more word, she is, the Church is leaning on her Beloved, the one she loves.

The Lord is determined to remove the props that we lean on that give us false comforts, false security, a false sense of success. He wants those props removed; that is part of the shaking of the nations that is going to happen before the Lord returns.

II. THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

A. The Holy Spirit's first priority is to establish the first commandment in *first place* in the Church. Jesus' statement in Matthew 22:37-38 is one of the most significant statements in Scripture.

³⁷“***You shall love the Lord...with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.***”
³⁸***This is the first and great commandment.***” (Mt. 22:37-38)

Well let's look at Roman numeral two. Now the understanding of the first commandment is key to understanding this seal of love, this fiery seal. Because it is a seal of fire, a seal of love that is put upon our heart. It is a fiery flame it says. This seal of love really can only be understood in context to the first commandment.

Paragraph A., the very familiar passage, one of the most significant statements in the whole Bible. Matthew 22, by the mouth of Jesus, you shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, your soul, and your mind. Then in Mark 12 He adds, and all of your strength, He adds that fourth category.

Here in verse 38 the Lord then elaborates. He goes, I want you to know something. This commandment to love with all of your heart is the first commandment from God's point of view and it is the great commandment from God's point of view.

Now the thing that, one of the things that makes this declaration of Jesus so significant is that it was his final public message before the cross. This was one of the last things He said in His public ministry. Then He talked to His disciples in private and then He went to the cross.

B. The command to love God with all our heart does not begin with us. It is one expression of the ultimate reality of the kingdom that existed long before the creation of the world—from eternity past, *God has loved God* with all of His heart—the Father loved the Son, Jesus loved the Spirit, etc.

Paragraph B., the command to love God with all of our heart it does not start with us. God does not say, hey I want you to love Me with all of your heart and then we will go from there. The command to love with all of our heart actually it starts with God long before the creation of the earth.

God loved God with all of His heart. God the Father loved the Son, God the Son loved the Spirit, God the Spirit loved the Father and the Son, and all the different combinations. God dwelt in perfect love in the fellowship of the Trinity in eternity past, this is how it was; this is how God is. Then God conceived of the plan because love demands by definition, love demands to be multiplied. The enjoyment of love demands to be multiplied so that others are brought into the enjoyment of it.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are so enjoying their relationship together in the family of God that the Father said, by the very fact of love and Our enjoyment of it We must multiply it and share it. So He created Adam and

Eve and the human race, created them in the image of God so they had the capacity to receive in return this love.

C. God also *loves His people* with all His heart and with the same intensity that He loves within the fellowship of the Trinity. We understand the first commandment best by seeing it in its eternal context of the fellowship in the Godhead, rather than seeing it as one aspect of kingdom ethics.

⁹“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.” (Jn. 15:9)

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

Paragraph C., well God does not only love God with all of His heart, God loves people with all of His heart. It is only later God says, people I want you to respond in the way that We love We want you to enter in to this grand glorious reality.

The passage I preach on more than any other or comment on more than any other passage in the Bible is John 15:9. You hear it almost every week. I just cannot get over this passage. Jesus said in the way, in the intensity the Father loves Me that is how I love you. What? In the intensity of how the Father loves Me that is how I love you.

Then in John 17 He says the same thing a little different. He goes, in the way that the Father loves Me the Father loves you too. So He says it two ways. The way the Father loves Me, I love you. The way the Father loves Me, He loves you. Because God can only love with all of His heart; that is the only way God loves. This is what gives us security, the fact that God cannot change. When God loves that is the only way He loves. Beloved this is the ultimate statement of our value, this is the reason we have confidence as believers. Because when we are relating to one that loves with all of His heart, His track record is perfect. He has proven it, there is no change in Him.

D. The Father’s love for Jesus is the measure of His love for us—the ultimate statement of our worth.

E. The grace to receive God’s love and to love Him in response is God’s glorious gift to us (Rom. 5:5).

F. God first *exhorted* Israel, through Moses, to love Him with all their heart (Deut. 6:5), and later Moses *prophesied* Israel would love God with all their heart in the end times (Deut. 30:1-6). Jesus’ statement was both an *exhortation* and a *prophecy*, giving insight into God’s plan for us.

⁶“The Lord...will *circumcise your heart...*to *love the Lord...with all your heart.*” (Deut. 30:6)

Top of page two, well to understand the seal of love, this fiery seal of love we have got to get the big picture of the first commandment, the call of love. Because that is what the seal of love we are going to develop in a moment is all about. It is understood in context to the first commandment.

Paragraph F., the very first time God commanded people to love, to love God with all of their heart was back in Deuteronomy 6 with Moses. When Moses came before God, God said okay here is the command Moses. Tell the people love Me with all of their heart. This was a new idea, the first time ever in the Scripture it was declared.

This was a new idea because you know most of Israel was thinking they had come before God in the Mt. Sinai and the mountain trembled and smoke and fire. Israel drew back in fear and they ran away, no no. So they had the idea of serving God in fear.

God said, well they do not have it right exactly. I want them to have the fear of the Lord but they do not really grasp what I am after. I want them to love Me with all of their heart. They did not really understand because God loves us with all of His heart. It is like, the Lord says, I am the one that started this because that is how I am but Moses we will cover that later. Tell them to love Me with all of their heart, that is Deuteronomy 6.

Then very important, Deuteronomy 30, this is the passage you all want to know, Deuteronomy 30. The Lord elaborates on the command. It is not only an exhortation, you ought to love God, Deuteronomy 6 the first time He said it. This is a prophecy not that you ought to love God but you actually will. God says, I am going to take matters into My own hands and I am going to release such an outpouring of the Spirit and I am going to create such an environment in the nations through the shaking of the nations, through the testing of the nations, through the outpouring of My Spirit, the whole thing. He says here in Deuteronomy 30, the Lord will circumcise your heart to love Him.

He goes, the Lord is going to do something to circumcise the heart of man, He is going to do something in the human heart that is beyond the power of fleshly abilities. God Himself is going to do something in the human heart amongst His people that is beyond their human natural abilities. God says, I will do this, you can be sure that My plan will not fall to the ground. I will have a people forever that will love Me like I love them. Beloved this is our destiny, this is who we are. This is the only thing that makes sense out of life actually.

So here Jesus is, Matthew 22, the passage where He says, you shall love the Lord your God. His very final message to the people of God. He goes to the cross, well He talks to His disciples in private at the last supper, etc. He goes to, this is it. He stands before them, you shall love the Lord your God. He was not only giving an exhortation that was expressing Deuteronomy 6, He was giving a prophecy that was expressing Deuteronomy 30 as well.

He was looking at Israel, He says, Israel you do not really know this but I told Moses in Deuteronomy 30 you will love Me. I just, thinking it is this kind of deal, Father before I go to the cross let Me declare as the Bridegroom God with authority who they are, you shall love the Lord your God, it shall come to pass. I think that is what He was saying. Yes He was giving an instruction but yea more than an instruction. He was declaring with all the authority of heaven the destiny of the people of God, you shall love the Lord your God.

G. Jesus elaborated on Moses' exhortation and prophecy by adding two words—*first* and *great*.

Well Paragraph G., then Jesus added two words that He did not tell Moses. When God spoke to Moses He just said, love God with all of your heart; that was it. Jesus here 500 years, I mean 1,500 years after Moses says, let me tell you something I did not tell Moses, this is the first commandment and it is the great one. Moses knew it was important but He did not know this, from the point of view of the Father, Son, and Spirit this is the number one commandment in all of the kingdom of God, top priority. Number, the second thing He says, this is the commandment that God calls great.

H. **First:** God's first priority and the Spirit's first emphasis in the Church is for His people to cultivate deep love for God. Without understanding that God is committed to helping us walk in this, we can be confused about His leadership in our life. His first priority in our life is that we would grow in love.

Paragraph H., this is the Holy Spirit's first emphasis in your life. You know our students, IHOPU students they come here this next week so there will be a few of them here next Friday night but the class starts, they will be here the week after fully but they are starting to come this week. I love to talk to the students and I kind of do this little thing with them. I always say it publicly so all you have to do is pay attention. I am giving, it is a pop quiz but I give them the answer before I give them the quiz.

The answer is, the most important prophetic word and direction of the Holy Spirit for your life, your highest calling is to love God with all of your heart. So I will talk to one, I will say, hey I want to pray for you about your calling. I want to prophesy to you about your calling. They get really excited, oh awesome. Often I ask them, well what is, what is your calling, your highest calling? Often they will talk about how much impact they are going to have. You know they are going to lead more people to the Lord than Billy Graham and Reinhard Bonnke combined. I love the zeal.

I go, well their highest calling is not what you are going to do, it is what you are going to be; it is what you are going to be. I show them the verse, I say, the highest calling, the very first, the one that will make you great is to love God. They go, okay we know that. Oh we thought you were going to really prophesy. I go, I just did.

People ask you know the question, what is God saying to the Church? I am in different leadership meetings over the years. I say, I know. I do a little, be a little bit weird but I mean it too. I go, I know the number one thing God is saying to the Church in the nation. The other leaders turn around and go, really. Absolutely number one, no matter what. They all look. I do it to kind of get their attention.

God called it first, there is no priority in your life more important than this in your life right now. I mean we want a breakthrough on our finances and our health and our relationships and our favor and our impact and all those things. I want all those, I want a double breakthrough when I get it. Then I want a double breakthrough again. I love those areas but beloved let me be really clear, those are not the first priority of the calling of God on my life or your life. The Lord is after something, He is after our hearts.

I. **Great:** It has the *greatest impact* on God's heart and our heart and is our *greatest calling*.

¹⁹...***whoever does and teaches them [commands], he shall be called great in the kingdom...***
(Mt. 5:19)

Paragraph I., it is the great calling. When a person sets their life in this trajectory to love God or even before they mature, this is where they are going, it has the greatest impact on God's heart of anything you do. When you love Him in secret, not that it always be secret but meaning nobody even pays attention, nobody esteems it, they ignore it. You in your heart, you are setting your heart to love Him. This has a great impact on God's heart and your heart. This is what will make you great in His sight in the age to come.

Matthew 5, Jesus says a statement that is a little unsettling to Western Christians. We do not really like this Matthew 5. When you read it in context He says, He is talking about believers in the kingdom in the age to come, that is clearly what He is talking about. He says, let Me be clear with you, among those in the family of God in the New Jerusalem in the age to come some of you will be greatest and some of you will be least. You will all be in but there will be distinctions. We do not like that. We would rather just everybody just be equal. I mean we are, you know a democratic nation, you know we vote, we are all equal. It is like, what?

Well now we are equal in our significance to God but there will be a different response and a different even experience of people of God in the age to come. He said, some of you, talking to believers, will be great and some of you will be least. You will all be in heaven. What He means by great, it does not mean other people you

will strut in front of them and say, hey dude I did better than you. It is not that kind of deal. It is the Lord declaring that the choices you made He esteemed them as great.

You can take a person, my favorite word here in Matthew 5:19 is not the word great it is the word whoever. You can take a believer, now let me exaggerate it beyond reality. Take a believer, let me think of the worst setting. He could have no friends, no gifting, no impact, nobody appreciates him, no education, no money, put ten more things on the list that really pile up and make us horrible. Everything he does everyone ignores. Nobody will even say hi back to him, has no gifts, there is no such thing as that but it is for the illustration. No gifting, no impact, no honor, nothing, lonely, painful but he seeks to love God.

The one little person in the neighborhood, about a little twelve year old boy down the street you know that he gives cookies to, he says, hey what is going on? That is the only guy that will listen to him, you know and he is talking about Jesus to him, the only person. Jesus says, if you will do this and teach, even if you have got one person listening, you do not have to have a lot you will be called great no matter what your economics, no matter what your position, no matter who paid attention, I will speak up for you in that day I promise you. I call this the great equalizer.

Jesus said, I am telling you this is the way to greatness. There is no mystery to this. I think we are going to be shocked on the last day that this is literal. Some of you are going to be shocked when you find out that God looked at your life with a value more than you understood. You somewhere in the grace of God found a contentment serving Him. Nobody made a big deal about you and there was no fanfare. Most of your service got overlooked but He saw every single cup of cold water you ever gave in His name. Some of you are going to be shocked when He describes your life decisions as great in His sight.

Some of you are going to be shocked when He looks at that guy over there that you thought was just, you know I do not know much about him. The Lord is going to say, oh I watched him closely. Nobody else paid attention to him but he sought to love Me. The two or three people he impacted nobody else would pay attention to him. He was always urging them to obey God. He says, you do not have to have a big following, you just have to use the following you have and encourage them to obey Me.

I remember one of the, I consider it the most significant day or one of the most significant days, probably the most in my life as a believer. That was many years ago, I have had a couple of really profound supernatural experiences in forty years but I consider this other experience the most significant one, I mean as a believer. I am in the kingdom some years ago, the day when the word first became real. I looked at it, it was like my eyes opened. The Lord said, this is in essence, this is what I want first out of you from you. When the word first became real and personal it changed my entire life.

I remember it vividly when I said before the Lord, Lord why, why? Because I would always tell stories of people who loved God and God used. I go, why not me? Why don't I be a person that loves You like this? I go, man I am messed up and I have got all these other things. I was a young man. I said, no why not me? Why can't I make this first? More than my impact because I mean my natural main things. I wanted a good family, a good ministry, good friends, good... I still want all of those things but there was a day, a literal day when I decided walking in the grace of God intentionally to fulfill the first commandment in my life would actually be number one over those other very legitimate important things.

I have not done it well and I have had to sign back up hundreds of times but there was a day it dawned on me that was what my life was about. A light went on and it set me on a completely different way with the Lord. Blessed is the man or the woman who when they look at these two words, great and first and it is personal to them, that is what this seal of love is all about. It will be one of the greatest days of your life.

I read a quote, I forgot who said it but it said, the two greatest days in your life are the day you are born and the day you understand why you were born. Those are the two greatest days of your life, I think is the secular poet like, I do not know who, if it was an overtly Christian. The two greatest days of your life are two most important days, the day you were born and the day you figure out why, what your purpose is. I know my number one purpose is to walk in the first commandment. Again I come up short but at least I know where I am aiming.

III. SEALED WITH FIERY LOVE (8:6-7)

A. The King invited the Bride to seek to receive His seal of fire on her *heart* and *arm* (ministry).

I encourage believers to ask Jesus to “progressively” seal their heart and arm with His fiery love.

6Set Me [Jesus] as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for [God’s] love is as strong as death, [God’s] jealousy as cruel [demanding] as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. 7Many waters [sin, pressures] cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised. (Song 8:6-7)

Well let's look at this, Roman numeral three. Let's look at the whole passage here verse 6-7. We know she is coming up out of the wilderness of history. There is a unique wilderness at the end of the age so we have already established that. The King is inviting her to seek to receive the seal of fire on her heart. This is the Lord speaking to the Church poetically.

Put Me as the seal of fire on your heart, set Me as the seal upon your heart. Because He says, I am willing but I need your cooperation. You have to invite Me, you have to participate with Me in this and it will be progressive and I will do this in your life. This is another way of saying, determine the first commandment is the top priority. It literally is first.

Again the day in your life which many of you it has already happened, when it dawns on you the word first is literal and it becomes personal and it is real to you, that I think is the most important day of your life after your day of salvation.

Verse 6, the King is speaking poetically here. Set Me as a seal upon your heart. Then He says it in a different, again set me as a seal on your arm. Your arm speaks of your labor and your ministry. For love, speaking of God's love, I am now interpreting this through a New Testament context. Love is strong as death. God's love is like jealousy, it is as, use the word cruel here. I think another word that helps us understand, it is as demanding as the grave is.

Its flames are flames of fire, the seal, the love. It is like flames of fire, it is a most vehement flame. It is powerful. There is nothing equal to its power if you yield to it continually. It is a flame that is most vehement. No power in the natural order is stronger than this fire if yielded to intentionally and consistently. It does not mean we do not fall short a number of times in the way but we sign back up. The Lord is saying, this yielding to this love, it will overpower any kind of fear, lust, bitterness, disappointment, identity crisis, you name it this love is vehement. It is more powerful.

Then He goes on and develops it more. It says, many waters cannot quench this love. Because in the natural water always puts out fire. You get enough water the fire will go out. Not this fire, this is a supernatural fire. The love poem goes, many waters, lust increasing in the culture, persecution, threats of death, credible pressures, the shaking of nations cannot put this fire out. Because again in the natural, water always puts out fire, always

except for this time. Even floods, a whole flood can be released on this flame. This flame will overpower the flood of water. This is a big statement.

Then He ends this powerful declaration, the King is making this statement. If a man, He ends up with this proverb which we will look at in a moment, if a man would give for love all the wealth of his house it would be utterly despised. What that means if a man gave for love all the wealth of his house and somebody congratulated him and says, you are so amazing, you gave it for love. He would say, there was nothing heroic in it. Because the reward of love is the ability to love. The guy would say, I despise being recognized as being honorable in some unique way. No no the power of what I did was the love itself; that is what that proverb means.

B. In July 1988 while reading Song 8:6, I began to pray, “*Jesus, seal my heart with Your fiery love.*” Bob Jones called to tell me that at that very time the Lord spoke audibly to him promising to release grace to walk in Song 8:6-7 across the Body of Christ worldwide. *This speaks of the message of God’s love, Jesus as the Bridegroom King, and the first commandment being embraced as first in the body of Christ.* (The first and second commandments are deeply connected to each other and cannot be walked out separately.) The Lord also told Bob that I was to focus on this message.

Paragraph B., I have told this story many times over the years but I love to tell it. It is 1988. So what is that? Like twenty, a long time ago, how long? Thirty years ago, almost thirty I guess, years ago I was pastoring. I was in my office, I was reading a wedding card. The wedding card had Song of Solomon 8:6, set me as a seal upon your heart, a seal of fire greater than death, etc., etc. I went, oh wow.

Suddenly, I just read it and in an instant, I had seen that verse before you know on wedding cards. I never really paid attention to it in any particular way. I just opened it and the Spirit of the Lord rested on me. Within one or two seconds my heart is tender and I have got this gentle weeping happening. I am saying, Jesus. I instantly made it spiritual. I go, Jesus seal my heart with my fiery love.

Then a few seconds later I mean I am really being touched by the Lord, I am just gently weeping. I go, put Your seal of love. I do not even know, I have never even paid attention to this verse but suddenly it is on me. About ten minutes later, a few minutes later I pick up the phone in my office at the church and to the receptionist I said, hey something really unusual is happening right now. It was about eight o'clock in the morning, nine o'clock in the morning. I go, if anybody comes by or calls do not let anybody come by. I mean, do not let anybody knock on my door. The Lord is touching me in a strange way, I do not know what is happening. The receptionist says, okay. That is the only time I have ever done that in forty years, call the receptionist and say, no matter what, even my wife no matter what, no phone calls. I have never done that. I wish I had more reasons to. I am kind of ashamed I have not had more experiences. I said it that one time.

I am there just kneeling down and the wedding card is on the floor. It is wet with my tears. I go, Jesus I want to seal my heart with Your love. I want to love You like the Father loves You. I was just talking. I just felt the Spirit. It was such a beautiful, beautiful moment. The phone rings. I pick up the phone. Hello. Like I was not really, I could not believe that they actually let someone in. Because I said, this is the most intense thing happening, I do not know, the Lord is touching me.

The receptionist said, I know you asked to have nobody but this is Bob Jones on the phone and he said he heard the audible voice of the Lord for you right now. He goes, ah I figure I better let God's word in. I mean I did not know what to do. I go, no always, that is good, that is a good call.

I am on my knees on the phone, the phone is there. I am just really subdued because of what has been happening for ten or fifteen minutes, just kind of really gone, kind of, I mean not wanting to have a conversation. I did not say anything. He goes, Mike, Bob here. Yeah. He says, I only have a moment, I heard the audible voice of the Lord. I do not say anything. The Lord spoke to me, Song of Solomon 8:6. I am looking at it, I am kneeling down.

He goes, He told me He was going to speak to you about that today. I did not even say, Bob you cannot believe it. I did not have any energy to do anything, I just. He said, the Lord told me in Song of Solomon 8:6 He is going to release, he said, I heard this audibly, He is going to release an anointing for this worldwide in the Church in the coming years sovereignly. He is going to just visit people in Asia, Africa, and all the world on this verse. I am sure many people will have different stories like my stories, many many different stories.

He is going to visit them and He is going to release this anointing in the Church before the Lord returns. I am listening. He goes, and He wants me to tell you that he wants you to stay focused on this theme all the days of your life. It is probably a sixty to ninety seconds phone call. He says, I have got to go. He hung up. I did not say anything except for when he said, hello. I go, hello. I did not even.

He said, Song of Solomon 8:6, He is going to touch the Body of Christ worldwide in anointing before the Lord returns. He wants you to focus on this the rest of your life, not only this but this would be a primary focus, bye. I did not say any words. I just began to weep and weep before the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord is resting on me. I go, Lord whatever this is, this chapter, this passage. I read it, you know I opened my Bible. I go, I do not understand it all.

It became clear to me and I have it written here in Paragraph B., that it is not the book of Song of Solomon that is my focus, it is the first commandment, it is the beauty of God, it is Jesus as the Bridegroom King. It is that reality. Song of Solomon is a great place to be inspired but it is a whole book from Genesis to Revelation about this theme.

So some people have said, you are called to Song of Solomon. I go, not exactly Song of Solomon but to the first commandment, to this passage, to this truth. I know that as a spiritual family and even as our part of the prayer movement as we are interfacing with people around the world one of our primary mandates as a spiritual family is to focus on the first commandment, living it, experiencing it, singing it, declaring it, praying it over and over and over again. I am positive. I was so excited.

A few minutes passed, you know this lifts for a while maybe an hour or two, I do not know. I get my breath. I do not even tell Bob Jones because he was on his way out of town for some time. I do not even tell him what my side of the story was. Because he left and went out of town somewhere, I cannot remember. I call my wife, I said, Diane the most amazing thing happened an hour or two ago. What? I was reading this passage, Song of Solomon 8:6. She goes, no. I read it through. She goes, oh yeah I have heard that.

I am weeping and the Lord is touching me. Bob Jones calls me and I do not say a word. He says, the Lord spoke, He is going to talk to you about this passage. I go, it is the one I am on. This is what He is going to do in our lives, way beyond our life and ministry. He is going to be doing this in the Body of Christ worldwide. People may use different terms but it will be the first commandment is the essence of it. Oh I was so excited. So I hang up and oh it is fantastic day. Then in the afternoon, I mean for God to give clarity like that to you, that kind of focus. I mean that happens once in a life. This is fantastic, so I am just so happy.

Then I decide to read the Song of Solomon because I am thinking you know I am probably going to be doing stuff with the whole book. I was horrified. You know body parts, perfume, perfume, hugging, body parts,

perfume, perfume. I went, ugh. Finally I got to Song of Solomon 8:6 the only actual verse I liked you know. I went, ugh I do not know about Song of Solomon 1-7, something, no no, I am not even doing that. I went home that night and my wife Diane she greeted me. She goes, oh, she goes, tell me about today. I go, no I have got a different story now. She goes, well you were so excited. I go, have you ever read the book? She goes, yeah it is amazing. I go, it is horrible. I go, I want nothing to do with that book. I go, I am more of a life of David, book of Romans, book of Revelation type of guy. I reminded the Lord my father was an international champion boxer and I was raised in a boxing world. I told that to the Lord. He did not change any of it. He says, just do that book, you will be happy. I did not hear Him say that but I know that, something like that. A couple of years later it all connected and I look back and I said, Lord that was the kindest thing You ever did was give me this focus on the first commandment. Even through this poetic language it touched me. I had no thought it could ever touch me. As a matter of fact I kind of had an attitude about it for a year or two. I read it with, well if You are going to make me do this, well never mind. I will not go into that.

C. Song 8:6-7 consists of a command, description, promise and encouragement. It speaks of God's people receiving grace or the Spirit's ministry to reveal and impart God's love in them.

1. **The command:** to set Jesus as a seal of fire upon our heart and arm
2. **The description:** the seal as strong or comprehensive as death
3. **The promise:** that nothing can quench this fiery seal of love if we yield to it.
4. **The encouragement:** we will have no regrets for giving so much of ourselves to God.

D. **Seal:** The seal is a *progressive* impartation of the Spirit pouring God's love in our heart (Rom. 5:5). The seal of love on our heart is our present tense relationship with the Spirit. Thus our fellowship with the Spirit is the seal, not our record of spiritual victories or failures.

5The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit... (Rom. 5:5)

13In whom, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise... (Eph. 1:13)

1. In the ancient world, kings put a seal of wax on important documents. They poured melted wax, then stamped it with the king's signet ring. The royal seal spoke of the king's ownership, protection, and guarantee that was backed up by the power of his kingdom.
2. This seal is our inheritance and destiny. We must determine that this is ours to walk in. The release of God's love on our heart and mind is the glory of the New Covenant (Heb. 10:16).

Top of page three, just a few more moments here. The seal, Paragraph D., it is not a one-time experience. I believe it is the Lord touching us in small ways and in, you know mostly baby steps but every now and then a big step but mostly little touches, little moments of inspiration over weeks and months and years. The seal is our present tense relationship with the Holy Spirit. The seal is not our record of failures and victories. The seal on my heart and your heart is not how good or how bad I have done. The seal is my interaction with a person—the Holy Spirit. He is the fire of love.

Look at Paragraph one, you know one man calls the Holy Spirit one of the books I read, the living flame of love, living flame of love, it is a title for the Holy Spirit. I think it was St. John of the cross if I remember right, I read it years ago. The seal is a person, we are sealed by a person. Again it is not like He touches us and moves on is that it is the interaction with Him and the seal grows and grows. It is a poetic term, it is a poetic concept. I have got a little bit more on that in the notes there.

E. **Set Me:** To set Jesus on our heart is to intentionally ask Him to strengthen us by His Spirit until the influences of His love are *progressively* imparted more to our mind, emotions, and ministry.

1. By the very definition of love, we must invite Him. He will not force us into a relationship of voluntary love. He waits until we invite Him in the matters of our heart.
2. Paul referred to this as putting on the Lord Jesus or putting on the new man.

¹⁴Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh... (Rom. 13:14)

¹⁰...put on the new man...¹⁴Above all...put on love, which is the bond of perfection. (Col. 3:10-14)

Paragraph E., Jesus the King poetically saying, set Me, be intentional, call Me into your life. He goes, I will come. I will come in the way the Word of God describes. I am going to insist that you call Me, you beckon Me into your, into interaction with you day by day. You make it your determined goal to grow in this love. This love will grow and increase the revelation of God's love to you but the impartation of it through you back to God and then the overflow to other people.

Paragraph two under E., Paul the apostle referred to this idea, Romans 13:14, put on the Lord Jesus. Song of Solomon it is the Lord saying, put Me on. In other words, interact with Me.

F. We put Jesus as the seal on our heart by seeking Him earnestly in various ways including prayer, fasting, meditation on the Word, and obedience—these activities, when done in faith and with confidence in grace, *position our heart* before God to freely receive more of the Spirit's work in us.

Paragraph F., is probably my, it is very simple and we already know but it is the most practical application of how do we put Jesus on. How do we put Him as the seal in our heart? Well we seek Him, it is that, it is that intentional interaction. The interaction itself often is not very dynamic. Often it is this kind of routine and every now and then there is a moment of inspiration. Every now and then, it is very rare, there is a far more dynamic moment.

Most of the moments are kind of, they are not, I find my interaction with the Lord often I have given the analogy it is like vitamins. It is like doing exercise. Meaning I have taken vitamins for years, there is Monday June 10th was the day the vitamins took. I have been taking vitamins for thirty years, okay because my wife makes me. I admit it. I would not take them on my own accord but anyway. I do exercises, you know whatever. There is not a day where it all takes, it is over months and months. It is little installments all the time. It is our prayer, I love to say the way that you walk in the spirit is by talking to the Spirit. If you want to walk in the spirit just talk to the Spirit. The measure of your walking in the spirit it is just that simple conversation when you are just coming and going. You are just talking to the indwelling Spirit. That is the absolute key to walking in the spirit, just talk to Him, just keep the conversation going. I do not mean all day everyday but just

intermittently through the day in little ten, twenty, thirty second little interactions, little sound bites back and forth, that is how you put the seal on you cultivating that kind of interaction. Sometimes you do not do it as much as you do other times and then you do it more other times.

When we seek Him in these simple routine seemingly weak ways, prayer, fasting, meditation of the Word, obedience in small things when these activities are done in faith and they are done with confidence in grace and that is critical. Because a lot of times we will pray and fast and obey and we are bargaining with the Lord. If You will forgive me one more time I will go on a long fast. He goes, no throw that out, no. Interact with Me with confidence in the grace of God. Interact with Me in faith that I am according to who I said I am and My kindness towards you in the grace of God, in the power of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

By doing this we position our heart before Him. I like to call it like putting our cold heart before a bonfire. You put a cold heart in front of the bonfire that bonfire will tenderize the heart over time. It is not one moment, it is not a microwave but over time our hearts get tenderized.

G. These activities do not earn us God's favor. We put our cold heart before the bonfire of God's presence by seeking Him in the Word. It is related to the time we feed our spirit on His Word.

H. Prayer and fasting are not our seal. The power of God tenderizes and changes us, not spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines *only position us* to receive. They do not earn us God's power.

Paragraph H., prayer and fasting are not the seal. The presence of God, the power of God, the person of the Holy Spirit He is the seal. He tenderizes us. Spiritual disciplines do not tenderize me, spiritual disciplines put my cold heart in front of a bonfire. The bonfire tenderizes me; that is the person of the Holy Spirit, talking to Him. Again it is just an analogy I use. Some people put their confidence in the discipline. The discipline does not change the heart, the fire, the person does that you are talking to.

I. ***Strong as death***: God's love in us is as strong or comprehensive as death.

1. Death claims everything in the natural realm. *Its grasp is comprehensive.*
2. God's love will not allow any areas of darkness to escape its grasp.

Paragraph I., the poem says, this love is as strong as death. What does that mean? Well death claims everything, everything that is alive dies by the laws of nature. What this poem means is it, it is as comprehensive as death. Meaning whatever fear, whatever lust, whatever bitterness, whatever disappointment, whatever area that we are wrestling with, whatever area that we are tempted to compromise in this poem is saying, there is a love that is so comprehensive it will demand, it will demand we yield every area to Him. It is as comprehensive as death, it does not let anything out of its grasp this love. It is a jealous love.

What is everything? It is a love that like death does not let anything escape. He says, I want your attitudes, I want your money, I want your time, I want the way you process your disappointment. I want it all brought under My leadership.

J. ***Jealousy***: God is a consuming fire with jealous love that *demand*s everything just as the grave does. The Lord jealously wants all of our heart—because He loves us so perfectly. We pray, “Lord, we want more of You.” Then Jesus responds to us saying, “I want more of you.”

¹⁴*For the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God... (Ex. 34:14)*

K. **Cruel as the grave:** God's jealous love is "cruel" or as demanding as the grave. In other words, God's jealous love will not allow any areas of brokenness in our lives to escape its grasp. God's love poured out in our hearts will conquer every area of sin that we continually yield to Him.

⁵*Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? (Jas. 4:5)*

Top of page four if you would, Paragraph K. Jealousy is as cruel as the grave. It is saying the same thing. The grave demands everything. He is saying the same point about strong as death, just saying it a different way for emphasis.

L. **Its flames:** Its flames of fire are a most vehement or powerful flame. The anointing to love God is the most powerful gift that the Spirit imparts to a believer's heart—"a baptism of fiery love." The 120 believers in the upper room received a token of the baptism of God's fiery love (Acts 2:3).

¹⁶*He [Jesus] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Lk. 3:16)*

³*There appeared to them...tongues, as of fire, and sat upon each of them. (Acts 2:3)*

Paragraph L., its flames, its flames are powerful. These flames are more powerful than pornography, more powerful than disappointment, more powerful than loneliness. The flames and the little flashes of flames this just use that, let's just tear this apart for a moment. Little moments of inspiration, not just the bonfire all at one time but you might have an experience or two over the years that is really dramatic. Mostly it is little flashes, just little moments of inspiration but over time nothing can overpower this fire is the idea.

I mean we look at the book of Acts and these fearful men. They were, they all fled in fear the Apostles. Then the fire comes on them in the upper room. They are bold and confident and joyful not afraid of death at all. The fire, the presence transform them. What this verse is saying, there is no lust, there is no fear, there is no disappointment, there is no loneliness, there is not a certain way in life that is more powerful than this flame when this flame is yielded to consistently. It may take a while.

M. **Many Waters:** God's seal is compared to a flame of divine fire that cannot be quenched by the waters of sin, pressure, or persecution. Water puts out fire unless it is God's supernatural fire.

⁷*Many waters [sin or pressures] cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised. (Song 8:6-7)*

1. The enemy sends the waters of temptation, disappointment, or pain to put this fire out. God's love, when yielded to continually, is more powerful than the floods of temptation. This fire is stronger than floods of bitterness, addiction, anger, immorality, etc.
2. A flood speaks of great troubles, including end-time persecutions (Rev. 12:15; Isa. 43:1-2).

²*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you... (Isa. 43:2)*

Paragraph M., many waters cannot put this fire out. Like I said, water always puts fire out but not this fire, not this fire. There is a great flood. Look at Paragraph two under M., there is a great flood at the end of the age. That flood will not put out the fire of the end-time Church to walk in love.

IV. THE REWARD OF LOVE (8:7)

A. The highest reward of true love is found in possessing the ability to love more. The anointing to receive and express God's love is our greatest reward. Those who are wealthy in love do not look at price tags. In other words, there is no sacrifice that is comparable to what Jesus gives us in His love.

7If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised. (Song 8:7)

Roman numeral four, it has come to the end here. Here is the proverb, if a man would give for love all the wealth of his house it would be utterly despised. In other words the recognition that what he did was noble, he would say, no. The highest reward of love is found in possessing the ability to love. The reward of love is love. To interact with Him with all of our heart, we will stand before Him on the last day, those of you that have thrown your life into it in our weakness, in our brokenness but you threw yourself into the relationship. Some would say, you were amazing. You will say, no no. For Him, the Man who became Man and then bore the wrath of God and then rose to the right hand of God and wanted me at His side forever? That was somehow noble? I gave everything to Him? Are you kidding me? He gave everything to me, do not tell me about my nobility. That does not mean every time somebody gives you a compliment you have got to like rebuke them; that is not the point.

The point is the person who gets it does not have a secret aspiration to be noticed in their devotion. Because being noticed in the devotion is not the reward when the love is real. Those who are wealthy in love they do not look at price tags. You know those guys, the billionaire people, I said, when they walk in the store they do not look at price tags. They go, give me that rack, give me that rack. I have been informed many times, billionaires do not walk in stores. I go, I know, let my analogy hold up. Wealthy people do not look at price tags. Well that shirt is 100 dollars, that was 110, let me think about it. They do not, they do not care.

People that are captured by the vision of love and the reality of love they are not worried, they are not thinking about, well if I really give my time I am going to lose my real earning years, these are my promotion years. I do not know if it is worth it because my thirties and forties that is when I really establish who I am going to be. The Lord told me to do this. They do not even care.

I believe in the book of Proverbs and wise choices in your life. I mean when you are captured by love and God tells you to do something contrary to the natural laws of promotion because the Word of God was clear it does not matter when our hearts are captured in love, it does not matter. That is what this is talking about.

You know the analogy I have used over the years is you know the man and the woman they find out that their little girl has a terminal sickness. It is a made up story so do not cry and ask how she is doing. The doctors said, we can save her life but it is going to cost all of this: a million of dollars. They had to sell their house, empty all their bank accounts, whatever, whatever, whatever. They sell, they gave, they did it all. The girl lived. Someone comes up to the man and the mom and dad and says, you are amazing parents, you gave everything for your little girl. They would say, what are you talking about amazing parents? This is our girl, we would give it all again. We utterly despise the idea that that is something noble, this is our girl. We would give it all again for her. Are you kidding?

B. Paul described love for Jesus that will pay any price to know Him more. Paul laid down his status, prestige, honor, and even open doors of opportunity in his pursuit of experiencing more of Christ.

8I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ...for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ... (Phil. 3:8)

Well this is how Paul the apostle felt. This is how Paul the apostle felt in Philippians 3. This is the exact application, I mean this is a really excellent application of this proverb. Paul says, I suffer the loss of everything, I do not care. He is worthy not just because He is glorious at a distant because, He is glorious at a distance but He loves me and He wants me. He gave everything for me. Paul says, are you kidding me? I would give up everything, it is rubbish. Do not tell me that I am some amazing noble person. I gave a career that would gain me nothing in eternity to interface with a Man who gave me everything and I have no regrets. Beloved we can live with no regrets by giving all to Him.

C. You are the only one who can give God all of your love. God will not force us to love Him. It is our gift to Him that we voluntarily give Him our love as we cooperate with the Spirit's work in our life.

D. Anybody can quit, except a person in love. When we are tempted to quit, the obstacle in our path is that we love God. God is raising up a people who will not quit.

You know I am going to end here with Paragraph D. Anybody can quit pursuing God. Anybody can quit except for a person in love. When a person in love is tempted to quit they have got this giant obstacle, but I love God, I cannot. I do not mean deny the faith but not pressing in in the same way. I have watched over the years a lot of people seek God hard and I mean they believe God for revival and breakthrough and the great things in their life for five or ten years. The next twenty years there is not a trace of it in their life. Well the revival did not come, I did not get real anointed, oh who...

Beloved regardless when the revival outwardly comes we have the ability to grow in the first commandment regardless what happens on the national front. We could be growing in the first commandment while we are contending for the breakthrough in the nation and the nations.

I have seen many of them over the years go hard for five or ten years and then nay I do not know, I am not really into that any more. I am just kind of settled down and do a lot more recreation and a lot more, a lot more of that. You know there is a whole lot of effort that did not get me anywhere. What? What do you mean? Why did you do the effort for? Well I was hoping for revival and I would get real anointed and then my life would happy and then it would be really amazing. No there is a bigger storyline. It is Him and His glory.

If you are never known and no one ever pays attention but you grow in love and you are a part of His story you will never regret giving everything to Him, never. Anybody can quit. I am talking about a believer can draw back and kick into that coasting mode is what I mean by quitting. Quitting the hot pursuit except if they have love and that is an obstacle. When I get weary and I have moments of discouragement I go, Lord I just want to, like some of those guys, just coast. I go, but I cannot, I love You. Okay okay rise up, pay attention. I am weak and broken, He is amazing and beautiful, He is glorious. I have got nothing, He has got everything. He wants me, I am grateful. Forget all that self-pity, I am back in the game.

Let's stand before the Lord. I want to pray for people to be resolved. First thing the first commandment, tonight you are going to re-sign up that the first commandment is going to be the number one life pursuit, more than

your ministry, your business, your impact, your favor. I am going after this. You are going after those other things too, but you are going to make them second on purpose intentionally.

Number two, those that are saying, I want to determine never to quit, I mean the hot pursuit of God, never. It may look different in different season but I am never drawing back, never never, I love Him too much. I do not care what my role is, I do not care if they treat me right I am never ever drawing back. I am pressing into God. If that is you, one of those two which are nearly the same thing and you would like prayer you just say, I just want to stand before God and declare it I want to invite you to come forward.

Again you can do this in your chair, you do not have to come up for it but if you would like prayer I want to make the first commandment first. I want to re-sign up again tonight. Here we are Lord, my heart is Yours Jesus. I am not quitting, I am not drawing back. I do not care how mundane it is. I do not care how they treat me. I love You Jesus, I am going for You all the way.

Holy Spirit we invite You to be a seal of fire on the heart tonight. Holy Spirit I just invite a gentle moving on the heart. I invite the ministry team to come down if you would. Any in leadership anywhere in the missions base or FCF, the spiritual family. Here I am Lord, again and again I will set You on my heart. I sign up again Lord. Release Your fire right now. Holy Spirit be the flame.