

Do You Yearn for Christ's Kisses?

Song of Solomon 1:2; 1 John 4:19

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The Lord Jesus does not call you as Christians to be robots in your service and obedience to Him—as if without any desire or love you simply obey. God did not create you to be computers where certain commands are simply typed on to your screen (“Do this” or “Don’t do that), and then the function is immediately followed without any emotion, affection, or passion—just compliance. The Lord Jesus has redeemed you to love what He loves and to hate what He hates (not to be neutral, not to be indifferent, not to be lukewarm when it comes to your relationship with your Heavenly Husband).

You, children, will many times simply obey your parents because they commanded you to do so, not because you desire to please them. You, husbands and wives, will often do what you do in your marriage because you are obligated to do so, and not because you have an earnest desire to please and bring joy to your spouse. This same attitude then gets transferred into your relationship with the Lord Jesus—it’s merely a relationship of obligation and duty, but there is no earnest desire to delight in pleasing the Lord by your service and obedience. Like Martha you know your obligations to serve Jesus, but unlike Mary you do not take time to delight in the Lord. This is what happened to the Church of Ephesus—it did what was right, but in doing so, it did not delight in the Lord for it had left its first love (Revelation 2:2-4).

Let me clarify something for you on this point. You should never wait to do what God commands you to do until you feel like doing it. God’s authority is supreme. However, if you do not move beyond God’s supreme authority in your obedience, you will be missing that holy desire of love in your obedience (which is the great commandment). You should cry out to the Lord to stir up within you that holy desire and love to delight in pleasing Him for who He is and for all that He sacrificed in love to make you rich in Him. Dear ones, you should obey the Lord out of duty, but if you stop there, your obedience will become a burden. You should obey the Lord out of duty, but that duty should also be swallowed up in the love of Jesus Christ for you and your love for Him (1 John 5:3). Just as a marriage without love becomes a mere formal relationship and one that is simply going through the motions in doing what you have to do because God has commanded it, so the same will be true in your spiritual union with Jesus Christ. There may be a spiritual union by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, but there will be little communion enjoyed if you do not daily live in the ocean of His love for you and your love for Him.

Let us today explore the holy desires of love that we should crave and for which we should hunger and thirst as those redeemed by the love of Jesus. The main points are the following: (1) The Desire for Christ’s Love (Song 1:2a); (2) The Satisfaction of Christ’s Love (Song 1:2b).

I. The Desire for Christ’s Love (Song 1:2a).

A. As we now come to the body of this love song, having considered the author and the way we ought to understand this love song from Song 1:1, it is the bride (the church) that first speaks in verses 2-7. The first words out of her mouth convey her holy desire for the Heavenly Husband to come unto her and to shower her with sensible expressions of His love for her: “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth” (Song 1:2a). There are a couple questions that should be answered at this point.

1. First, What is the significance of the bride’s desire for her beloved’s kiss?

a. A kiss is universal in expressing love, affection, and tenderness to the one who is cherished. In ancient times, a king may have permitted his hands or even his garment to be kissed which would have been considered a great honor; but that he should kiss another with his mouth was the highest of

honors (because it moved beyond his mere authority to convey his heart-felt affection for the one so treasured). Here Christ's elect bride has a holy desire that the Lord Jesus would continually manifest His love to her. She hungers and thirsts for His being near to her, to throw His loving arms around her, and to show again and again that love by His kisses. She is not merely satisfied with a mere greeting, a kind look, or a friendly embrace. She wants the Lord to express the abundance of His love for her (consider Paul's prayer, Ephesians 3:18-19). Perhaps you would consider this presumptuous to crave the manifestation of Christ's love to you. Perhaps you would ask, "Who am I to have such a desire or to make such a request considering my sin, my weaknesses, and my failures?"

b. Dear ones, one of the greatest evidences of God's work of grace in the heart of a Christian is a holy desire for Christ's love and affection to be continually manifested to you. Are you satisfied with simply going through the motions of obedience with no more thought and delight in the Lord than when you change your socks? Are you not only submissive to the will of the King, but does your holy desire extend to wanting the King to come to you and show you the abundance of His love from the past, in the present, and in the future? That is what you who trust in Jesus should crave and for which you should pray—the authority of the King, yes; but also the immeasurable love of the King. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth."

2. A second question: Why does the bride feel such a holy desire for the kisses of the King?

a. The bride's holy desire for the kisses of the King is her love-bound expression in light of the King's initiation of love for her from all eternity and in time (Ephesians 1:4). The bride did not first begat this love in herself for her Heavenly Husband. She did not initiate this love for Him (1 John 4:10,19).

b. Until the Christian grows in understanding this everlasting love of Jesus Christ for a bride ugly and unloving due to her sin, deserving His everlasting judgment, yet chosen in love when she was His enemy, redeemed by His laying down His life for her, wooed unto Himself by His irresistible grace, and granted faith to come unto Him by the Holy Spirit, until then, I dare say that a Christian's life will be one of mere obligation with little to no joy—it is the love of a Hosea for a Gomer. If you do not understand your own spiritual adultery, you will never understand the love of Jesus that has sought you out and redeemed you to be His beloved. It is the understanding of Christ's infinite redeeming love and His continual kisses that He showers upon His elect bride that changes and transforms a union into a communion—knowledge into holy desires—and mere formal greetings into affectionate kisses from your Savior.

B. Application.

1. Dear ones, when the Lord Jesus kisses you, His elect bride, with His mouth, He does so expressly through the Word that proceeds from His mouth—for all Scripture is inspired (literally, God breathed as it were from His own mouth). The Lord Jesus comes and kisses you who believe as you hear His divine love letter of His Word read and preached unto you, and you kiss Him as you sing with fervency and affection and offer to Him the sacrifice of your lips (and as the prayers of the Lord ascend into the glory of God's heavenly throne room). Every Lord's Day (as in secret and in family worship) the Lord kisses you with His love and affection and you fall upon His neck in your loving embrace and kisses of Him. That is what gospel worship (as opposed to mere legal worship) is all about. It is a holy love feast. The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are likewise tokens of Christ's love for His people. He kisses you in giving them to you, and you kiss Him in receiving them in faith and love for Jesus Christ.

2. Would you not be more thankful if you recognized the daily earthly blessings you receive as kisses from your Savior? They are not accidents, fate, or good fortune. They are not what you have earned or deserved. The daily benefits of God in supplying all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus are His gracious and loving kisses, freely bestowed upon you who are united to Him by faith alone (clean water, food, homes, job, family, measure of health, safety, etc.).

3. Christian marriages are to mirror that kind of relationship that exists between the Lord Jesus and His Church. Has your marriage become simply a matter of duty and obligation and nothing more? Is

your marriage more characterized by a friendly handshake (even when it's going well), or is it characterized by desires and expressions of love and affections (and even kisses)? You can blame your husband or wife all you want, but you must move beyond mere obligation to praying for the holy desire to be loved and to show love to one another. If that is what the relationship between Jesus and His spiritual bride should look like, then that is what your Christian marriage should increasingly look like as well. If don't desire it, it will not happen. Pray for those holy desires to be evident in you and your spouse. Two Christians united in holy matrimony should not settle for anything less than that. Yes, there will be sin, offenses, and failures in a marriage (just as there will be in your spiritual union and communion with Jesus Christ), but that is what the gospel of Jesus Christ is all about—repentance, forgiveness, restoration, and kissing to seal that love and reconciliation. That is a Christian marriage.

II. The Satisfaction of Christ's Love (Song 1:2b).

A. The bride of Christ knows from experience the delight of the Lord's kisses, and confirms that His kisses truly satisfy the heart better than anything else upon earth.

1. The fine wine spoken of here represents whatever the world has to offer that promises to bring satisfaction and contentment. Wine is not condemned here, but commended as a blessing of God (Psalm 104:15). But even that which is an earthly blessing cannot satisfy like the wine of Christ's love. It revives and cheers heavy hearts, makes dead sinners alive, and comforts distressed saints in all of their afflictions, temptations, and trials. And you may drink plentifully of the wine of Christ's love, and no matter how much you drink, it will not harm you or bring shame upon you, but will rather be to your great profit and benefit (that greatest expression of love is found in the shed blood of Jesus Christ signified by the wine in the Lord's Supper).

2. Nothing upon earth can truly satisfy the deepest longing of man's heart like the love and kisses of your Savior (Philippians 1:21). Dear ones, when you prefer the kisses of His love before all delights of the children of men, and when you would rather forego those earthly delights than forfeit the sweet and blessed wine of His love, then you will know and enjoy the daily kisses of the Lord Jesus.

B. The word "love" in our English text is actually in the plural in the Hebrew text, emphasizing the many expressions of Christ's love to His elect bride. It is not simply one act of love—it is a love by way of its manifold expression that is more than the stars in the heavens. His covenant love from eternity; His redeeming love; His justifying love; His sanctifying love; His chastening love; His sustaining and persevering love; His restraining love; His protecting and providing love; His dying love at your death; and His glorifying love for all eternity in heaven.

C. Observe here the change of the person in the pronouns used.

1. "Let HIM kiss me—there she speaks of him as absent, as at a distance from her. But her hearts yearns for Him and for His nearness and closeness. When the Lord Jesus seems like a million miles away, is it just fine with you or do you pine away, hungering and thirsting for His kisses? It is not necessarily a sign that one has left that first love for Jesus when He seems so far away, but it is a sign that one has left that first love when he/she does not care and is not concerned. Every faithful Christian knows and experiences that distance, where it appears the Lord has hidden Himself from us, but your faithfulness is revealed when you yearn with a holy craving for His nearness and the presence of His sensible kisses once again.

2. In the next words, she sees him before her, and therefore directs her speech to him: "THY love (loves) is better than wine." By what means did her Heavenly Husband draw near to her? He drew near by means of her holy desire to know again His kisses which are better than anything else in this world. Dear ones, the battle with the enemy is won or lost in the heart and affections. When you cherish the Lord Jesus and cry out to Him, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth", you will in due time be saying to Him,

“For thy love is better than wine.” “Thy love alone can truly satisfy, more than any human love.” It is only when the love of Jesus Christ satisfies you, that human love will be truly enjoyed. Perhaps you have been betrayed by a kiss and are afraid to desire the kiss of the Lord, or have been abused by those who should have loved you. The kisses of Jesus Christ are not your betrayal or your oppression, but are your deliverance and salvation. His kisses will never bring regret.

D. The wine of Christ’s love for guilty sinners is a love that cannot be earned or deserved. There is not enough money in all of the world to purchase it. But it is freely offered without price and money to all who will confess their spiritual poverty and deadness without Christ, and will hold out their empty hand to receive the Lord Jesus Christ and the kisses of His love in justifying the ungodly (Isaiah 55:1). Cling not to the wine of this world that is perishing—it cannot save you. Only the love of God in Christ Jesus can save you now and for all eternity. The true wine of joy, peace, contentment, and satisfaction is all found in one Person—the Lord Jesus Christ. Come now and drink of this everlasting wine.

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