

## I.N.I.

Song of Solomon 8:5-7

2nd Sunday in Lent

February 28, 2010

In Christ Jesus, the Bridegroom who shall come on the last day and take with Him His bride, the Church of believers, Dear fellow Redeemed,

Our study this morning is of one of the least known books of the Bible. The Song of Solomon, also known as the Song of Songs is a love poem or love song written by Solomon that shows the beauty of true love between a man and a woman; but it is more than that. It is a picture of the eternal love between Christ and His bride, the Church. It is an allegory; that is a story describing real or supposed facts for the purpose of representing higher truths or principles other than the story itself. It is kind of like a parable. In a parable the important thing is not the people or the event but what the people and the event represent. So also here in the Song of Solomon.

The title itself tells us that this love song is more than just the words of a King, fallen in love and written to his betrothed lover; it is more than just one of many love poems or love songs that lovers write to one another—this is Solomon's Song of Songs! The love Song that far surpasses every other love song for it is speaking of the love that the true Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, has for His bride, the believers!

This love song progresses along these lines:

- 1) My beloved (Jesus) is mine:
- 2) I am my beloved's (Christ's); I belong to Him:
- 3) In spite of all obstacles our union of love will be established throughout eternity.

And it is this last point, this union of love between Christ and us that we would like to center our attention on this morning.

Our text sets before us:

### **A DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST'S LOVE FOR HIS CHURCH**

#### **I: Vigorous.**

#### **II. Victorious.**

The first picture from our text is one I am sure you're all familiar with. It's a picture of a young couple walking, with the young lady leaning lovingly upon her man. This action not only denotes closeness; but also a trust that he will support, defend and protect her. It also shows a willingness to share and it shows a peace, contentment and joy in being together. All this is seen in this one picture **LEANING UPON HER BELOVED**. And when we apply this picture to our walk with Christ, leaning upon Him, it is even more beautiful.

We are coming up with Christ out of the wilderness—the desert; leaning upon Him. This can be a picture of conversion. Unbelievers live in a desert of loneliness; wandering lost in unbelief; spiritually dry and dead in sins. But the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel picks us up and leads us to Jesus, our Bridegroom and we lean on Him and are carried by Him out of the wilderness, the desert of unbelief into the pleasant pastures of faith and life.

But this can also be a picture of any consolation or comfort from our loving Savior. The wilderness could be any sorrow, grief, trial, tribulation, suffering, depression or calamity we have experienced. Christ is always there, like a loving husband supporting, encouraging, giving comfort and strength. Lean on Him and we will grow stronger and be led in the right way out of the desert of this life. If we try to walk on our own through our problems and troubles we will

surely grow weaker and remain lost and perhaps die in the wilderness.

The next verse leads us into our theme: **SET ME AS A SEAL UPON YOUR HEART, AS A SEAL UPON YOUR ARM.**

I'm sure many of you did this in high school or college and for sure when you got engaged. Exchange rings. Sometimes a girl would wear her boyfriend's high school ring around her neck on a chain, or a guy would get a tattoo of his loved one on his arm—which we do not endorse. However the picture is clear. The ring shows you are someone's; you are pledged, promised to that person. So also the plea of every believer is that Christ place us as a seal over His heart; signifying that we are His; we belong to Him.

The seal; literally the signet ring, bears the owners name or symbol. It was used to make impressions in clay or a soft substance; it represented the owner's signature. Our names are imprinted upon our Savior's heart. What a beautiful, comforting picture for us brides of Christ!

We are sealed into Christ's heart and emblazoned on His arm. A picture of Christ's love, strength and power. We are bound by heart and arm to our Lord and Savior. Paul asks---What need we fear---tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness or peril or sword? Paul answers his own question: **IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US.**

He has redeemed us as His own with His own blood. He has called us to be His own with the power of the Gospel worked in us by the Holy Spirit. He promises us: **FEAR NOT, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU; I HAVE CALLED YOU BY YOUR NAME; YOU ARE MINE!**

That's active love. As our theme this morning states: Christ's love for us is **VIGOROUS!** It works, it is active! The picture that is used in our text is quite unusual to say the least. We read: **FOR LOVE IS AS STRONG AS DEATH, JEALOUSY AS CRUEL (UNYIELDING) AS THE GRAVE.**

What does that mean? Death surely is not active. There are two wonderful truths being taught here. First, even as death and the grave will not give up its dead, so love will not let go of the loved one. Christ's love for us is unending, eternal.

Second, nothing can hold its ground in the face of death. Nothing here on earth can escape death; everyone must finally yield to its power. Christ's love is like that. Nothing can stand in its way and stop it. It is the strongest power in this world. It has stood the test of time and still stands. Paul says that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nothing!

There is an old saying, "love conquers all!" When speaking of Christ's love, then that saying is absolutely true. Christ's love does conquer all. It is all-powerful, ever constant and unyielding. That is why the Lord calls us Christian spouses to model our marriages and our love for each other on His sacrificial, powerful, constant, unyielding love and not on our human emotions and feelings.

What Martin Luther saw in his day is often the case today. He wrote: "I have observed many married couples coming together in such great passion that they were ready to devour each other for love, but after a half year the one ran away from the other." That is why the Lord inspired Paul to write what we heard this morning from Ephesians: **HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR HER.** Jesus calls for total commitment, total devotion! An active, giving love. We are to serve our wives as Christ has served us. That's our goal as husbands.

And the Lord through Paul writes to you wives: **WIVES, SUBMIT TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS TO THE LORD.** Jesus calls for total commitment, total devotion! An active,

giving love. You are to respectfully serve your husbands as the Church loves and serve Jesus. That's your goal as wives.

What Christ has for us and what He expects us to have for our spouse is selfless, active, vigorous love for the good of the other and for the welfare of both. This kind of love certainly has been shown to us on our Bridegroom's part. Christ's love for us is stronger than death. His love led Him into death. He willingly gave Himself into death so that He could conquer death and the grave. His love burns zealously for us night and day. Solomon says it is **A MOST VEHEMENT FLAME**. Literally it reads: **'the very flame of Jehovah.'** It never dims or fades, never stops.

Jesus gave Himself for us 2,000 years ago as our perfect sacrifice and His love for us today is just as strong. May we reflect His love in our love and service for Him and in our love and service for our spouses, our children and for one another.

## **II: Victorious**

But Solomon says that our Lord's love for us is not only **VIGOROUS** and active, it is also **VICTORIOUS**. It overcomes all obstacles. Solomon writes: **MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE, NOR CAN THE FLOODS DROWN IT**. Waters and floods of grief, tribulation and temptation cannot drown or quench Christ's love. Isaiah writes: **WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE WATERS, I WILL BE WITH YOU; AND THROUGH THE RIVERS, THEY SHALL NOT OVERFLOW YOU. WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH THE FIRE, YOU SHALL NOT BE BURNED, NOR SHALL THE FLAME SCORCH YOU. FOR I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, YOUR SAVIOR.**

The Apostle Paul lists some of those floodwaters in Romans 8: **FOR I AM PERSUADED THAT NEITHER DEATH NOR LIFE, NOR ANGELS NOR PRINCIPALITIES NOR POWERS, NOR THINGS PRESENT NOR THINGS TO COME, NOR HEIGHT NOR DEPTH, NOR ANY OTHER CREATED THING, SHALL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.**

Christ's love conquered Satan, removed sin, destroyed death and slammed shut the doors of hell so that we have an eternity of peace and joy in heaven to look forward to.

Christ's love also enables us to be victorious in our daily trials and temptations. We can say "No" to the smiles of this world (riches, lusts and pleasures) and we can stand up to and defeat the frowns of this world (sorrow, grief, loneliness and despair).

Finally Solomon tells us that Christ's love cannot be bought: **IF A MAN WOULD GIVE FOR LOVE ALL THE WEALTH OF HIS HOUSE, IT WOULD BE UTTERLY DESPISED.**

Christ's love for us is totally **FREE!** Yet it is priceless! No amount of money can buy Christ's love. It is given to us freely through God's grace in His Word, without any merit or worthiness on our part. Yet it is the most priceless possession we have in this world, for without it, as we heard last week in our study of Ecclesiastes, everything would be useless, empty, meaningless, vanity.

In our first Scripture reading from chapter 5 we heard a description of our Beloved, Jesus. In I Cor. 13 the Apostle Paul gives us a description of our Beloved's love—of His Agape love. **LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND. IT DOES NOT ENVY, IT DOES NOT BOAST, IT IS NOT PROUD. IT IS NOT RUDE, IT IS NOT SELF-SEEKING, IT IS NOT EASILY ANGERED, IT KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS. LOVE DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EVIL BUT REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH. IT ALWAYS PROTECTS, ALWAYS TRUSTS, ALWAYS HOPES, ALWAYS PERSEVERES. LOVE NEVER FAILS.**

The more we read and hear about Christ's sacrifice for us the more we are filled with our Savior's love. A love which led Him to willingly carry out His Father's will and humble Himself to the point of taking upon Himself our flesh and blood. He placed Himself under the Law, keeping it perfectly for us. He allowed Himself to be arrested, beaten, ridiculed, mocked, tried and then crucified at the hands of ungodly people. But that wasn't all. He took upon Himself the wrath and condemnation of His heavenly Father over against our sins that were laid upon Him. He was damned for us, so that we would never be. He died so that we would live forever.

What great love we see in our Heavenly Father who sacrificed His only Son for us. What great love we see in our Bridegroom Savior, who obeyed His Father's will and gave Himself as the sacrifice for us all.

Since our Bridegroom so loved us, we will be moved to seek to find more and more ways to love Him and to love one another.

Amen.