



## Unrelenting Love

*(En Español)*

We simply must have more of Jesus. In the face of increasing wickedness in the world, human ideas have fallen short. Those who understand the hour are seeking God. Possessing more of Christ Himself is our only strategy and hope. Yet, to seek God is to embark on a journey that will include obstacles and spiritual enemies along the way. We must not give ourselves reasons or excuses to fail. As a pattern, therefore, we will look at the Song of Solomon 3:1-4. Here we find a bride and bridegroom who both are intolerant of the distance between them. The bride in the passage symbolizes the church in her deepest longings for Jesus; the bridegroom represents the Lord.

The bride: "On my bed night after night I sought him whom my soul loves."

On the highest level, seeking God is an action born of love. It is not a matter only of discipline; it is first an awakening of desire. It is not a question of sacrifice but of the passions stirred by unrelenting love. The bride's ability to sleep is gone because her beloved is gone. She must seek him, for such is the nature of love. Some will say, "But I already know the Lord. I have found Him." In reality, it was He who found us. Our salvation rests securely upon this truth. But while many rest upon Christ having found them, they have little interest in possessing a greater relationship with Him, nor do they realize His desire for us. The bride loves because Christ first loved her (1 John 4:19). She arises now to find Him. In the very love that He inspired, she pursues her beloved. The apostle Paul wrote, "As many as are perfect, have this attitude" (Phil. 3:15). To seek and know Christ is the attitude of the mature; it is the singular obsession of Christ's bride. In this maturing process, there will come a point when your love for God will take ascendancy over mere intellectual or doctrinal understanding.

The bride of Christ cannot contain her longing or patronize her aching heart; she cannot simply adjust to feeling empty. There is simply no reconciling the passion of her soul with the absence of her beloved. Note also that there is an unfolding dimension to seeking the Lord. Genuine love for God is an ever-increasing hunger. As one would die without food, so we feel we will die without Him. The bride says, "*Night after night* I sought him." She has come to love the Lord with all her heart, with all her soul and with all her mind (Matt. 22:37). Her love has become all-consuming; to accept his absence is impossible.

### Overcoming Resistance

Note: the Lord will allow obstacles and delays to deepen and test the character of our love. Thus, the bride acknowledges, "I sought him whom my soul loves. I sought him but did not find him." Her first attempts at seeking her beloved proved fruitless, yet she does not terminate her quest. Augustine said it well: "God is not on the surface." There is indeed a "secret place of the Most High." Although hidden, it can be found and accessed. One common deterrent, ironically, is the benevolent effect that comes with drawing nearer to the Lord. Inevitably, the blessings of an answered prayer or a new understanding of Scripture will greet us on our way to God, but we must guard against these signposts becoming our final destination. We must not be content with edification or comfort, only encouraged. Let us also understand, we will not find His fullness by seeking Him merely in convenient times and comfortable places. Rather, our quest is a determined and continual pilgrimage. It will not end until He is disclosed to us (Phil. 3:12). We are confident, though, for He has promised that in the day we seek Him with our whole heart, we shall find Him (Jer. 29:13). He assures us, "And I will be found by you" (v. 14).

## Christ Our Life

The bride continues, "I must arise now and go about the city; in the streets and in the squares I must seek him whom my soul loves." This inexorable woman has risen from the security of her own bed. She has left the comfort of her warm house and now is seeking her beloved in the streets and in the squares. Pastors, be aware: Not all who wander from church to church are uncommitted or superficial Christians. A significant number are honestly searching for Christ. They are asking, "Have you seen Him?" Not only is the bride in the streets and squares of Christianity; she is facing the force and the power of darkness as well. Yet nothing stops her - not her own need of sleep or her fear of the night. The love of Christ compels her.

However, again she is disappointed: "I sought him but did not find him."

We might think that after so great an effort - and in the face of the seeming reluctance of Heaven to answer her cry - she would feel justified to return home. But she does not. We too must guard against becoming satisfied with our opinion of ourselves: "We prayed; we waited; we searched for God. We did more than other men." This false reward fills the soul with self-exaltation. If we truly want to find Him, we must stay empty and hungry for God alone.

"The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, and I said, 'Have you seen him whom my soul loves?'" From her bed, to the streets, and now to the watchmen, the bride is seeking her lover. Notice that "the watchmen" found her. The watchmen are the modern-day prophetic ministries. Their highest calling is to find the searching bride and direct her to Jesus. While many may come to the seers for a word of encouragement or revelation, the bride is looking for Jesus. Her singleness of purpose is undistracted; she asks the watchmen, "Have you seen Him?"

"Scarcely had I left them when I found him whom my soul loves." This is the greatest motivation for seeking the Lord: *The time will come when you find Him!* You will pass your tests and overcome the obstacles; you will be secure in the embrace of Christ. She says, "I held on to him and would not let him go." I am reminded of Mary at the empty tomb of Christ (John 20:11-18). The apostles came, looked in the cave, and went away astounded. But Mary lingered, weeping. The death of Christ was horrible, but the empty tomb was unbearable. She had to find Him whom her soul loved! The Scripture says that Jesus Himself came to her, but in her sorrow she did not recognize Him. He said, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" It is interesting that Jesus connected Mary's inconsolable weeping with her seeking. Blinded by her tears, she supposed He was the gardener. "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away" (v. 15). "Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, 'Rabboni!' (which means, Teacher)" (v. 16). Immediately Mary burst from her kneeling position to embrace Christ; she held Him so tightly that, like the bride, she too could say, "I held on to him and would not let him go." I see Jesus smiling, and with great love He gently pushed her back, saying, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father" (v. 17).

This is a most astounding event. It is a marvel, I admit, that is beyond comprehension. In the mysterious process of the Lord's resurrection - during an interlude between the grave and some stage of His ascension - Christ interrupted His triumphant ascent to appear to Mary. Jesus was drawn - no, compelled - toward Mary's weeping! I am staggered by this event. Jesus demonstrated that love is the highest, most powerful law of His kingdom. It brings His living presence into the hearts of those who seek Him.

## You Have Made His Heart Beat Faster

One last thought, and it is a profound reality: Where was the Bridegroom during the time when the bride was searching? Was He aloof, indifferent, sitting detached in Heaven? No, from the beginning, He had been watching, actually longing, for His bride to find Him.

He now speaks: "*You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride; you have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes.*" ---Song of Solomon 4:9 You are His bride. He is returning from Heaven for you! The single glance of your eyes toward Him makes His heart beat faster. Such love is inconceivable. He sees your repentance from sin as your preparation for Him - His bride making herself ready. He beholds you kneeling, weeping at your bedside. He shares your painful longing. He has been

watching. And the bridegroom says, "The glance of your eyes has made my heart beat faster." The Lord has a promise for His bride. There is coming a fresh baptism of love that will surpass all our knowledge of Him. We will know the height and depth, the length and the breadth of His love. While yet here on earth, we will be filled with His fullness. (See Eph. 3:18-19 Amplified.)

We have many tasks, even responsibilities, which have come from Heaven. However, the greatest need of our soul is to be with Jesus. The areas of sin in our lives exist simply because we have lived too far from Him. Let us commit our hearts to seeking our God. Let us find Him whom our soul loves and bring Him back to the house of the Lord!

*Lord, even now we lift our eyes toward You. Jesus, grace and truth are realized in You. Grant us grace that the truth of this message will change our lives and compel us in unrelenting love to You! In Jesus' name. Amen.*