

# Come, My Beloved

Song of Solomon 7:10-13

19 December 2021

11:00 AM (Halifax); 3:00 PM (Glenholme & Livestream)

## **Introduction:**

Today we will continue our sermon series in the Song of Solomon.

- After today, I am planning to take a two-week recess from our Song of Solomon series to do a couple of seasonal messages.
  - For our newer folks, I should mention that our session does not follow the church calendar because we do not believe we, or any other church leaders (who are all but men of clay), have the authority to create or institute holy days.
  - Jesus did not institute days to commemorate events in His life on an annual basis in the New Covenant beyond the weekly Sabbath which was changed to the first of the week since that was the day that He arose from the dead.
    - He called us to observe a weekly remembrance of His cross and His resurrection as well as of His creation of the world on the first day of the week and apparently considered that to be sufficient.
    - His apostles did not take it upon themselves to institute annual days, nor were they given authority to if Jesus had not done so. If such days had been permitted and were as necessary or even useful as many claim, surely they would not have failed to institute them from the beginning of New Covenant worship.
      - The time, for example, to institute Christmas should not have been centuries later, but as soon as New Testament worship was initiated.
      - All the holy days of the Old Testament were instituted from the time of the event, not centuries later.
      - In the case of Jesus, such annual holy days, if God wanted us to observe them, would have been established immediately after the resurrection.
  - God has chosen to have things much simpler under the New Covenant without all the special holy days and ceremonies that go along with such days and that were such a prominent feature of the old covenant.
    - It seems that now that Jesus has come, the focus is on communion with Him and with the Father and the Spirit each Lord's Day.
  - When it comes to determining what ought to be done in worship, the question should always be asked, "Who has appointed these things?"
    - And unless the answer is, "God," they are things that should not be done.
    - When God's people have added to His worship, His objection is always, "Who required this of you? I never commanded these things."
    - The institution of worship that God has not instituted was the sin of Jeroboam that gave him the famous appellation, "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

- It should be recognised that Jeroboam did not institute the worship of other gods. His sin was to establish worship of the Lord in places and in ways that the LORD did not command.

Nevertheless, next Sunday, I do plan to do a sermon the advent of Jesus since this is something that is on the minds of so many at this time of year.

- This is similar to preaching on Covid at various times since it is on our minds.
- But as far as having special services or special ceremonies related to the church calendar, we will not do that because God has not given us that authority.
  - He is the Lord of His worship, not us.

Enough of that. This Sunday, we will continue our series in the Song of Solomon.

- For the last couple of weeks, we have been looking at chapter 7 where the bridegroom (who represents Christ in the Song of Solomon) expresses His delight in His bride (who represents the believing church in this Song—she is one bride with many members).
  - He praises her qualities in verses 1-5 with descriptions that refer to her body parts, not with regard to their physical beauty, but with regard to her spiritual qualities.
    - For example, she is said to have a nose like a watchtower facing Damascus—this is not a reference to a big nose, but to vigilance in guarding against enemies that would invade to spoil her relationship with Christ.
    - Jesus delights to see His redeemed people guarding their relationship with Him from outside influence—from the world, the flesh, and the Devil.
  - After praising her in many such particulars, in verses 6-9, we saw how He then spoke of how greatly He desires to have her and to embrace her in His love.
    - He compared her to a stately tree with fruit and declared His resolution to climb her and embrace her as His beloved wife—the picture of a man making love to his wife representing His spiritual relationship to us...
      - He promises that He will have communion with us in which He expresses His love to and delight in us and in which we respond by expressing our love to and delight in Him.
  - Last week, we took a look at verse 10 where we the church, hearing these words of ardent affection and desire from Him, respond by saying,
    - “I am my beloved’s, and His desire is toward me.”
    - We will start with a further look at these words and then consider how we, the church, respond to Him by welcoming His embrace.
      - Having heard Him say that He wants to embrace us, we say (in short), “Come away with me and I will give you my love.”

Listen, and I will read our text for today to you, beginning in verse 10.

- Song of Solomon, chapter 7, verse 10.
- We read this text because it is the word of God, not the word of man, the word of God which is given to be the final standard of what we believe and how we live.
  - Here it is:

**Song of Solomon 7:10-13: I *am* my beloved’s, and his desire *is* toward me. <sup>11</sup> Come, my beloved, let us go forth to the field; let us lodge in the villages. <sup>12</sup> Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine has budded, *whether* the grape blossoms are open, *and* the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love.**

<sup>13</sup> **The mandrakes give off a fragrance, and at our gates are pleasant fruits, all manner, new and old, which I have laid up for you, my beloved.**

And there we end the reading of God's holy and infallible word that abides forever.

Let's begin, as I told you we would, with a further look at verse 10.

**I. After hearing of His delight in us, we (His church) conclude that: "I am my beloved's, and His desire is toward me."**

- Let's look at each of the two parts of this conclusion.

A. That I am my beloved's!

1. Think of it. You are **His!**

- The Most High God. The Maker of heaven and earth. The LORD of glory. The one who has no beginning and no ending. The Holy One. The judge of all the earth. The Lord of lords and the King of kings. You belong to Him!

2. Think of it. He has taken us to be His bride.

- **We**, mere creatures made of dust and ashes.

- **We**, members of Adam's fallen race, of those who were made to have communion with the living God, but wickedly rebelled.

- **We**, the ones whose sin makes us obnoxious and defiled before His holy eyes.

- He has taken us to be His own, to be His bride, to be the one that He loves and cherishes forever (for He will never die and in Him, we also will live forever—though we die, yet shall we live).

- He, the one who is able to love and knows how to love better than anyone, has taken us as His own possession.

- He has pardoned our sin, and He has done it by bearing the penalty of our sin—the debt was ours and the payment was His.

- In taking us to be His, He has also delivered us from our corruption so that we were made willing to come to Him when He called us.

- Now we belong where we ought to belong—our identity is not based on our feelings or on the desires of our flesh, but on belonging to Him.

- We have been brought into His house as His bride. That is who we are.

- We will be protected and provided for by Him—what a pleasant inheritance we have!

- He will direct us in the beautiful ways of His family where love is the greatest commandment.

- He will be kind to us and cherish us as His dear wife.

TRANS> We belong to Him.

- And then the second part of our conclusion based on what He has said, is this:

B. His desire is toward me.

1. That means that He actually delights in us.

- He finds us attractive (we are a new creation in Him) and He wants to be with us.

- He wants to show us His love and He wants our love—He! The Most High God, the Maker of heaven earth wants this.

2. He has told us that we are His palm tree and that our breasts are like its clusters and that He is going to climb us and embrace us in His love.
  - He uses the love of a husband to illustrate His desire for us, for His church.

TRANS> If the Lord of glory wants to be with us, what else can we say but “Come and be with me”?

- The rest of this chapter is our welcoming response to Him.
  - Does He want to be with us? We say, “Come away with me.”
  - Does He want to look at our fruit? We say, “Come with me and see.”
  - Does He want to receive our love? We say, “Come away with me and I will give you my love.”
- We will look at each of these three parts to our response beginning with the first.

## II. Does He want to be with us? We say, “Come away with me.”

- You can see the words in verse 11 & 12: **Come, my beloved, let us go forth to the field; let us lodge in the villages. let us get up early to the vineyards.**
- A. This is an invitation for Him to come with us when we come apart to worship Him.
1. We ask Him to come with us whenever we come apart to read His word and pray in private, in our families, and in our church services.
    - Is the goal not to have communion with our risen Lord at such times?
    - I know we can read the way a student reads a text book and burn off mindless prayers, but that is not our intent when we have Saviour who is alive and wants to be with us!
      - As we read and hear His word, we respond to Him—we engage with Him—we are before His face having communion with Him, or at least we want to be.
  2. You can see the desire to have Him come apart with us in the words of the analogy.
    - “Come, my beloved, let us go forth to the field.” (v. 11).
      - It is the request of a lover to get apart with her beloved who wants to be with her.
      - The wealthy people, like Solomon, had their fields and their vineyards separate from their houses so that visiting them was a get away.
    - Some of these fields and vineyards were near enough to visit every day if they wanted, others required an overnight trip.
      - You can see that she includes the request of more extended times as well when she speaks of wanting to lodge with her beloved in the villages.
      - We have our daily prayer and Bible reading in our personal devotions and family worship,
        - But we also have our weekly observance of the Lord’s Day where we come apart with Him for a whole day each week, morning and evening.
        - We also do well to have even more extended times when we come apart for fasting and prayer.

- B. It is so important for us to get apart with our beloved.
1. Every couple who has a good relationship spends concentrated time together.
    - They know that they will drift apart if they don't...
    - They know that they need time apart if their relationship is to flourish and grow.
    - And besides that, they want to be together—indeed, you can't keep them apart!
      - You see how she wants Him to get up early to the vineyards.
        - She is eager.
      - We see this with Jesus, rising a great while before day, to have communion with His heavenly Father.
        - It is a priority—something to do before all the distractions come, before the sun is even up.
        - Other things have to be put aside for it—six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it, thou shalt not do any work.
          - It is a day for communion with the living God.
          - We need to consecrate time each day as well, preferably in the morning and the evening, to get away with our Lord.
  2. But indeed, if He does not come with us when we come apart for church or for private reading and prayer, we have missed the whole point.
    - When God was angry with Israel for worshipping the golden calf, He at first promised to spare them from annihilation, but declared that He would not go with them to the promised land but would send an angel—because they were so stiff-necked that if He Himself went, He might destroy them.
    - But Moses would not hear of it.
      - Moses knew that God's presence was the only thing that made Israel unique among the nations as God's people.
      - In Exodus 33:15, he said, **“If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in your sight, except you go with us?”**
        - The bride does not want to go away to the fields and to the villages unless He comes with her.
    - That should be our attitude about worship.
      - It is not just about Bible study, or about being with other people.
      - It is not just about singing and releasing ourselves in prayer.
      - No, the whole point is to meet with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who brings us to the Father by the Holy Spirit.
  3. Those who are faithful in these duties can testify to their importance.
    - The elders of this church have sought to encourage you in these practices.
      - We have encouraged personal prayer and Bible study.

- We have sought to make daily family worship a hallmark of our church where fathers minister the word to their wives and children each day as was done before Sunday School took over.
- And as for the Lord's Day, one practical advantage of not following the church calendar is that those who do have a tendency to elevate the holy days that they institute to a higher place than the Lord's Day.
  - It has often been my observation that the more emphasis is placed on the holy days we institute, the less is placed on the Lord's Day.
- In any case, we, as the bride of Christ, desire to come apart with Him. It delights us to do so.
  - If you do not find delight in communing with Him and attending His ordinances, you need to examine your heart and see what has made you so cold. It is easier to be stirred up by special holy days than by Christ Himself.
  - We have seen in the Song of Solomon the times of negligence on our part as well as the times of dryness, but it is our duty to continue to ask the Lord to make Himself known to us and to seek Him in the fields, as it were.

TRANS> This is the first part of our response to Him.

- Does He want to be with us? We say, "Come away with me."
- We have also seen that He wants to look upon us—to see and to enjoy our fruit.
  - So that brings us to the second part of our response to Him.

### III. Does He want to look at our fruit? We say, "Come with me and see."

A. We have seen all along in the Song that we (the bride) are His garden.

1. Thus, when we say to Him in verse 12, "**Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine has budded, *whether* the grape blossoms are open, *and* the pomegranates are in bloom,**"
  - we are asking Him to help us to examine the new growth that is in us by His grace.
    - a. In John 15, He says that He is the vine and that we are the branches.
      - Now that we are married to Him, we are able to bring forth things in our lives that are most pleasing to Him and to His Father.
    - b. We have seen that He loves to come and see the fruit that is growing in His garden and to enjoy it.
      - So we are asking Him here to come and look at the fruit and to help us to examine it.
2. This is what we call self-examination in scripture.
  - a. It is done in private, family, and public worship—it is an inseparable part of being with Jesus, the Lord of glory.
    - We read or hear His word, we hear sermons, and when we do this in His presence, His word and Spirit search us out.
    - We rejoice in the new growth—in the blossoms and buds.
      - There should always be new growth.

- b. Self-examination is not good when it is done apart from Him.
    - No. We do well to invite Him to come along and help us examine our fruit and see our progress.
    - Yes, when we engage in a Bible reading and prayers at home, or on the Lord's Day, we do it in communion with Him as our gracious husband.
      - We make sure that He comes along.
    - Sadly, as odd as it seems, we often forget Him when we come to church or read our Bibles at home.
      - We look at the text, we think about what it means, we may even think of some application, but we don't do it consciously before Him.
- B. We need to change the way we think about examining ourselves.
1. It ought to be very exciting to have Him come to look at the garden of our lives.
    - Think of a little girl who has been working hard to paint a picture and who calls for her mom to come and see what she has done.
    - Sometimes we think of examination before the Lord as a very negative thing, but it can be exciting when we are growing.
      - He is not a harsh master, the way the chap in the parable of the talents described Him.
      - Our husband takes great delight in our progress—as we have seen.
        - He is very generous in His assessment.
  2. It is true that He often graciously helps us to see areas in our lives that need improvement,
    - But if we are eager to make progress, this is also delightful to us!
    - Think of a woodworker who speaks to a master craftsmen who shows him how to make better dovetails or how to get a better finish on his table top.
      - You don't come away from that kind of engagement defeated and cast down because you weren't doing it right before.
      - You come away invigorated and filled with delight that now you can do it even better than before. You have been with the Master!
  3. Bringing Jesus to examine our fruit is, of course, a very fearful thing in that we respect Him so much.
    - We know that He is holy and we know that there will be times when we are exposed in ways that are not flattering at all to us.
      - But as we get to know Him as the gracious Saviour that He is, we know that even those times are not to berate us, but to help us.
    - You know how it is when there is something wrong in you that you have not really been willing to face.
      - You know it is wrong, but you don't want to see how wrong it is because you don't want to deal with it...
      - But then the time comes when He, by His Spirit and word, fully exposes you so that you are able to repent—to pull out the weeds that have been choking the life out of your walk with Him.

- Or to prune the wild growth that is not fruitful growth.
- Yes, it hurts, but it hurts in a way that makes you glad—
  - There is soreness, but there is a sense of great freedom and joy!
- We only avoid inviting Him to examine our growth in those times when we are not interested in growing.
  - Then we want to hide from Him—and we resent the very thought of self-examination.

TRANS> Make sure, then, that you are like the little girl who calls her mom in because she is so excited about her progress.

- “Mommy, look at what I did this time!”
- Jesus is our husband and we want to please Him.
  - We know that He wants to help us to do that, so we are delighted to invite Him to come and see the new growth.
  - We are glad, not only that He will be pleased, but also that, like the master craftsman, He will show us how to be even more fruitful!
    - Search me and show me if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting!
- Now let’s look at the fourth way that we respond to Him...
  - Didn’t He tell us that He desired our love?
  - Indeed...

#### **IV. Does He want to receive our love? We say, “Come away with me and I will give you my love.”**

- You see the promise at the end of verse 12—
  - The words are, “There I will give you my love.”
  - *There*, in the place where we have come apart together.
- Giving our love to Him as a bride involves three things...
  - We give Him our love by taking delight and expressing our delight in Him.
  - We give Him our love by yielding ourselves to Him.
  - We give Him our love by presenting our offerings to Him that we have prepared for His pleasure.

Let’s look at each of these.

#### **A. We give Him our love by taking delight in Him and expressing our delight in Him.**

1. When we come apart with Him and He with us,
  - He reveals Himself through the word.
    - We learn of His majesty and glory as the maker of heaven and earth.
    - We learn of His wisdom in the way He deals with us and with our enemies.
    - We learn of His power.
    - We learn that He dwells in inapproachable holiness and light.
    - But the thing that is the most striking of all His gracious saving work for us.

- That He has taken us up from the miry pit to be His wife.
  - That He has redeemed us with His own precious blood—blood that He obtained for that very purpose in becoming a man.
2. We give Him our love by responding in loving admiration to all of these excellent things He reveals to us.
    - We read the word with hearts that are moved when we learn of Him and His works.
    - We sing the word with hearts that are filled with the praises we are lifting up to Him.
    - We come to the Table with hearts full of love for Him who first loved us.
  3. Heartfelt adoration of Him should be the hallmark of our worship.
    - Not feelings that are stirred up by stories or by music and dancing. By colourful ceremonies and altars and glorious temples and priests decked in ornamental clothing while incense fills the air.
      - Those are things of the Old Testament when we were children.
    - In the New Testament, it is Jesus Himself and His saving work that moves us—the gospel itself thrills our souls.
      - Those Old Testament expressions or New Testament innovations to our worship are not what is called for...
      - But rather hearts delighting in our LORD revealed through the glorious gospel.
        - We give Him our love by adoring Him as He is now revealed.
        - We must grow in this love—we must cultivate this love.
        - We must not use the artificial stimulants, but find Him in the simple unadorned worship of the New Testament.
    - The mandrakes in our garden, literally, the love plant, gives off its fragrance to Him... it is our love flowing out to Him as a sweet aroma.

TRANS> Closely associated with that is the second way we give Him our love.

B. We give Him our love by yielding ourselves to Him.

1. I have already spoken of how both the good and bad in us is exposed when He comes apart with us.
  - That's one of the ways you know that you have met with Him.
  - The word convicts you and encourages you, and this conviction or exposure of your sin as well as the approval of your fruit, makes you glad...
    - You are glad because your greatest desire is to please Him, and each time you meet with Him, you learn more of what pleases Him.
2. And so you yield yourself to Him.
  - You find out what is pleasing and you give yourself to do what is pleasing.
  - Your love is shown by your eagerness to change, to conform to what He wants.
  - You belong to Him, and your identity does not arise from your feelings, but from belonging to Him.
    - Your purpose is not to find your true self, to find your true identity based on the desires of your flesh.

- Your purpose is to glorify Him with your life—to die to your own sinful desires and to find delight in doing His will.
- That is what make identity politics so wrong.
  - It teaches you to follow your own heart—your own sinful flesh.
  - It teaches the desires of your flesh are good—sometimes religious people will say that they are God-given—even very sinful desires.
- But you show love to your Saviour who gave up His desires to save you—even His desired to have unbroken communion with His heavenly Father which was a holy desire—that He might bear your sins.
  - He loved you, so now you love Him and find pleasure in giving yourself as a living sacrifice to Him.
  - You give Him your love by yielding yourself to Him with holy love.

TRANS> And now the third thing.

C. We give Him our love by presenting our offerings to Him that we have prepared for His pleasure.

1. When we come apart with Him in our worship, we are to bring our offerings.
  - There is the offering of praise which I have already spoken of in terms of taking delight in Him,
    - but it also includes coming before Him with expressions of thanks—with an offering of thanksgiving that we have prepared to present to Him.
    - We come lifting up our prayers of particular thanks for what He has done.
  - There is also the offering of service.
    - We come apart to make vows of service to Him, as an officer of the church, as a parent to raise our children, as a husband or a wife in marriage.
    - We make promises in our covenant of church membership—promises of service and faithfulness.
  - And then there is the offering of our material possessions.
    - We bring our tithes and our offerings as an expression of our love.
    - Perhaps like Barnabas who sold his land and presented it to the apostles to support his poor brothers and sisters at Jerusalem.
      - This is done not in a begrudging way, but as an expression of our love to Jesus Christ who first loved us.
2. These offerings that we bring to Him for His pleasure are described very well as being laid up for Him—for His pleasure.
  - From the middle part of verse 13, we say: **And at our gates are pleasant fruits, All manner, new and old, Which I have laid up for you, my beloved.**
  - They are not laid up for man to see, but they are laid up for Him.
    - Our thanksgiving, our service, and our material offerings—for our beloved.

**Conclusion:**

Today, we have seen the response of Jesus' bride to His expressed delight in her and desire to be with her.

- Knowing that He has redeemed her and that now He wants her,
  - she asks Him to come apart with her,
  - to examine her fruit that she has produced for Him,
  - and to receive her love that she promises to give to Him.

It is a beautiful relationship that is built on the love that the church has for her Saviour.

- She still has much sin in her, but she also has a new heart so that she wants to live for Him, knowing that by His saving work, she is fully cleansed from her sin and has cleansing for the sin that is in her now.
- She is delighted to belong to Him and does not want to belong to anyone else.
  - Are you a member of the bride of Christ?
  - We have seen that she is one bride made up of many members.
- How do you get to be a member?
  - You simply come to Him and cast yourself on Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, a sinner!" and He will both pardon you and transform you that you might become His.