
SESSION 3: BRIDAL VISION FOR INTIMACY WITH JESUS (Song. 1:2 – 4)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 1:2 – 4 describes the *Bride's Life Vision* and her *Cry for Intimacy with Jesus*. It is *a powerful divine invitation* of God for every believer through these three verses to enter into a journey of pursuit for God.
2. This passage sets the pattern for our faith. Our salvation in Christ is much more than saving us from hell's fire or just receiving blessings from God. The ultimate goal of salvation is:
 - a. To know God. (John 17:3)
 - b. To become mature as the Bride of Christ. (Rev. 19:7)
 - c. To partner with Jesus in fulfilling the Great Commission. (Matt. 28:19 – 20)

B. OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE

1. Song. 1:2 – 4 sums up the *main theme*, the *primary focus* and the *theology* of the entire book.
2. Song. 1:2 – 4 gives us *a summarized version of the entire book*. The entire heartbeat of the Song of Songs is defined in these three verses. Understanding these 3 verses will give us a glimpse of what Song of Songs is about.
3. There are *three metaphors of intimacy* with God in Song of Songs:
 - a. The *Divine Kiss* (Song. 1:2)
 - i. The kiss of God unlocks closed hearts. The unlocked heart means a seeing and perceiving heart. (Eph. 1:17)
 - ii. The request for the kiss of God is a request for the spirit of revelation that will help our hearts perceive the things of God. (1 Cor. 2:9 – 10)
 - b. The *Divine Embrace* (Song. 2:6; 8:3) can come in two ways:
 - i. The invisible activity of God – God's left hand touching under her head speaks of His indiscernible activity which she can't see because His hand is under her head.
 - ii. The manifest presence of God – This speaks of the sweet manifest presence of God that can be seen, felt and discerned. The right hand of God is the part that embraces. This is the cherishing embrace that we can feel and discern.
 - c. The *Divine Seal* (Song. 8:6)
 - i. The seal of God is the very flame of God's love that sets our hearts ablaze for Jesus.

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- ii. Our hearts are set ablaze as a result of holy passion and love for God.
4. Song. 1: 2 – 4 introduces the first divine metaphor in the Song of Songs which is the Divine Kiss of the God.
 5. There are seven-fold aspects of Divine Kiss of God in the Song of Songs.
 - a. It is vital for us to understand and to experience all seven aspects because it's the basis for our understanding of the Bridal Paradigm.
 - b. The understanding of the Bridal Paradigm is fundamental in helping us know how Jesus sees us and how He feels towards us as His Bride.
 6. Song. 1: 2 – 4 is primarily the declaration and prayers of the Bride.
 - a. She is declaring the ultimate vision and focus of her life.
 - b. She is asking the Father to grant her the desire and longing of heart, which is intimacy and passion for Jesus.
 7. Simple Outline of Song. 1:2 – 4
 - a. Bridal Cry for Intimacy with Jesus (verse 2a)
 - i. An invitation to go deep with God and be passionate for Him, instead of “casual” and “passive” Christianity.
 - b. Two-Fold Reason for her Desire and Cry for Intimacy (verse 2b – 3)
 - i. Superior pleasure of God's love. (Song. 1: 2b)
 - ii. Revelation of the Beauty of Jesus. (Song. 1: 3)
 - c. Two-Fold Vision of the Bride (verse 4a – b)
 - i. The biblical pattern, order and priority of our faith.
 - ii. The Old Testament version of the First and Second Commandment in Matthew 22:37 – 40.
 - d. God's Response to her Request for Intimacy (verse 4c)
 - e. Exhortation for the Journey of pursuit for Holy Passion (verse 4d)

C. THREE-FOLD DIRECTION OF THE BRIDE'S COMMUNICATION

It is important to acknowledge that the Bride is speaking in three directions in this passage. This is necessary in order to best understand the full meaning of the passage:

1. She speaks directly to the Father (verse 2a)
 - She is speaking to the One who has authority over the King.

2. She speaks directly to Jesus (verse 2b – 4)
 - She acknowledges the superior pleasures in Jesus.
3. She speaks to all sincere believers (verse 4c)
 - She exhorts and encourages all to imitate her faith.

D. THE BRIDAL CRY FOR INTIMACY WITH JESUS

Song.1:2a: “*Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth...*”

1. The entire Song of Songs unfolds with this Supreme Request by the Bride to the Father for intimacy with Jesus. This is the highest and the most important request anyone can ask from the Father – to know and understand the deep things of God. (Jer. 9:23 – 24; 1 Cor. 2:9 – 10)
2. The cry of the Bride reveals the focus and the pursuit of her heart and her life.
 - a. The Bride could have asked for anything (e.g. anointing, blessings, prominence, fame, health, wealth, etc.) but she requested for the “kisses” of God (i.e. intimacy with God).
 - b. The supreme request of our heart to God reveals the ultimate desire of our heart.
3. In a similar way, the Lord has invited the Church to ask for anything in His will.
 - a. As the Bride, we stand in the Father’s presence to ask for what we want most. We cry: “*Father, let Him kiss me with the kisses of His Word.*”
 - b. We ask for the deepest things that God will give to the human spirit. (Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:23; John 14:13,14)
4. God continues to test His people by allowing them to ask for anything.
 - a. The Bride’s supreme request from the Father is the Divine kiss of the Word. She wants this more than power, prominence and earthly comforts.
 - b. God is raising up a people whose supreme request is for the kisses of God’s Word. There are many necessary things to ask for, but they are secondary. The greatest prayer of faith is to receive grace to love God with all our heart and strength.
5. She is crying out to the Father for His Son and He would give her the deepest parts of who He is. The Father will unlock her heart with words of His mouth which will enable her to live in another realm of understanding of who He is.
6. God defines our life by what we want and not by what we attain.
 - a. We must distinguish between our intentions to passionately seek Jesus and our attainment of spiritual maturity.
 - i. Our intention speaks of the cry of our spirit or the setting of the course of our heart.

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- ii. If our intention is ordered according to the Word of God, then our attainment of maturity will follow in due time.
 - b. The Lord does not want us to focus on our attainment.
 - i. We can end up in pride when we do well, or we can end up in condemnation when we do badly.
 - ii. We should focus on setting our intentions to fully obey and then leave the attainment to the Lord.
 - c. The pitfall of focusing on attainment:
 - i. When we succeed, we become proud and self-righteous.
 - ii. When we fail, we become discouraged.
 - iii. There is a place to evaluate but we must not over-evaluate.
 - 7. We must also distinguish between our desire and our intention to pursue intimacy with Jesus. (Ps. 27:4)
 - a. Many desire intimacy but not many have intentionally gone after intimacy with Jesus.
 - b. Desire causes us to say “yes” but intention propels us to “do something deliberately and proactively”.
 - 8. Song. 1: 2a sets the theme for the entire book and the pursuit of her life – the pursuing of intimacy with Jesus. This should be the ultimate and supreme vision for every believer.
 - 9. There are two different “kisses” that are mentioned in this verse:
 - a. “Let Him kiss me...” – She is requesting for the “divine kiss” of God to unlock her heart so that she could receive a greater revelation of Jesus. (Eph. 1:17)
 - b. “...with the kisses of His mouth...” – The “kisses of His mouth” is referring to intimacy with Jesus. She is making a prayer for intimacy with Jesus. There are different kinds of “kisses” in the Bible that are metaphors of our relationship with God:
 - i. Kiss of the Feet – “master-servant” relationship.
 - ii. Kiss of the Hand/ Cheek – Relationship between friends.
 - iii. Kiss of the Mouth – A metaphor of our relationship between Jesus as the Bridegroom and we as His Bride (intimacy with Jesus).

Note: This is only a Divine Metaphor and Not a literal kiss. It is an allegorical picture of Intimacy with God in our heart and there is nothing sensual or sexual.

E. THE SUPERIOR PLEASURE IN THE LOVE OF GOD

Song. 1:2b: “For your love is better than wine.”

1. After asking the Father for the kisses of God’s mouth, she gives the reason for wanting the kisses of the Mouth or the Word.
2. She speaks directly to Jesus in the second person, “For Your love (affection) is better than wine.” We can use the word “because” in place of the word “for”. She is saying that experiencing Jesus’ affection is better than the wine of this fallen world. (Song. 1:2).
3. She uses the term “wine” because wine “exhilarates” the heart. Wine, in the context of this marriage metaphor is “the drink of earthly celebration”.
 - a. It is the drink of gladness that makes people happy. It speaks of the intoxicating things of this world, both good and bad.
 - b. There is the “good wine” of God’s blessing and also the “bad wine” of our sin. She is saying more than, “Your love is better than sin.” That is obvious. She is saying, “Experiencing Your love is better than all the other privileges in this life.”
 - c. The good blessings of God in our circumstances include financial increase, favor in relationships, physical health, new spheres of influence in ministry, etc. The wine speaks of the best experiences that we can have in the natural realm.
 - d. As wonderful as God’s blessings are, they are not to be the primary focus of our heart. Many experience God’s blessings in the increase of finances or prominence, etc. without their hearts being enlarged in the love of God. They often gradually decrease in their love for Jesus. (Rev. 2:4 – 5)
4. The Bride introduces the priority that the “superior pleasures” of gospel have in her life. This reveals her theology of her life and her pursuit of holiness. (Song. 1:2)
5. “Is better than”, “is superior to” or “is more delightful than” points to the superior pleasures that come from growing in revelation of God’s heart and affection. These superior pleasures are in contrast to the inferior pleasures of sin. God frees us from the dominion of inferior pleasures of sin by allowing us to experience superior pleasures that are far more powerful.
6. There are many different categories of pleasures that we are to celebrate under the leadership of Jesus.
 - a. There are physical, emotional, and mental pleasures. God is the author of these. God made us spiritually, physically and emotionally hungry or needy.
 - b. We long for happiness and yearn deeply for pleasure because we are designed by God to be pleasure seekers. This in itself is not sinful; but the search for pleasure in unrighteousness is sinful.

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7. God created the human spirit with seven longings that draw us to Him and reflect His glory in us.
 - a. These longings are common in all of us. They give insight into the way God had designed our spirit.
 - b. Each longing is a reflection of God's personality. We were made in His image, and thus we have these longings. We feel delight because He is filled with delight, we experience happiness because He too experience happiness.
 - c. The seven longings are: the longing for the assurance that we are enjoyed by God; the longing to be fascinated; the longing to be beautiful; the longing to be great; the longing for intimacy without shame; the longing to be wholehearted and passionate; and the longing to make a deep and lasting impact. (You can find out more about the seven longings in our "Bride of Christ" teaching series.)
 8. These cravings were put into us strategically by God. They will never ever go away.
 - a. The reason food is so good is because we were created to be hungry. The reason God satisfies us with pleasure is because He created a hunger for pleasure in us.
 - b. They each have an element of delight, pain and ache as they woo us into God's presence. The enemy uses these cravings to woo us into darkness as well.
 - c. When these longings are not touched in the grace of God they leave us empty; they leave us with pain, mourning, and dissatisfaction. God created us with a "God shaped vacuum" or gnawing emptiness in our heart that can only be filled by God.
 9. Satan counterfeits the pleasures that God created so that he might draw us away from God. (Eph. 4:22; Heb. 3:13)
 - a. Sin produces immediate pleasure. No one sins out of obligation. We sin because we believe that it will provide a pleasure that is superior to obeying God.
 - b. The power of temptation rests on a deceptive promise that sin will bring more satisfaction than living for God, thus, it is referred to as the deceitfulness of sin or deceitful lusts.
 10. The greatest "pleasures" that we can experience are spiritual ones. These are best experienced by encountering Jesus as the Bridegroom God.
 - a. This intoxicates our heart and makes us lovesick. God does not call us to holiness so that He can test us by keeping us from a life of pleasure.
 - b. Holiness is not drudgery. It is a call to pleasure that is perfect and eternal. (Ps. 16:11)
 - c. The Bride develops the theme of the superior pleasure in God throughout the Song. (Song. 2:3)
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11. Sin is pleasurable and sin appears to be the most pleasurable thing that the human spirit can experience until we experience the full truth of the gospel. The superior pleasures of the Spirit are far more powerful than the inferior pleasure of sin.
12. God's main strategy is to raise up a holy people and restore the first commandment to first place in the generation in which the Lord returns. This strategy will introduce the superior pleasures of the gospel.

F. INTRODUCING AFFECTION-BASED OBEDIENCE: MOTIVATED BY SATISFACTION IN JESUS

1. Affection-based obedience is obedience that flows from experiencing Jesus' love and affection. We understand He has affection for us and we experience an impartation of it back to Him. This is the strongest kind of obedience because it results in the deepest and most consistent obedience. A lovesick person will embrace and endure anything for the sake of love.
2. Obedience by faith or obedience without feeling God's presence is still required in God's Word. In other words, we must continue to obey God when we do not feel like it.
3. Fear-based obedience or "shame-based obedience" is obedience that flows from the fear of being put to shame or the fear of suffering negative consequences. This is biblical. However, it is not enough to motivate us to consistently resist the pleasures of sin for many years. In other words, it is not the most effective approach to obedience.
4. Experiencing God is more effective in motivating us to resist sin than the fear of consequences. Why?
 - a. Because the temptation to experience the immediate pleasure of sin is usually more powerful than the fear of punishment. This fear of sin's consequences does not – and cannot - overpower the tendency in our hearts to sin.
 - b. Instead, fear of sin's consequences will cause us to sin in secret, in more creative ways. We sin because we enjoy the pleasure it brings.
 - c. We sin when our heart is hungry and unsatisfied with God. Our struggle for holiness must be set in context against our pursuit to live satisfied lives in God.
5. The pleasures of God are a banquet set before us, a table of spiritual delights that can deliver us from the emptiness of seeking pleasure in sin. The way to free the heart from the domination of sin is by delighting in God. Encountering Jesus is a superior pleasure that transcends anything that sin can offer us.
6. Holiness has often been presented in a negative way with endless lists of threats and warnings of the consequences of sin. The Word of God teaches about the consequences of deliberate, sinful rebellion. The Bible is full of don'ts and

prohibitions, but these laws and rules were never designed by God to supernaturally transform the human heart.

7. The approach of many is to only use shame and fear to motivate people into keeping a list of dos and don'ts. But in the end, the allure of the immediate pleasure of sin is often more powerful than the fear of long-term consequences.
8. Yes, we must continue to present the consequences of sin, but we must do so realizing that this alone is not sufficient. Something more is needed. Warning people about the social and spiritual consequences of sin does not often cause them to reject pornography, greed, lying and cheating.

G. REVELATION BASED DESIRE FOR GOD

Song. 1:3a, b: *"Because of the fragrance of Your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth..."*

1. The Bride reveals the source of her fervency for Jesus – the beauty and the knowledge of Jesus. Her encounter with the beauty of Jesus has awakened her passion and fervency for God!
2. The knowledge of God awakens our heart to fervency. In other words, to know Him is to love Him. To understand Him is to enjoy Him. More understanding of God's character causes us to enjoy Him more.
3. We desire "little" of God because we know "little" about God. When we know more of who God is and encounter more of His beauty, it will cause us to long and desire for more of God.
4. Apostle Paul wrote that the excellence of the knowledge of the Man Christ Jesus was the motivation of His great zeal. This is a very important theological premise. (Phil.3:7 – 14)
5. In Song. 1:3, the Bride is introducing the revelation-based desire for God. We will love Jesus more as the knowledge of God is poured forth. The Church will love Jesus as the Father pours forth or reveals more of the beauty of His name.
6. The Bride knows that the beauty of Jesus will cause all believers (i.e. virgins) to love Jesus. God's name is like good perfume. Its mystery, beauty and wonder powerfully impact us. (Song. 1:3)
 - a. The virgins are referred to as the daughters of Jerusalem in the Song of Songs. They are genuine yet immature believers who seek Jesus throughout the Song of Songs but are never fully committed as the Bride is.
 - b. All believes that the Church will eventually become extravagant lovers of Jesus even if they do not become so until eternity.
7. She understands how God changes the human heart. There is only one "perfumed name" that effectively transforms us. (Isa. 4:2)

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8. When God reveals God to the human spirit it exhilarates us. There is nothing more powerful or pleasurable than when God reveals God to the human spirit. To understand Jesus more is to love and enjoy Him more. Our zeal for Jesus is strengthened by receiving the knowledge of God. This motivated Paul to suffer loss and endure hardship. (Phil. 3:8)
 9. Jesus declares the Father's name to awaken our hearts to love God. (John 17:26)
 - a. We will love Jesus with the love which the Father loves Him. Loving Jesus in the overflow of the Father's affection for Jesus is our inheritance and our destiny.
 - b. There is nothing more glorious than loving God by the power of God. The Bride will love Jesus just as the Father loves Jesus.
 10. How do we grow in passion for Jesus? We do this by understanding the passion of God's heart for us. The revelation of God's desire for us empowers us to desire God. If you want to love God more, fill your mind with truths related to His love and affection for you.

H. THE FRAGRANCE OF GOD

Song. 1:3a: "*Because of the fragrance of your good ointment...*"

1. The fragrance or perfume is not an activity or a visible substance. When perfume is in the air you cannot grab a handful of it, but we can still feel its impact. It can still stir our heart. It is something we can feel.
 2. The fragrance of God speaks of Jesus' lovely personality – Who He is, which especially includes His beauty, His passion and affection, His emotion, His thoughts, His will and His pleasure for His people.
 3. The presence of fragrance is not speaking of something we do. In Song. 1:3, it speaks of something God is – the sweet perfume of God's heart.
 4. His Fragrance is not speaking of His actions. His fragrance is speaking of the essence of God's personality. This speaks of the fragrance of who He is, in the beauty of His being.
 - a. The revelation of the sweet perfume of God speaks of God's thought life and His emotional make-up.
 - b. The sweet perfume of God speaks of His emotional beauty.
 - c. Throughout the Song of Solomon perfume is pictured as thoughts and feelings.
 - d. It expresses the beauty of what is on the inside of one's personality like a rose. The fragrance of the rose comes from the beauty of its internal condition.
 5. It is the picture language of expressing internal beauty. The perfumes in the ancient world came from the inside of a plant being outwardly manifest. And if you crushed the plants, then the fragrance would come out. It was the internal presence of the beauty of a flower's fragrance.
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6. 2 Cor. 2:14 talks about the fragrance of Jesus Christ. God literally has fragrance. It is not just a metaphor.
7. The doctrine of the affection of God militates against legalism on one hand and pride on the other hand which are always the two evils of every powerful doctrine.

I. THE NAME OF GOD

Song. 1:3b: *“Your name is ointment poured forth”*

1. This speaks of the unique exaltation of His Name. It also speaks of His attributes being openly revealed or poured forth. When God's name is poured forth, His name is exalted and openly revealed. His name is revealed through His actions.
2. This speaks of Jesus' lovely and wise acts in redemption and His manifest leadership throughout history. He is the sovereign leader of history, and she has now finally seen how wise and good His dealings are in her personal life, as well as, in history. (Rom. 2:4; 8:28)

J. AWAKENING OF THE UNIVERSAL BRIDE IN MATURE LOVE

Song. 1:3c: *“Therefore the virgins love You.”*

1. She speaks from what she observes through her journey. The Bride knows that God's love will be eventually worked into all believers referred to as virgins.
2. The virgins are genuine yet immature believers. They represent the carnal majority in the Church that will eventually be won over to become extravagant lovers of Jesus.
3. The revelation of the knowledge of God as described in Song. 1:3 will produce this love towards God even in the weak daughters of Jerusalem. This is the inevitable result of the Holy Spirit's revelation of Jesus' beauty to our hearts.
4. The carnal Church of this generation will see the excellence of God's beauty as it produces love and worship in them.
5. This will be the strategy of God at the End-of-the-Age in preparing a Church to fully walk in the First Commandment. The Holy Spirit will release the full revelation of the Beauty of Jesus. (Matt. 22:37 – 38; Eph. 1: 17; Rev. 19: 10; Isa. 4: 2)

K. THE BRIDE'S TWO-FOLD LIFE VISION

Song. 1:4a, b: *“Draw me away, we will run after You.”*

1. *Her 2-fold life vision expresses her goals in the form of a prayer to God.* (Song. 1:4)
2. The NAS translates this as *“draw me after You.”* The words *“after You”* modifies *“draw me”* in many Bible translations. In the NKJ the *“after You”* modifies the verb *“running.”*

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3. She firstly prays, “Jesus, draw me away.” She longs to be drawn close to God’s heart in deep intimacy as an extravagant worshipper who loves God with all her heart. (Matt. 22:37)
 4. She prays, “We will run after You.” The “we” refers to running with Jesus and His people.
 - a. Being drawn to God is singular but running with Him is plural. She longs to serve people in ministry partnership with Jesus and those who love Him.
 - b. Running represents a life of service motivated by compassion for people. It involves obedience in action, reaching out to others, and stepping out in faith.
 - c. We run behind Jesus, who sets the pace and in relationship with other people. (Matt. 22:39)
 5. The balance is to have passion for Jesus and compassion for people. There is a constant tension throughout our entire spiritual journey between “drawing” and “running.” At the beginning, most are focused on running in ministry without being drawn in intimacy.
 6. We have to be “drawn to Him” and “run with Him” in each season. It is not enough to be only drawn near to God’s heart in intimacy. Nor is it enough to only run in ministry.
 7. The general order of the Kingdom is to first be drawn in intimacy and then to run in ministry in the overflow of our close relationship with Jesus.
 8. The First Commandment focus to love God with all our heart empowers us to more effectively walk out the Second Commandment focus to relate to and serve others.

L. THE CHAMBER EXPERIENCE

Song. 1:4c: “The King has brought me into His chamber.”

1. The King’s chamber is a bridal chamber. It refers to the times when she develops her secret life in God.
 - a. We all have a secret history in God where Jesus draws us to Himself, particularly into His Word. The times in the chamber form and fashion our inner man. During these times, the Lord woos and warns us, give us promises and confronts us so that we grow in the Spirit.
 - b. The King’s chamber is a time of preparation where we love and obey Jesus with all our heart, even as He fashions us for future tasks to run with Him in active service.
2. The young Bride asked the Lord to draw her, to take the initiative in helping her.
 - a. Jesus answered by carrying her into His chambers. (Song. 2:4)

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- b. Jesus described the good shepherd as carrying the lost sheep on His shoulders of grace. (Luke 15:5)
3. The chamber experiences refer to the times that God carries us to Himself by granting us unusual experiences in the Spirit – revelations, encounters and impartations.

M. THE PROPHETIC EXHORTATION

Song. 1:4d: “*We will be glad, and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine!*”

1. The Bride ends this passage with an important *three-fold exhortation* for the journey in pursuing intimacy with Jesus. It is an important advice for us to “hold on” in this long journey because there will be challenges which will cause us to feel like quitting (e.g. weaknesses and failures), feel distracted (e.g. temptations) or have a sense of condemnation.
 2. We will be glad and rejoice in Jesus and remember His love in *three ways*:
 - a. We rejoice in and remember *His tender mercy in our weakness even as we refuse condemnation.*
 - b. We rejoice in and remember *His Excellencies and exhilarating affections that are superior to the wines of sinful pleasures.*
 - c. We rejoice in and remember *His leadership over our lives in times of difficulty and testing.*
 3. This faith confession in times of despair and testing is *an expression of spiritual warfare as we declare that God is good and the devil is a liar.*
 4. *The goodness of Jesus’ love powerfully causes us to love Him.* When believers in the Church remember Jesus’ love and goodness, their hearts are awakened to the three-fold love of God – love from God ignites our love for God, which then overflows into love for others. The Bride understands how God changes the human heart. (Song. 1:4d)
 5. The Bride is showing the way to maintain the fervency she received in the chamber experience.
 - a. In the chamber experience, we receive personal encouragement and assurances from God.
 - b. It is not enough to have these experiences. *God holds us accountable to remember them and to act on them by setting our soul to agree with what God spoke to us in these times.*
 6. *Our soul remembers Jesus’ love by faith and refuses to draw back.* We must regularly re-align our soul to God’s Word. There is a place to set our soul to be glad by faith.
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- a. *In difficult circumstances*, we actively rejoice in God and confess His loving leadership instead of sinking into anxiety. We declare that we are gladdened by His good leadership. In the darkness of the midnight hour, we remember the revelation He gave us in His chambers. (Song. 2:4; Rom. 8:28)
 - b. *In temptation*, we actively rejoice in God and confess that His affections and promises are better than the wines of this fallen world. (Heb. 11:20 – 30)
 - c. *In failure*, we confess His love as we believe in His tender mercy instead of wallowing in condemnation. We will not accept the accusations of the enemy. Satan tells many they are rejected by God causing them to run from God instead of to Him in weakness.
7. In difficult circumstances, temptation and failure, we must declare that the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever. (1 Chron. 16:34, 41; 2 Chron. 5:13; 7:3, 6; 20:21; Ezra 3:11; Jer. 33:11; Ps. 52:1; 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 117:2; 118:1 – 4, 29; 138).