

**Song of Solomon 1: 4; "Draw me; We will run after You", Sermon # 4 in
the series - "I am my Beloved's", Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall
on May 17th, 2009, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

How good our God is, to bring us out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of His dear Son! How good He is to give us the power to become His children! How good He is to draw us away from the allurements of the world and to bring us into a kingdom and a spiritual relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ which perfectly satisfies our souls if we will pursue Him with all of our heart. He is the One who personally comes to our soul and draws our heart closer to His. This is what many portions of this blessed book are describing. And having read it; a Christian comes to know that their being drawn to Christ is something which is absolutely essential if he or she is to be saved from their many sins, if they are to be cleansed from their many spots; if they are to escape the corruptions of the world and not fall back into them. Let us ask ourselves this afternoon if we see ourselves in this light? Have you really come to realize as a believer in Jesus Christ that unless your soul is in love with Christ and enamored with His beauty and glory, that you will most certainly fall victim to the great pull of the world, to be conformed to it? You might fall so far as to act no differently from the millions of worldly people around you who are perishing for lack of knowledge. Do you realize more and more, as a believer, that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh so that you will not do what you please? Have you so overcome the world that you are crucified to it? Have you so overcome your flesh that you are daily crucifying its lusts? Do you realize that there are many points in time where the arch-enemy of your soul lies in wait for you to snare your soul with temptations and is looking to ruin all your present and future usefulness and fruitfulness to Christ with his schemes? Have you overcome him? These are the battles and struggles of the Christian life. But you and I who believe in Jesus Christ also need to come to understand experientially that we have a spiritual husband who watches over us and bids us pray to Him as our Savior, our Lord, and our King; that we may know the reality of His presence and power and love in our lives. This afternoon we want to look first at the earnest Petition of the Bride. Then, secondly, we want to look at the sincere Promise of the Bride. Then next week we will look at the wonderful Privilege which was extended to the Bride - being brought into the King's chambers.

1st of all - The earnest Petition of the Bride.

"Draw me away!" Or, "Draw me after you!" The Christian life, from beginning to completion, is a continual series of drawings which bring the believer closer to Christ. When we come to Christ we are drawn by God to see Him as a suitable Savior. and a glorious Lord, and a precious friend. Each of the 3 persons of the Godhead are involved in the drawing which initially brings us to Christ. Let's look at the Father first. Turn with me to John Chapter 6, verse 32. Jesus has just fed

the five thousand men, as well as the other 5,000 or so women and children who were following Him on that day. And He is showing them that this miracle that He has done is meant to point them to Himself as the Bread of Life. If they partake of Him they will have eternal life. He says, "Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.'" "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." "Then they said to Him, 'Lord, give us this bread always.'" "And Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life.' "He who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst." "But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe." "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out." "The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, 'I am the bread which came down from heaven.'" "And they said, 'Is not this Jesus , the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?'" "How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven?'" "Jesus therefore answered and said to them, 'Do not murmur among yourselves.'" "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day." Here we have the truth. People are so wedded to their own sins and lusts; they lean so much to their own understanding, that they will not come to Christ without a supernatural drawing; the Father putting forth His almighty hand in power so that a person gradually or suddenly begins to take an interest in Christ. He begins to think of Himself as a sinner. Before this, when someone would try to tell him that he was a sinner, he didn't believe it. He thought himself or herself, a pretty good person. They were a person who could get through life without Christ and when it came time to die; God would not forbid their entrance into heaven. Taking Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, as their righteousness, did not seem to be necessary for them. They resisted the idea of conversion very firmly because they did not believe that anything needed to change in their heart or life. That is what was happening with the people here in this passage in John 6. Jesus is speaking to them spiritual words, but they are blind to their true meaning. They stumbled over His words. How could they literally eat Jesus' flesh and drink His blood? In verse 60 they say, "Therefore many of His disciples when they heard this, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can understand it?'" It says, "When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, 'Does this offend you?'" "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?" "It is the Spirit who give life; the flesh profits nothing." "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." "But there are some of you who do not believe." "For Jesus knew form the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him." "And He said, 'Therefore, I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.'" To be drawn by the Father is to receive the gift of faith so that you are enabled to believe the spiritual words which will give you eternal life. There is nothing wrong with praying, "Father draw me to Christ," if you have not as yet come to know the Lord. You may know the

reality of this drawing of the Father, and you cannot make Him draw you Christ, but you must be drawn. If you feel cold and indifferent to the claims of Christ upon your heart and life; it is never wrong to pray, "Draw me, dear Father to your blessed Son." If you do pray this way, then you should know that the Father has already been at work in your life, drawing you to consider how great is Christ's ability and power to save; and how needy a sinner you are. Then the gospel comes which power to your soul. The reality of the Father's drawing is at work. Christ Himself is at work drawing you to Himself. He said in John 12, verse 32, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." The word "peoples" is not in the original. It should read, I will draw all, or all men, unto myself. He means all the Elect; those who will trust in Him for eternal life, all those who have been drawn by the Father to consider how necessary it is to believe in and receive Christ.

But this passage is talking about more than just the initial drawing which must take place if we are to find the forgiveness of our sins and eternal life. It is speaking even more about living the Christian life in close and intimate spiritual communion with Christ, so that we will live our lives to His glory. Those who already know Christ need often to be drawn closer to Him in their communion with Him. They are indeed in union with Him and this union can never be dissolved. They can never be separated from His love or cease to know His favor and grace. But it very possible for the Christian not to understand that their love for Christ is supposed to grow; that our Lord should be able to see our love in evidence in the way that we live our Christian life. In the early part of our Christian life, most of us as Christians whether our faith is strong or weak, are very often praying this kind of a prayer to Christ: "Draw me away!" This is because we are now conscious of the reality of His grace at work in our souls, and we are enamored with His great love wherewith He has loved us so much as to open our eyes and save our souls. The idea that we are married to such a glorious King and He takes such a personal interest in our soul's growth, well-being, and welfare, excites our devotion to Him. But then as time passes, and we come to realize that for devotion to flourish and for love to be maintained and flourish, that we must pray and seek for these blessings daily. And then sometimes we do not pursue our love relationship with Christ as we should. And sometimes, even worse, we become cold and cynical towards our being able to live a consistent, interactive, devotional life with our Lord. We simply leave off pursuing this tremendously important part of our Christian life. But let us understand that it doesn't take long private and personal devotions every day to do this. It simply takes conversational prayer to Christ in your heart and the faith to believe that you and your Lord are able to interact over everything that is going on in your heart and your mind that you are aware of. "Draw me away!" It will require abiding in the word of God as well. How good it is to hide in your heart and to review in your mind, realizing that your Lord is reviewing your thoughts by His Holy Spirit. Your spiritual life cannot be stimulated to grow if you never meditate upon the word of God. But

look at it in this light. When you take one verse and meditate upon it; thinking about the phrases in it; pondering what the Lord would do with it in your own life first; then thinking about the possibilities of what the Lord might do with it in the lives of others; pray, "Lord draw me away!" Draw me away from the world's shallow conception of what a Christian is like. "Lord draw me away from shallowness, and carelessness, and fear, and laziness, and give me joy in living this Christian life with You by my side. Remember His great love for you and why He died. He died so that you might live and know the reality of His great love for you. "Oh the deep, deep, love of Jesus, vast unmeasured, boundless free." "Rolling as a mighty ocean, over me." "Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus, love of every love the best: 'Tis an ocean vast of blessing, 'Tis a haven sweet of rest." "Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus!" 'Tis a heaven of heavens to me; and it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to Thee!" His love can do that without ending your life here and taking you to Himself. His love can lift you up even now as you pray, "Draw me away!".

Then 2ndly - Let us look at the sincere promise which the Bride made.

"Draw me away!" "We will run after you." If Christ is drawing us to follow after Him, then we ought to be running to keep up with where He is leading us. He is leading us on to holiness, to pursue peace with all men, and to be fit to enter heaven. Our regular path of obedience is a walk upon the path of righteousness which He leads us upon for His own name's sake. All is done for His glory. But running with Christ denotes an exercise of all of the members of our body and soul to pursue righteousness and holiness. In this we are eager to follow Him and will exert ourselves to the utmost to follow after Him as quickly as possible; to be a quick learner and a good learner. A good example of this is found in Psalm 119, verse 32 if you would turn with me there. "I will run the course (or the way) of Your commandments, for You shall enlarge my heart." The Lord has enlarged your heart in drawing you unto Himself in the effectual call. He has set you free from your bondage to sin and death. Now you can run, and you ought to run in the way of His commandments. He further enlarges your heart by giving you the Holy Spirit who works upon your affections by His marvelous power, applying the grace of Christ to your heart so that His love is poured out within your heart. You now love the brethren and indeed you study to love all men. Since you have come to know the love of Christ, you also have had your heart enlarged to run in the way of His commandments. There is a race that you are in as a believer and that is to see how much that you can do for Christ in the time that God has allotted for you here upon the earth. This requires discipline and the exercised of our faith. Let's look at the discipline of running first. Turn with me to 1 Corinthians 9, verse 24. "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize?" "Run in such a way that you may obtain it." "And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things." "Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown." "Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty." "Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air." "But I discipline my body and bring it

into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." The thing that Paul is saying is that when we promise to run, we are running to obtain the prize of being like Christ. That; when we exercise our faith and all the graces that are given to us, that we see to it that we lead a disciplined life. Runners train for their races by watching what they eat, what they drink, what they do with their bodies. Their moderation is known to all. Their body and all of its passions is something to be disciplined and brought into subjection. The same thing is true Paul is saying, with regard to our running spiritually. Christ is drawing us to live a disciplined godly life. He is not calling us to run with the world. He expects us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil age. That is the race. But it is not a selfish race; it doesn't lead to isolating ourselves from the world or from people. It is a race run with others who believe. Every believer is trying to win the prize of the "well done, thou good and faithful servant."

The reason that the pronouns change in this verse that we are studying in Song of Solomon chapter 1, verse 4; the reason that they change from "me" to "we" is because the individual believer when they say, "Draw me", wants to personally know and experience the Lord's power and presence and love at work in their heart and life, but they want their obedience to be in conjunction with the Church, in union with those who are of one mind and one purpose in doing the Lord's will. "We will run after you." This is confirmed by Hebrews 12, verses 1 and 2. "Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of God." As we run the race, we look unto Jesus. He has drawn us to run this race and our eyes are upon Him because becoming like Him in righteousness and to show others His love is the goal toward which we are running. "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and a sincere faith." (1 Timothy 1: 5 , NAS) Ask yourself this afternoon if you are running this race of becoming holy; of becoming more and more conformed to the image of Christ? Is your love increasing? Are you joyful and cheerful in your faith, even when going through things which would make a person of the world cynical and bitter? Is your life becoming more disciplined for godliness or is your obedience to His commands irregular and inconsistent. You can only live this way if Christ is drawing you. When He is drawing He gives a very great and powerful grace to break free from all that is weighing you down. As we close, let us think of those wonderful verses in Psalm 110, verses 2 and 3: "The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion." "Rule in the midst of Your enemies!" "Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, you have the dew of Your youth." We pray, as we run the race, that the dew of Christ's powerful grace which enabled Him to run the race and obtain our

salvation, would be sprinkled and poured out upon our lives so that we will run in a way that will obtain the prize.