

Session 6 Challenging the Comfort Zone (Song 2:8-17)

“Ah, I hear my lover coming! He is leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills. My lover is like a swift gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he is behind the wall, looking through the window, peering into the room. My lover said to me, “Rise up, my darling! Come away with me, my fair one! Look, the winter is past, and the rains are over and gone. The flowers are springing up, the season of singing birds has come, and the cooing of turtledoves fills the air. The fig trees are forming young fruit, and the fragrant grapevines are blossoming. Rise up, my darling! Come away with me, my fair one!”

Young Man

My dove is hiding behind the rocks, behind an outcrop on the cliff. Let me see your face; let me hear your voice. For your voice is pleasant, and your face is lovely.

Daughters of Jerusalem

Catch all the foxes, those little foxes, before they ruin the vineyard of love, for the grapevines are blossoming!

Young Woman

My lover is mine, and I am his. He browses among the lilies. Before the dawn breezes blow and the night shadows flee, return to me, my love, like a gazelle or a young stag on the rugged mountains.”

I. REVIEW

A. The Song of Solomon is the greatest love song in the Scriptures (1:1). It is a poem that has both a natural and spiritual interpretation in describing the beauty of married love and the spiritual relationship between Jesus and His Bride. This song uses language from an agricultural setting.

B. The Bride spent much time sitting before the King, experiencing delight in His presence (2:3). The Spirit solemnly charged others not to disturb her as she sat at His table under the tree (2:7).

3I sat down in His shade with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste...

7I charge you...do not stir up [disturb] nor awaken love until it pleases. (Song 2:3, 7)

II. OVERVIEW OF SONG 2:8-17

A. The King called the Bride to a deeper partnership with Him. He revealed Himself to her as the sovereign *King* who has authority over all mountains (obstacles). He can easily leap over all obstacles. He called her out of the comfort zone so she might know deeper partnership with Him.

B. A spiritual crisis in her life began when the King introduced the “we will run after You” phase of her spiritual life. In Song 1:5-7, she faced her first spiritual crisis as she

discovered her sin—her crisis was related to her *fear* of going to the mountains of full faith and obedience (2:10). Her struggle with fear was not an expression of rebellion towards God but spiritual immaturity.

C. She was called to overcome fear with courage to obey and share with confidence in God's love.

III. JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF TO HER AS THE SOVEREIGN KING (2:8-9)

A. The Bride saw Jesus as the Lord of all nations who has easily conquered all the mountains—He is like a gazelle or a young stag (adult male deer) who leaps victoriously on the mountains.

8The voice of my Beloved! Behold, He comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. 9My Beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. (Song 2:8-9a)

B. **The voice of my Beloved:** The King called her to a new season in the Spirit for her life. She recognised the voice of her Beloved, the One she loved. Jesus speaks tenderly to us in love when He calls us out of the comfort zone to join Him on the dangerous mountains of risk.

C. **Mountains:** Mountains often speak of obstacles. Jesus has authority over all obstacles, both human and demonic. We are to speak to the mountains of adversity, commanding them to be removed. The hills speak of the smaller difficulties or challenges that we face. Zerubbabel was to speak grace to the mountains of adversity that stood before him (Zech. 4:7).

“I say to you, whoever says to this mountain,

‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and

does not doubt in his heart...those things he says will come to pass.” (Mk. 11:23)

D. The King stood behind a wall of protection, looking into the house in which the Bride sat undisturbed. Similarly, Jesus stood outside the door of the Laodicean church (Rev. 3:20).

He stands behind our wall; He is looking through the windows, gazing through the lattice. (Song 2:9b)

E. **Stands:** When Jesus stands, He is ready for action. He is also pictured in Scripture as sitting in rest and victory with His feet upon His enemies (Ps. 110:1). When Stephen died, the Lord stood up to receive him (Acts 7:55). The Lord stood when speaking to the Laodicean church (Rev. 3:20).

F. **Behind our wall:** She described the wall as “our” wall. It is not *her* wall, but *their* wall, because she had been led by the Spirit to remain undisturbed at the table until He called her to leave the place of sitting at the table feasting on Him (2:4, 7).

IV. OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE INTO DEEPER PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS

A. The King called her to a deeper partnership with Himself. This is what she had prayed for (1:4). This speaks of the time when Jesus comes to us, calling us to respond in a new measure of faith and obedience. We must either respond or go backwards in our relationship with Him.

My Beloved spoke, and said to me: “Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away. Song 2:10

1. **Spoke:** He spoke tenderly to the Bride, calling her “My love and fair one”—beautiful one. Knowing that she would refuse His request, He still considered her beautiful, just as when her vineyard was not kept (1:7-8). We are more motivated to obey Him when we feel loved and beautiful in His eyes. When Jesus corrects His people, He speaks with a tone of tenderness and love, without harshness.

“Rise up, My love, My fair [beautiful] one, and come away!” Song 2:13

2. **Rise up:** He called her to arise from her comfort and security to come away with Him to conquer the mountains (of this fallen world). Jesus commissioned His Bride to work with Him as He brings the nations to obedience (Mt. 28:19).

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.” (Mt. 28:19)

3. Jesus challenges us to arise and obey Him in the mountains. This refers to embracing difficult areas of obedience and ministry assignments that challenge our sense of security and comfort. She did not like the risks associated with the mountains, wanting only to sit under the shade tree eating apples with the King (2:3).

4. A John Wimber said that faith is spelled R. I. S. K. Faith is the way of the kingdom.

B. The question is—is it safe to go with Jesus, even if He takes us outside our comfort zone? Or will we miss out on things if we obey Him 100%? When we operate in the flesh, it seems safer to be “in the boat” without Jesus rather than “on the water” with Him.

C. The fundamental issue for the Bride is whether or not she believes Jesus’ leadership to be good.

D. The King pointed to the prophetic signs of soon-coming fruitfulness (2:11-13). He encouraged the Bride by revealing that it was the time for the harvest, for new fruitfulness.

11For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. 12The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. 13The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away! (Song 2:11-13)

E. Jesus points His people to the past and present to awaken faith to prepare for a coming harvest.

1. **The past:** The King reminded her of His faithfulness in the past winter season. The winter season is dark with cold rains. It is a difficult time, when few things grow outwardly.

Jesus reminds us of His intervention and faithfulness in the past in bringing us through the winter seasons of life. If Jesus faithfully helped us in past difficulties, He will also help us in future ones. Jesus will not neglect us as we “go up the mountain” (2:10).

2. **The present:** The King pointed out specific conditions that proved that the harvest was not far away. He noted four signs: flowers appearing on a vine signify that the harvest of grapes is soon to follow; the voice of the turtledove is heard at harvest time; fig trees put forth young green figs, which ripen into mature brown figs; the fragrance of tender young grapes indicates the approaching harvest. The King revealed His tender affection for the Bride as she struggled through her fears (2:14).

O My dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let Me see your face, let Me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. (Song 2:14)

F. **My dove:** He affirmed her sincerity. A dove speaks of purity and loyalty. He knew that she would initially compromise (2:17), but that it was in her heart to obey Him.

Clefts of the rock: This speaks of the work of the cross. Jesus was the spiritual Rock in Moses' day, and is the Rock on which the Church is built (1 Cor. 10:4; cf. Mt. 16:18).

a. God hid Moses in the cleft of the rock—an open space or gap in the mountain rock—

to protect him from being struck dead by seeing the glory of God's face.

“You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live...²¹Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock...²²while My glory passes by...I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.” (Ex. 33:20-22)

b. God hiding Moses in the cleft of the rock is a type of salvation through Jesus' death. “Cleft of the rock” also speaks of the wound to Jesus' side during His crucifixion.

Secret places of the cleft of the Rock

This speaks of Jesus' resurrection—the ultimate “secret place,” in which a Man ascended to God. The secret place of *the cliff* (NKJV) is also translated as secret place of *the stairs* (KJV) and secret place of *the steep pathway* (NASB).

G. Jesus wants to see our face and hear our voice in worship and prayer as we cry for help (2:14). We can tell Jesus that we love Him, without fearing that He sees us as hypocrites. Some think that when they struggle with sin, their voice is repulsive to God, and their face is ugly to Him, but God wants us to run to Him in confidence, instead of from Him in condemnation.

Let Me see your face, let Me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. (Song 2:14)

H. The Bride prayed for deliverance from small compromises (2:15). She responded to the King's exhortation to see her face and hear her voice by praying for help (2:14).

¹⁵Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes. (Song 2:15)

I. 1 **Little foxes:** The foxes in the vineyard of our heart speak of our small compromises; they include fear, sinful attitudes and words, and misuse of our time and money. Foxes are cunning animals that will destroy a vineyard under cover of the night. They are not bold, like lions that attack in the day, but are small, fast, crafty, and hard to catch.

2 **Spoil the vine:** Her “vineyard,” throughout the Song, refers to her heart and spiritual life.

3 **Catch us:** Catching the foxes requires “us”—the Bride and the King—working together.

We cannot catch them by ourselves, so we cry for help. The Lord is so willing to help us.

In the midst of the Bride’s struggle, she expressed confidence in God’s love (2:16). This

confidence is necessary for all who seek to be consistent in praying for help, as seen in verse 15.

My Beloved is mine, and I am His. He feeds his flock among the lilies. (Song 2:16)

J. 1. **Is mine:** She was confident that her Beloved was hers—He belonged to her, His heart open to her; He had not abandoned her. Even in our weakness, Jesus is accessible to us.

2. **The lilies:** She said she was “the lily of the valley” (2:1). Here, lilies is in the plural. Our spiritual safety is found in close relationship with other believers who pursue purity. The Bride’s painful compromise (2:17). She refused the King’s command to arise to join Him on the mountains (2:13). She told Him to turn and go without her until the day breaks to give her light. She refused to obey because of fear. She was responding in her immaturity, not rebellion.

¹⁷Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag upon the mountains of Bether. (Song 2:17)

K. **Until the day breaks:** Daybreak comes in the morning as the new light of the rising sun dispels darkness. At daybreak, the dark shadows and gray areas of the Bride’s life disappear.

QUESTIONS FOR SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION (e.g., FCF FRIENDSHIP GROUPS)

1. Identify one point that inspired or challenged you. Why? What will you do differently to apply it?
2. Identify one point that you want to impart to a younger believer. Why? How will you approach this?