

Longing for Christ's Coming

Song of Solomon 8:13-14; Revelation 22:17

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How you react to times in which you are separated from your husband or wife reveals much about the depth of your love for one another. If a separation for a few weeks is treated with indifference and the heart does not yearn to be reunited, how can such a lukewarm reaction reveal a deep affection? If, however, such a separation of husband and wife only increases the longing and desire to be in the arms of one another, does that not reveal a depth of love and affection? What is true of your earthly marriage is especially true of your heavenly marriage to the Lord Jesus. Do you hunger and thirst to be with Jesus or do you seldom even think about it? Do you care? True love cares.

A test that the Lord has given to evaluate our love for Jesus is whether we long to see Him face to face and to enjoy uninterrupted communion with Him forever in heaven (2 Timothy 4:8). It is the love of this world that will hinder you from longing to be with Jesus. When your heart and affections are firmly fixed upon this world, why would you want to leave it to be with Jesus (Matthew 6:21)? Are you grasping so tightly to this world that Christ's coming (whether His coming for you at death or at His Second Coming) hardly affects your love and obedience to Him?

As we conclude our study of the Song of Solomon, let us focus our attention upon these two truths from our text: (1) Jesus Longs to Hear the Voice of His Beloved Bride (Song 8:13); (2) The Bride Longs to Be with Her Beloved Savior (Song 8:14).

I. **Jesus Longs to Hear the Voice of His Beloved Bride (Song 8:13).**

A. The elect bride of the Lord Jesus had declared in Song 8:10 that she was a wall in Christ's palace, built upon the immovable foundation of Jesus Christ and His gospel of salvation. She was united to Christ by faith alone—united to Christ in His sacrificial death for her and united to Christ in His powerful resurrection for her. We saw last Lord's Day that an evidence that the one is united to Christ by faith is his/her diligence in caring for and tending the vineyard that the Lord has given to him/her (both ministers in Song 8:11 and believers in Song 8:12). Those who have no care to bring forth fruit from their vineyard for the Lord Jesus neither evidence that they are united to Christ nor that they are communing with Him. Now, as we conclude this beautiful Love Song between Jesus and His elect Church, we see that there is one other evidence that the bride is a wall united to and communing with Jesus: Jesus and His bride love each other and long to be in the arms of one another for all eternity.

B. These are the words of Jesus to His bride (Song 8:13). The speaker is not in doubt, for the one addressed as dwelling in the gardens has a feminine singular ending attached to the participle. Thus, it is Jesus who speaks here to His elect bride before they part for a season.

1. Jesus identifies His bride as, **"Thou that dwellest in the gardens" (Song 8:13).**

a. Here the elect bride of Christ is not said to take up her habitation in this wilderness of the world (she is just passing through this wilderness, Song 8:5). This world is a wilderness of trial, temptation, sin, and suffering. As Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years before entering the Promise Land, so believers are passing through this great wilderness before we cross over the Jordan of death and into that heavenly Promise Land. This world is not our home. We are pilgrims. Why would we want to live in this wilderness of death, where all is passing away, when we have the hope of a heavenly Promise Land, where there is no sin, temptation, death, or tears, but everlasting joy in serving and communing with Jesus and all His people? Dear ones, the more we cling to this world, the more we are grasping to that which is

perishing in a hot, dry desert. The world, the flesh, and the devil have deceived us. Why would you want that which is perishing over that which will never perish?

b. The elect bride is a dweller in the gardens. As was noted earlier in this Love Song (Song 6:2), these gardens signify particular congregations where Jesus comes to smell the fragrance of His grace and to enjoy the fruit brought to Him in His appointed ordinances (reading and preaching of His Word, prayer, singing of Psalms with grace in the heart, sacraments, and benediction). The ordinances are described as the kisses of Jesus to His beloved bride (Song 1:2). Worship is a love feast between Jesus and His elect. If you simply come and sit and do not feast with Him in His kisses of love, you are not really a dweller who delights to be in Christ's gardens (Psalm 84:10). Jesus is here! Enjoy His kisses.

2. **"The companions hearken to thy voice" (Song 8:13).**

a. These companions of the elect bride are the daughters of Jerusalem—the Visible Church, in which are both tares and wheat (Song 8:4).

b. These daughters of Jerusalem were astonished at the beauty of Christ's elect bride, especially when she had just come out of the wilderness (Song 8:5). She had not been dried up spiritually, but had actually grown in her beauty because she was leaning upon Christ. This is the only way that the wilderness of this world will not scorch you or destroy you. You must daily lean upon Jesus and His Word. You must daily commune with Him. His Word, prayer, sacraments, and appointed ordinances are your beauty treatment. When you fail to use them, you dry up in this scorching wilderness of trials, heartaches, temptation, and sin. When you use them faithfully, His life, love, joy, and peace beautify your words and deeds. That is why the companions hearken to her voice—the life and beauty of Christ's grace amazes her companions.

c. We truly listen to one another when we see God's grace working effectually in one another's lives. Where there are observable contradictions in our lives, brethren will not hearken to us. It is not our mere profession of Christ's love and truth that are attractive, but the adorning and practicing of His love and truth. It is not temper tantrums or name calling that will cause us to be heard, but the beauty of Christ (children, parents, husbands, wives, fellow brethren).

3. **"Cause me to hear it" (Song 8:13).**

a. Here the Lord Jesus concludes His final words to His beloved bride, not by cautioning her to call upon Him infrequently as if He might grow weary of hearing her voice, not by telling her to only come when she is spiritually flying high, but here is Christ's command (not suggestion), "Cause me to hear it." Jesus delights to hear your voice in coming to Him (whether you are weeping, or whether you are rejoicing).

b. A beloved husband and wife do not only want to hear good news in phone calls to one another when they are apart. No, they want to hear that loved one's voice (the pains and sorrows as well as the blessings and joys). The Lord Jesus also wants to hear your voice in all of His beautiful ordinances (both privately and publicly). Don't you be the one to determine when Jesus wants to hear your voice (don't listen to the enemy who wants you to believe Jesus does not want to hear your voice). Let Him be the one to tell you when He wants to hear your voice.

II. **The Bride Longs to Be with Her Beloved Savior (Song 8:14).**

A. Here are the final loving words of the bride to the Lord Jesus.

1. **"Make haste, my beloved" (Song 8:14).**

a. "Don't delay long, but come soon. Flee to me. Come quickly." Do you hear in these words an expression of one who is content for her beloved to take His time because it doesn't matter to her when He returns? Far from it! This is the expression of a bride who has a love-filled longing and urgency for the Lord Jesus to come as soon as He can.

b. There are different ways in which the Lord Jesus comes to us. And in each way, we should have the same fervency of love that He would hasten His coming.

1. His spiritual coming to us in private and public communion (Revelation 3:20).

2. His spiritual coming in judgment upon His enemies and in deliverance of His people who suffer under the persecution of the wicked (Psalm 40:13-14; Psalm 68:1; Luke 16:22—deliverance by death).

3. His spiritual coming to destroy the antichristian civil beast of Revelation and the false prophet of the Church of Rome before the millennium (Revelation 19:11ff).

4. His bodily Second Coming to raise the dead, judge the world in righteousness, and usher in the New Heaven and the New Earth (Hebrews 9:28).

c. Although the Lord will come in all these ways at His appointed time, the bride's words display how much she longs to be with her Savior. It is the expression of a love that can hardly wait to be with her beloved. How did Jesus become "my beloved"? That is the language of possession and affection. It is the language of faith—taking Him and His marital covenant (Covenant of Grace) as her very own as offered to her in the gospel. He is not simply the beloved in a general way, or the beloved of others, but He is "my beloved". There are many names and titles by which Jesus identifies Himself in Scripture, but there is not a more personal, precious, affectionate name than this: "my beloved". Is Jesus your beloved? If He is not your beloved, you will fear death and you will tremble in slavish fear at the thought of His Second Coming; for He will not be coming for your salvation but for your everlasting condemnation in hell. Are you ashamed to call Him "my beloved" or for others to know He is your beloved, or is "my beloved" such an amazing title to you that you delight to call Him "my beloved" in prayer?

2. **"And be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spice" (Song 8:14).**

a. Mountains many times in Scripture signify kingdoms (Isaiah 2:2). Mountains of spices refer to the different aspects of Christ's gracious Kingdom (all secured for His beloved bride by the beauty of His suffering, death, and resurrection)—**the Kingdom of Grace** (which Jesus now leaps like a deer in coming to redeem His people through His death in order to save us and commune with us—privately at home and publicly each Lord's Day); and **the Kingdom of Glory** (which will be fully realized when Jesus comes leaping like a deer to establish a New Heaven and a New Earth wherein will dwell perfect love, joy, peace, and communion with Jesus forever.

b. Dear ones, there are two that are battling for your wholehearted love and affections—the world and Jesus. You cannot serve two masters. You cannot have two lovers. To love, follow, and serve the world (relationships and possessions) is to make yourself the enemy of God (James 4:4). When you love the Lord Jesus, James 4:4 will hit you between the eyes and will send you to your knees to fall upon His mercy and love. When you don't love Jesus, you will not care.

B. Do you long to be set free from the pain and sorrow of this world—to enjoy a glorified body? Do you pray that Jesus will come and remove all temptation and sin from this world? Do you earnestly desire to see righteousness forever established and all the enemies of God removed and judged forever? And do you hunger and thirst to have unending communion with the Lord Jesus (which will be the chief joy of all the saints in heaven)? Then you cannot be apathetic about Christ's coming. You must yearn for it; for Jesus comes for those who love His appearing. Do you love the coming of Jesus Christ? That is one of the loudest and most clear evidences of saving faith in the life of the believer (Revelation 22:17).

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