

Love for Jesus Is Not a Hidden Love

Song of Solomon 8:1-3

June 7, 2020

Greg L. Price

Your love for Jesus and His truth are not just a private matter that should be confined within the boundaries of your own home. Yes, it begins in the home and transforms your home, but Jesus and His truth are not to be left in the home. Jesus never intended a wall to be built around the truth that He taught and has given to us in His Word. He said that we would be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The apostles were commanded by the authorities to stop teaching publicly in the name of Jesus, and their response was that they must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). Your loving submission to the Lord Jesus is to be lived out wherever you go: in your work, school, friendships, politics, entertainment, and the way you spend your money. This is what Jesus meant when He said that our light should so shine before people that they would glorify our Father who is in heaven. Jesus will not be confined to a little corner of your life whom you bring out when it is convenient. He is not Lord of part of your life, but of all of it (Matthew 10:32).

Let no one make you ashamed that you evidence your devotion to Jesus Christ and His truth outside your home in the public arena. Let not fear that you might be called a religious fanatic or worry that family or friends might cut you off chase you back into the private confines of your home; but be bold in your love for Jesus and His truth, and cling to His promise: “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Hebrews 13:6).

As we continue our study through this Divine Love Song, we see how the chosen bride of Christ longs that her love for Jesus would be manifested openly and publicly, rather than being hidden and secret. The main points are: (1) Love for Jesus Expressed Publicly (Song 8:1); (2) Love for Jesus Expressed in the Public Ordinances (Song 8:2-3).

I. Love for Jesus Expressed Publicly (Song 8:1).

A. The beloved bride of Christ (His elect Church) revealed to us in Song 7:12 that one important aspect of our communion with Jesus Christ in prayer that is often overlooked: self-examination.

1. All Christians have the fruit of Jesus implanted and growing in their lives, but not all to the same degree of fruitfulness (some 30, 60, or 100 fold). Dear Christian, you cannot truly enjoying blessed communion with Jesus and yet care nothing about inspecting your spiritual fruit by way of self-examination. Just as you don't plant a garden and expect to see and enjoy fruit from it if you do not water, weed, prune, and inspect the fruit, so it is no different spiritually. But as you inspect your spiritual fruit, always call for Jesus to accompany you with His redeeming love for you, so that you are not crushed by your many failures or lifted up in pride at the growth that you see.

2. This spiritual work of self-examination has a two-fold purpose: (1) to assure you of God's work of grace; (2) to expose any self-deception. Assurance welcomes self-examination. Self-deception doesn't want the light of God's Word shining into His soul to reveal sins, failures, struggles, and weaknesses. Self-deception would rather keep all of that buried, focusing on just what one believes are his strengths and successes. That is setting yourself up to believe a lie (Proverbs 14:12). However, when you examine yourself through the grid of Christ's everlasting and redeeming love for you evidenced on the cross, you will be transparent in confessing where you have failed, and assured as you repent, seek forgiveness, and renew your loving obedience to Jesus Christ. That kind of self-examination before Christ evidences that you belong to Him and are truly communing with Him.

B. The chosen bride of Christ continues speaking in Song 8:1 and expresses her desire that her

love for Jesus be not hidden, but seen. When you truly love your spouse, you are not afraid that it been seen in the way you speak and act before others. You don't want it buried, but want it revealed that your heart is given to that one and that one alone. That is likewise true in your relationship with Jesus Christ

1. The bride here likens her desire to express her love for Jesus openly before others to that of a little sister who clings to her older brother and kisses him on the cheek. That is what is meant by the words: **“O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother!”** This is not some perversion of love, but rather the public display of true love—not a hidden and concealed love, but a vibrant and open love for Jesus and His truth that can be heard in words and seen in deeds. At the time this Love Song was written, a husband and a wife were more modest in the way that their affections were shown in public than is presently the case, but that was not true of the relationship that a little sister had with an older brother (who both were nursed by the same mother). Public affection in such a case was acceptable and not immodest or deemed inappropriate. The bride is saying in effect: “O how I desire my love for Jesus not simply to be a love displayed in my times of private prayer and communion with Him, but also I want my devotion to Christ to be seen in all situations in my home, at work, with extended family, with friends, at school, at the gym, and wherever I go.”

2. Her longing to publicly display her love for Christ is seen in the next words that she utters: **“when I should find thee without (i.e. outside of the house), I would kiss thee (i.e. unashamedly show my love for thee in the way I speak the truth about thee and live for thee).”**

a. The world wants you to keep your love for Jesus and His truth to yourself. They do not want to see it because it is convicting. It reveals their rebellion against Christ, His gospel, and His holy law. The world doesn't mind seeing people love their children, love their work, love their sports, love their movies, love their home, or love their dreams, but how it annoys them to no end to hear and see you express your love for Jesus Christ and His doctrine found in Scripture.

b. Dear ones, that is an evidence of your love for Jesus Christ—you want your love for Him to be seen. He first loved you in redeeming you, justifying you, sanctifying you, and glorifying you. He was not ashamed to love you and die for you openly. Are you ashamed to love Him and live for Him? When you truly understand the sin and condemnation from which He rescued you, how can your love for Him be buried or concealed? His love is not mere wishful thinking, but is almighty in accomplishing salvation for His elect. The love of God is evidenced in His words and His sacrificial giving (not mere words, 1 John 4:10). Only the gospel of Jesus Christ cures hatred and violence toward one another, and also hatred and unbelief against the Lord Jesus Himself (which is the source of all other sins).

3. **“Yea, I should not be despised”** (literally, “they should not despise me”). Clearly, those who hear and see your commitment to put Jesus Christ and His law first in your life should not despise you, but they will, because you cannot and will not agree with or accept their breaking of His commandments in their blasphemy against Christ, their false religion, their disregard for the Christian Sabbath, their hatred of the gospel, their selective moral outrage against the murder of a black man but their justifying of murder against millions of unborn children, their riots, their destroying the divine institution of marriage by every form of immorality, and their stealing, looting, and destruction of property and businesses of their neighbor. Yes, the world should not despise you, but how will you respond when they do? Will the fear of others that target you for your love of Christ drive you back into the privacy of your home to conceal your faith in Jesus and your loving submission to Him? Dear ones, it is not going to get easier to let your love for Christ be heard and seen in the public arena, but how will we be used to bring any to Jesus Christ if we hide our light under a bushel? Difficult days are coming for Christians who will not compromise Christ's truth as revealed in Holy Scripture, but we must obey God rather than men. Our willingness to suffer for Jesus evidences our union with Christ (Acts 5:41).

II. Love for Jesus Expressed in the Public Ordinances (Song 8:2-3).

A. **“I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother’s house, who would instruct me” (Song 8:2).**

1. Here the bride expresses her further love for Jesus in leading and bringing Him into her mother’s house (the assembled Visible Church) that she might be instructed by means of all of the holy ordinances Jesus has appointed in His Word.

2. When you gather on the Lord’s Day to worship, your public and open love for Jesus is expressed in bringing Him by faith with you as you worship Him. You must not just show up for worship unprepared. You are bringing Jesus with you from your homes and worshipping Him in casting your love upon Him for all of His mercy and grace bestowed upon you. If you are not edified in worship, the first question you should ask, “Did I bring Jesus with me?” This implies your preparation before coming to worship. Every part of your worship (psalms, prayer, reading and preaching of the Word, the sacraments, and the benediction) are offered to Him as sacrifices of your faith in Him and love for Him. When that is not the case, they simply become mere outward rituals that you perform to impress others (but God is not impressed at all). He spits out all such vain worship as repugnant to Him. Worship that merely has the approved outward form, but not the approved inward love is hypocrisy. It’s acting, not worshipping.

B. **“I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate” (Song 8:2).**

1. The beloved bride will in her mother’s house give to Jesus spiced wine (i.e. wine that has the best spices and graces added to it in order to enhance its flavor and His pleasure in drinking it). This was a delicacy that was reserved for the refreshment of special guests.

2. The Christian’s chief end in coming to worship should not be what you can get out of it or how you can be blessed. That is secondary. The chief end in worship is bringing glory, honor, and delight to Jesus in the spiced wine of your faith, love, repentance, brokenness, thanksgiving, praise, and obedience that you offer to Him. It is when you are more concerned with what you give to Jesus than what you receive from Jesus that you will leave having been abundantly blessed by Jesus. Is every part of your worship an expression of your love to Jesus? He kisses you and you kiss Him in His ordinances. You receive from Him and give back to Him in love the way you hear Him speak to you in His Word, in the way you sing unto Him, in the way you examine yourself before Him, in the way you apply His Word to your life, in the way you obey Him and His truth. This is the spiced wine to Jesus.

C. **“His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me” (Song 8:3).**

1. We heard these words back in Song 2:6. These words express that Jesus will find such delight in our public expressions of love for Him that He will draw near to us with His sensible presence so that we will know His loving embraces. Though none of us knows that nearness and closeness of Christ’s sensible presence at all times, we will know it most regularly when our love for Him longs to break out of the confines of our home and to be taken into public places and when our love enjoys Him for who He is (the eternal Son of God who became flesh and dwelt among us) and for all that He has accomplished in redeeming us.

2. Before that love of Jesus can break out of your home, it must first be alive in your home. Is love for Jesus alive in your home? Is your love more concerned with what you’re not receiving or with what you’re not giving? Dear ones, we must first learn to truly love with the love of Jesus those within our home if we expect our love for Jesus to be seen outside our home. If we cannot love those to whom we are bound by covenant, what a mockery of love to say that we can love strangers with the love of Jesus. Let your love for Jesus break out of your home.

Copyright 2020 Greg L. Price.