

Beauty of God (Video)

by Glenn Meldrum

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a deep personal relationship with God, highlighting the need to prioritize seeking Him above all else. It delves into the beauty of God and the necessity of desiring Him above all worldly desires, using the analogy of a lover knocking at the door to represent Jesus seeking intimate fellowship with us. The speaker urges listeners to awaken their passion for Jesus, to pursue Him fervently, and to allow Him to cleanse and beautify their hearts, leading to a life of worship and prayer that flows naturally from a deep love for God.

Duration: 1:04:17

Scripture: Psalm 27:4, Matthew 23:27, Revelation 3:20, Acts 3:19

Topics: "Intimacy with God", "Prioritizing Spiritual Desires"

Description

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Transcript

Let's look to the Lord in prayer. Father, we come before you now in the precious and wonderful name of Jesus. We just thank you for who you are.

Lord, as we look at your word this morning, we pray that you would give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation so that we may know you better. God, we need a clear view of you. We need the dismantling of our view of you that we've had for so long that's built just upon opinions and self and distortions.

We need a fresh vision of you. And we ask that you give us understanding in the precious and wonderful name of Jesus. What I want to do is I want to look at the beauty of God.

And I'm going to lay out some thought here that's all preliminary for me to get to where I really want to go, and it's going to take me a little bit to get there. But I'm going to begin in Psalms 27 verse 4. Psalms 27 verse 4, and after this then we will end up in Song of Solomon. In Psalms 27 verse 4, well actually Psalms 27 is a psalm where David is crying out because of the oppression of his enemies.

And there's nothing within the psalm that tells us where and when in his life it was written, just that we know it was written by David. And so here you have this psalm that's all about the oppression of his enemies, and then you have verse 4, which is just absolutely astounding when you look at the setting. And I don't know whether at this time he was king, whether he was king just of Judah, or whether he was king of Israel, which would have happened seven years later.

We don't know exactly when this happened. But yet, whether he was just fleeing from Saul, or whether he had become king of Israel, or just king of Judah, whatever it was, it's an astounding statement of what he makes there. One thing I have desired of the Lord, that I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

I mean, can you say one thing you desire? I mean, do you know how astounding that would be? Here's a man talking about the oppression of his enemies upon him, and he's not saying one thing I desire is victory over my enemies. He's not saying I want greater wealth, I want the throne of Israel, or I want a nice easy life, or whatever. One thing I desire, and what is the one thing? It's broke down into three thoughts that are there, but ultimately to behold the beauty of God, to behold his beauty, to look at this God, and to see him, and to look through all the veil of the flesh, and all this world, and to begin to see a little more clearly of who he is.

One thing I desire. David at times, especially with his sin with Bathsheba, and then killing her husband, having her husband killed, you know, he was in a backslidden state there, but when it says in scripture that he was a man after God's own heart, that defines the majority of his life, that where he really was. Yes, he had the times where he got lifted up in pride, and judgment came on the nation as a result of his pride, but for the most part that man's life was in hot pursuit of God.

He was a man that desired one thing, and here is this yearning that's inside of him, that says I want to go to the house of God, I want to dwell in his house, I want to behold the beauty of God in that place. I want to see him. Is that what defines your life, or are you wanting Jesus? Just to be an addition to it.

To clean the house out, make it nice and make it pretty and everything else, and then you can go on and live your own life. Or is it that you've come to a place like this, that says there's one thing I desire. I don't care about the money, I don't care about the situation, I don't care about the job, I don't care about anything, there's one thing I've got to have you, I've got to see you, I want to behold your beauty, I want to behold your splendor.

And so what I want to do is I want to take a little bit of time and look at the beauty of God. And what we're going to do here is we're going to do a little bit of theology, and theology is not a Christian cuss word. It's two Latin words put together, theos, which is God, and ology, which is study.

Every time you pick up your Bible, you're doing theology. Every time you're going through the workbooks and so on, you're doing theology. And so it's just the study of God.

And so we're going to do a little bit of the study of God. I'm going to deal with a little bit of systematic theology, though, here, and be a little bit more formal, but I am going to do my best not to bore you. I want to begin by looking at the freedom of God.

I'd venture to say that most of you have never thought of the freedom of God. It's not been something that you went and even was curious about or wanted to know, especially while you were in your sin and in your

dead religion, you're not going to want to know the freedom of God and how that really affects our life and what that means. To help us understand, let's begin from a human standpoint, though.

We are not free people. We live in a country that we say is free, but what that means is that we are not oppressive as other nations. We are not free.

Imagine if somewhere on this planet there was a switch, just like a light switch, and you flicked the switch off and gravity turns off. You flicked the switch on and it kicks back on. I mean, you'd find out if all of a sudden the guy attending that switch, that was his whole life, to attend that switch and make sure it never got turned off, he stumbles and he accidentally whoops, and all of a sudden people start, whoa, off the world.

I mean, how long are you going to live? And then when he turns it back on, whoo, that fall is going to really hurt. We are bound to this planet. We are stuck here.

And you don't think about it, do you? How often have you ever woke up and the first thing on your mind is, thank you, God, for gravity. We take it for life. We are bound to this planet, and it's the goodness of God that allows us to be bound because otherwise we'd be dead.

After service today, you will probably get something to eat. We are bound to the dinner table, sometimes way too long. We're bound.

I mean, we like it. Glad God has given us taste buds that we can enjoy the bounty that he has given us in this world. But how long can you go without food? Forty days, they say, maybe with some supplements you might be able to go 80 days, but you're going to eventually die.

There was a young man I know, he fasted 40 days. It was not a God-ordained fast. It was a religious fast.

He ended up in the hospital because he was killing himself. He was on the verge of death. He lost every hair on his body, and it never grew back again.

You see, he was killing himself. Religion, all that it was, it wasn't anything about relationship, this religion. But how about water? You can go three days, maybe, without water.

I've preached many times in Bullhead City, which is the hottest city in the nations. It gets up occasionally to 130 degrees there. I asked them once, how long can you live in the desert without water? And they basically said, maybe a day.

You need it. It's not just a maybe, it's the reality. And you want to look at it even more, how about air? Let somebody hold you underwater for 30 seconds, you might think he's playing.

Take it a minute, and you're going to be panicking. You're going to be freaking right out. You are bound.

You are bound. You are in need of all these things outside of you. I remember years ago when I was pastoring in Detroit, this story is never, I've never forgotten this story.

And it was of a little girl that the mother had locked up in a closet, and that girl lived in that closet, that dark closet, for seven years. It was her bathroom, her bedroom, her living room, her dining room. Anything she got from the mother, she got through the door to that closet.

One day, her mother was so drunk, she forgot to lock it, and the little girl got out and it got known. We were created to love and be loved. And when the fall came into the world through Adam, it twisted us and demented us so that our love is this selfish taking thing.

But can you imagine what that had to do to that girl? To be in such a cold, heartless situation, locked away in this closet. No love, longing to love and longing to be loved and never knowing it. You see, we need that.

It's not something we just want. We need that, and when we don't have it, it twists us in the brain in just horrendous ways because God created us, wired us to love and be loved. But what about God? He doesn't need gravity.

He lives outside of creation. He's not controlled by it. He's not controlled by the elements.

He's not controlled by the sun and the stars and the galaxies and none of that. He's outside of it. And so He controls it all.

He is within it all but separate from it all. Here is this God that needs nothing. He doesn't need gravity.

He doesn't need air. He doesn't need water. He doesn't need our love.

You understand? He does not need our love. He doesn't need our worship. God is self-sufficient.

He is free. Nothing outside of Him. He doesn't need anything outside of Himself to be who He is and to do what He does.

He was fully God before men and angels were created and He'll be fully God if all of creation ceases to be in a moment. He is who He is and nothing can add to Him and nothing can take away from Him. He needs nothing outside of Himself to exist.

He is self-existent. When He told that to Moses, that I am that I am, that I'm a self-existent one, all I can imagine if a video camera could have been there at the burning bush to see it, all that Moses could have done was have his mouth gaping open in astonishment. I don't understand.

Self-existent? How do we comprehend such a thing of God when everything in existence that we know and see and understand has beginning and end? And then God says, that's not me. I'm separate. I'm different.

I'm self-existent. I am uncreated. This is the God that broke into our world, took upon flesh and blood.

Not a different God. Not a lesser God. The same identical God.

And so He needs nothing outside of Himself to be who He is. He was wise, just, holy, loving, kind, beautiful, almighty before creation. And nothing can add to it because He is infinite in all those.

And the very idea means nothing can give Him any more. He can't become more wise, more holy, more powerful, because He is full, complete, and infinite in it all. He is not served by men as though He needed us.

And you know, I do not understand. I don't understand this. Why did God create mankind? We are not told other than it was His good pleasure.

That's it. It was His good pleasure. He didn't create because He was lonely.

Everything He needed was within the Godhead, was within the Triune God. The perfect love in everything was right there. He wasn't a lonely God aching for somebody.

He was a God fully fulfilled, but He created out of the superabundance of who He is that we might know this God and share in the glory of who He is. The infinitude of God. I'm speaking things here that I do not understand.

I'm just being honest. How does a finite being understand an infinite being? And the crazy thing is some people, man, they got their theology down. They think they know so much and they can quote this verse and that verse, and they've got a down pad and they don't even know nothing.

And the best thing they could ever do is come to the place and say, I don't know. I thought I knew. I thought I had it all figured out.

I thought I had all those doctrines down. And then they come to a place and realize, I haven't even begun to understand. If you could take all the atoms in all of creation and add them all together, what number that would be, what we know of God isn't even the equivalent of one atom.

We know so little of this God. So little of the vastness and greatness and majesty and beauty and splendor. So little of Him.

And yet we think we know so much. In our pride and arrogance, we fail to understand what it really means as much as is humanly possible for God to be infinite in every dimension of His being. He is omnipotent, which means He is all-powerful, which means that He super abounds with the power to do anything He wants to do anytime He wants to do it.

When God created, He spoke a word. When was the last time you spoke a word and even cracked a sweat? One word. Do you understand? It wasn't hard.

Quam! There it is. Just a word. Quam! He'll speak another word.

Quam! It's gone. And then He'll speak another one and new heaven and new earth will come into existence. And the whole time.

It's like He's making it a little bit bigger. It's nothing for Him. And when He was done creating, when you look at each day of creation in Genesis, what do you see there? Each day He used this word as tov, T-O-V, which means it is good.

I have done what I wanted. If He wanted it a billion times bigger, it would just be another word. It wasn't hard.

It wasn't difficult for Him. And this God that is omnipotent, that can speak a word, and galaxies and universes come into existence, the same God is able to speak a word to us and give life where there's been nothing but death. This God that is all powerful is able to make victorious those who have been absolutely defeated.

But the problem isn't with an omnipotent God. The problem is with finite people that say no to Him. God is omniscient.

Which means He knows everything that there is to know, yet there is no end to all He knows. And don't ask me to explain that. I went to grad school.

I got a Master's in Theology, in Church History and Philosophy, and I forgot so much that I learned there, I can't even remember it. It's like you're done with the class, and it's gone out of your head. Where did that go? But yet this God knows everything.

He knows everything. There's no end to it. And that should be haunting to us, because He knows everything.

Because He knows us. There is no mystery. Not the motives of our heart.

Nothing. He knows it all. And the aspect that He would love us, that should blow our minds.

That He would still love us. He is omnipresent. Which means He's everywhere at once.

And He's not everything at once, as Eastern mysticism would say, that you are basically sitting on God right now, because the material world as well. God is separate and distinct from His creation. Yet He fills it all.

There again, don't ask me to explain it. But there's no place you can go where He is not. You can't even go to hell and have Him not be there.

But yet all the residents of hell will never know the tangible reality of God. It will be the abject absence of any reality of God in their understanding. Yet God will still be there.

And He will be the only one throughout all eternity that will know their agony. Omnipresent everywhere. There's not been a sin that you have enacted that He wasn't right there.

He's seen everything. He's known everything. God is infinite as far as time.

Which means that He's eternal. That He is timeless. And you know, we have a terrible, terrible time with this one.

I mean, this is why you have evolution and all these things out there. One of the reasons for it. Because where is it that God came from? Everything in existence has a beginning and end.

Then God says, I'm the self-existent one. Here I am. I've always been.

It hurts our brains. I don't comprehend. How can you have something that always exists? And yet in the paganism, and you go back into ancient religions, and you see it rebirthed in modern science, in evolution, which is the idea that the material world, that matter is eternal, and recreates itself again and again.

But God says, that's not the way it is. I'm the only one that's eternal. And all that creation is came out of my infinite genius.

That in my mind, it's not just that I saw what creation would be, but I designed all the laws that would govern all of creation. Laws that we haven't even understood, or even know exist yet that he has created, that keeps it all going, and everything by the power of his will. The wonder and the majesty of this God.

He's eternal. Yet all creatures, all creation, is bound in time. We have a beginning, but we will not have an end.

We are going to live forever now. Our eternity is different than God's eternity. Because we will forever be with him, yes, but never be like him in that sense.

A.W. Tozer made a very powerful little point. He said, left to ourselves, we tend immediately to reduce God to manageable terms. So what do we do? We take this God that is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, that is eternal, that is this God that is so beyond anything we can imagine, and then we take him and we drag him down.

But here's the thing, we don't even drag him down to the human level. Because for mind, for human mind to understand this God, we must drag him down below our level. We make a manageable deity.

That's what people do when they are in the practice of sin and call themselves Christian. They make a manageable deity. They make a God that they can understand, that they can figure out, that they can just say, this is how it all works, and they're comfortable with that God, because they won't make him the holy, infinite God that he is.

They'll make him something else. So it becomes idolatry. The church in one sense is full of idolatry today, because of all the false beliefs that are in there, that define them, that allow them to continue in the practice of sin.

Idolaters, which is no different than what Israel was during the days of Jesus, right? They weren't bowing down to Molech anymore, were they? They had a new idol, and that was the idol religion, and that they could practice their religion and still have all the garbage inside of them, like whitewashed supplicants. This elderly man is in a park. He's bent over.

Looks like he's playing in the dirt, and this little boy sees him and kind of walks up very sheepishly. He's walking up to him, and the old man looks at him and says, Come here, boy. Let me show you what I'm doing.

The boy comes up a little. No, no, come on. You're not going to see from there.

Come up here. I'm not going to hurt you. So the boy comes and stands on just a little waste room, and the old man stoops down and says, Look right there.

You see that little ant? Well, there's his home over there, and I have went and moved some rocks and sticks out of his way to make his way home a little bit easier. The little boy looks at him and says, Mister, did you just break out of the insane asylum? I mean, who in the world wants to help an ant? I mean, you know, what do we do? We buy those little round canisters, and I don't know what goes on inside of those things. Ants go in and never come out.

I don't know if they walk around, get dizzy, fall over. What? You know? I mean, but we don't want them in our houses. Right? And here's a man out there making the life of an ant a little bit easier.

And you know what the man tells the boy? He says, That ant doesn't even know I exist. I just made his way home easy, and he doesn't even understand what I've done for him. And we don't comprehend who this God is that has broken into our world.

Turn with me to the book of Song of Solomon, to the fifth chapter. What I'm going to share here is a difficult... It's a very difficult book. Song of Solomon is challenging.

This portion is, I think, a lot more clear. And there's two approaches that can be taken with the book of Song of Solomon. One would be that the beloved, which would represent the church, is engaged to the lover, which represents Jesus.

The other way is that they were married, and I happen to believe it, that they were engaged, that they were not married. And so you have to think of this not in a modern day, 21st century, perverted kind of romance that we have today, that guy sees girl, and they end up in bed in the next hour. You know, I mean, it's just... This isn't it.

And so what you have here is you have a play that's taking place. I guess that's probably the best way we could look at Song of Solomon. It's a play.

You have three main actors. You have the lover, that is Jesus. You have the beloved, that is the bride, going to be the church.

And you have the friends, that's the world. And so there's this dialogue that goes on between this, this story that is playing out. And we're going to look at a portion of this, beginning in chapter 5, verse 2. And just in case your Bibles have little notations of who's speaking there, none of those, not one in your Bibles, those little notations over the headings, none of those are original to the Hebrew and Greek.

Those are really late, late, late added, and so they're not original. And so what's going to go on here is the people are changing, and I will tell you who is speaking, because sometimes they're incorrect in the headings that they put there. And so the beloved is speaking here.

She says, I slept, but my heart was awake. Listen, my lover is knocking. Now the lover speaks.

Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night. Now the beloved speaks.

I have taken off my robe. Must I put it on again? I have washed my feet. Must I soil them again? My lover thrust his hand through the latch opening.

My heart began to pound for him. I arose to open for my lover, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrhs on the handle of the lock. I opened for my lover, but my lover had left.

He was gone. My heart sank at his departure. I looked for him, but did not find him.

I called him, but he did not answer. The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. They beat me.

They bruised me. They took away my cloak. Those watchmen on the walls.

Oh, daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you. If you find my lover, what will you tell him? Tell him I am faint with love. Now the friends speak.

How is your beloved better than others, most beautiful of women? How is your beloved better than others that you charge us so? And afterwards the beloved begins to describe the beauty of her love. I just want to

jump right into the allegorical teaching that's in this. What you have is you have a picture of Jesus knocking at the door, and in this case we're going to look at it first from a believer's standpoint, which is really where this is at, and I will touch on it from a non-believer's standpoint, which is not directly implied in this portion of Scripture, but I want to look at it nonetheless because I think there's some good points we can glean.

The picture is of this man that has engaged this woman and loves this woman. He had been laboring all day, whether it was in the fields or the marketplace, it doesn't tell us where he was working, but he's laboring all day, and he's going to her house to spend a little bit of time with her. He wants to hold her hand.

He wants to look in her eyes. He wants to talk with her. And the idea that he is drenched with dew speaks of this great desire that the sun is setting, the dew is starting to fall, he is getting wet.

It speaks of desire. I want to spend some time with this woman, eventually I'm going to be married to, that I will spend the entirety of my life with. I want to spend time with her.

And so he comes to the door, and he knocks on the door. Open to me, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. Open to me.

Let's sit down, let's talk, let's look in each other's eyes, let's hold hands for a moment before I have to go home so I can get some sleep and get up in the morning. But I'd rather be up until two or three in the morning with you, spend a little time and talk with you than have a whole night's sleep. Knocks at the door.

But the lover, she was inside, she heard the knock, but she didn't want to get out of bed. She'd gone to bed, she washed her feet, she washed her clothes, and she had her jammies on and everything was there. And, you know, she had everything just right, and Jesus comes knocking on the door and messing up her comfy little time.

Well, let me try and relate this to us as men. You've had a bad day. I mean, it was rough at work.

Okay, 100 degrees, no air conditioning, so in the shop it's, what, 120? I mean, you drank and you drank and you drank and you're just drenched from all the sweat. And then the boss is just, he is grumpy and grouchy because he's hot and you get hot and you're hot and grouchy and everybody's grouchy and it's just a terrible day, man. It's just the pits.

You just can't wait to get home and you get home and you go in and you take your clothes off. They're just soaked with sweat and you throw them aside and you take a shower and you put on your jammies and you make yourself a little quick meal and then you pop some popcorn. Then you're going to sit down and watch some Christian movie or whatever and you sit there and you just want to veg out, man.

You just want to veg out. You are stressed out. And you just want to put your brain in neutral.

You don't want to deal with problems until you've got to deal with it in the morning. And all of a sudden, that knocks there. There's that knock and Jesus is saying, Come along, son.

Let's sit down and let's talk for a little bit. And you're just there, Jesus, why are you coming now? Why are you messing up my comfy little time of just vegging out? I am stressed. I want to be left alone.

Don't bother me. You see, he keeps knocking. Open up, son.

Open up. Let me in. You see, in this analogy here, why didn't the woman open up for Jesus when she came? Because she was utterly selfish.

Consumed with self, consumed with her own desires, consumed with her own wants, consumed with her own self-pity, her own struggle. What a terrible job I got. I have to sweat all day long.

Then I got to go home and I don't have air conditioning and it's the pits. Right? Poor pity party. Oh, it's just so hard.

Life's so hard. Well, you don't know what hard is until you get to hell. Then you'll know what hard is.

You see, it's not hard. I'm not going to say it's comfortable, but it's not hard. And how many guys have left because it got too hot and they complained and it was just whiny, whiny, whiny little guy that just so self-absorbed he can't see anything but himself and his own pain, his own struggles and they're not touching my feely good buttons or anything else.

Right? Hudson Taylor wrote a little book on Song of Solomon. Good little book. And he made this point.

He said, It is sad that Jesus should be outside a closed door. That he should need to knock. But it is still even more sad that he should knock and knock in vain at the door of any heart that has become his own.

It was her condition of self-satisfaction and love of ease that closed the door. Jesus, you're just kind of in my way right now. You're just kind of in my way.

I just, I don't really want to go that far. Okay, I want you as Savior. I don't want to go to hell.

You know, I want this problem out of my life, but I don't want you to consume my life. I don't want you to consume everything. I don't want to give up this particular stuff.

You know, and this is the scary thing because behind that closed door are some very scary things. And let's look at another door. There's another door that Jesus was knocking on.

And this is one that I want us to take a couple minutes at and look. It's in Revelation chapter 3 verse 20. He says, Here I am, I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me. Who is Jesus talking to here? The church of Laodicea. The church out of the seven churches, the one church that Jesus had absolutely nothing good to say to.

A backslidden church. A church that was immersed in the world. That thought it had everything together.

I'm good, I'm not, you know, I don't have all the issues of other people. I'm alright. Yet Jesus says, You're wretched, poor, blind, miserable, and naked.

You don't even understand. I'm at the door of your life knocking because if you don't open the door, you're going to be eternally in trouble. What were the people hiding behind that door? Why didn't they want to open that door? What were they hiding? What idol of their heart that they would say, Jesus, you can't come in here because I got things in this room.

I got things in my house that I don't want you touching. I don't want you to get out of my life. I want to keep these things.

I want to protect them. They've been who I've been all these years. Clean me up, make me enough good so I can go to heaven, but leave me basically alone.

Let me live my life. I've got these idols. I refuse to relinquish.

You see, some of you have closed the door to Jesus and he's knocking. He's knocking. Some of you, the door's closed and you're a follower of Jesus.

You come to Christ while you've been here. But now your austerity's demanding too much. Can God demand too much? Because whatever he commands, whatever he demands, he offers us all the grace necessary to do it.

So he can never ask too much. He will ask what is beyond human ability, the natural man, but he will never ask and demand of us what his grace will not be able to supply. But what happens is we say, I don't want you.

You're getting too close, Jesus. You're starting to touch these idols of mine, these things inside of me. I don't want to deal with them.

I don't want to deal with them. I don't want those things out. I don't want to overcome.

They've been so much a part of me. You rip those things out and I'm going to be undone. What's going to be left of me? But he knocks in a desire for you to finally open your eyes and say these filthy things I've kept in my little house, in my little house of my heart, in my mind, these worthless, good-for-nothing things are actually leeches that have attached themselves to me and they're sucking the very life out of me.

They're destroying me. They're zapping anything good. You're trying to give me life and these things are taking the life right out of me.

You're knocking at the door wanting to come in, wanting to deliver me from the very things that I've allowed to attach itself to my life. That's destroying me. The lover is there knocking at the door.

Why have you shut the door? Why have you shut the door? And you shut the door because you're trying to hide something. There's some idol something that you're wanting to keep from him but he's omniscient. He's omnipresent.

He knows what's in your house. He knows. He's just waiting for you to finally have the courage to deal with it and throw yourself at his feet and throw open the door.

And I'll tell you when that door opens sometimes it'll just be this sweet, sweet Jesus right there arms outstretched wanting to wrap us in his arms. Other times it'll be this blazing light that'll just blind us and knock us to the ground like it was with Saul. But he will give us exactly what we need.

Give us what we need when we need it. You know I'm just astounded again and again as I think of it. Why would Jesus want me? Why would he? Why would he break through all the junk and stand at that door of my own heart so many years ago knocking to the sun open to me let me in.

Why? I know a billion years from now I still will not have that answer other than it was the goodness kindness and love of God. And so Jesus at the lover's house or the beloved's house knocking knocking on the door. Finally she gets out of bed.

And the picture here is that it wasn't just like what a guy would do. So you know you got the knock you get out of bed you go there and you're a mess you could care less. But she has to go and she has to do her hair and she has to put her makeup on she has to put the myrrh on you know all the perfume.

And so the picture is of her trying to get herself ready. Well you know I mean I don't want to say anything because there's not a lot of ladies here but you know sometimes it can take them a long time to do that work you know. I mean just all the stuff and my wife's not bad at all you know so I'm not speaking of her but man that's just we've had teenage girls and whoa you can't get in the bathroom.

You know I mean whatever they're doing it's like you know it just takes a long time to do the remodeling or whatever I don't know. She gets out and when she finally comes to the door she opens it and Jesus is gone. That whole time he was knocking how long was it? Five minutes? Ten minutes? Half hour? Knocking at that door? Yearning? Desiring to spend time with his beloved? Knocking at the door.

And finally when she gets there he's gone. And Jesus was really really really really good to leave her. Because you know what she was not a fit bride to marry.

Wasn't fit. Are you fit? Are you fit to be Christ's bride? Are you fit for the time that he comes back to go with him? Because you see the beauty that God is looking for in people is not the beauty that we look at in one another. The beauty he looks at is what we are on the inside.

Whether we let him come in and clean and purify us and beautify us. Whether we allow him to come in and get all the filth and the junk and the bad attitudes and the way we think and the way we act. Get all that stuff out and transform us so that we are literally different on the inside.

Jesus leaves to make us desperate. For the Christian you know what this comes down to be? This comes down to be the sin of prayerlessness. That people don't understand who's knocking at the door.

Do you understand who's knocking at your door? This isn't a man. Not a mere mortal. It's not just some deity among other deities.

This is the God that breathes stars out of his mouth. That creation is so big we can't even find the end of it. It's massive and then he says it's only this to me.

It's the breath of my hand. It's just nothing. And he is the one that's come down and knocking on your door and says open up.

Open up my darling, my dove, my flawless one. Let me in. Let me clean those idols out of your life.

Let me clean the filth out of you that separates me from your love, from you, from knowing you. Prayerlessness. And you know the church today does not understand the tremendous sin of prayerlessness because it's an absolute affront against the God who calls us.

An affront. It's saying Jesus you are not important enough to me. To lay aside this time.

And what's going to happen with some of you and I'm not trying to be prophetic in this I'm just speaking the reality of life. Some of you are going to go back out there when you're done, you graduate you'll have a wonderful testimony you'll give up here on the day you graduate and you'll go out there and think you're going to do great and you'll go back and do a job whatever it is and slowly your prayer life is going to disappear and you will be back where you were. Because you will not be protecting the relationship you'll

let the sin of prayerlessness come into your life and it will destroy you.

Because the only hope you have of being beautiful by God's standard of beauty is that you are near to the one who is beautiful that you cling to him that you hold to him that he becomes your all in all that he becomes a very means by which you can sustain and walk with him and if you sever that you sever your lifeline you sever everything prayerlessness will destroy you it can't be a legal obligation something I gotta do it or I'm gonna die type of thing but you have to remember who it is that's knocking at your door who it is that's inviting you this God that needs nobody this God that does not need you this God that is calling you wooing you compelling you to come to open wide the door let him clean out the filth of all the idols and all the junk that's been inside of you that you protected that you're still trying to protect in here let him in because you see the sin of prayerlessness is the sin of neglecting Jesus so what it really comes down to be is just you are not important enough God you are not important enough and so other things are important it's more important for me to mow the lawn more important for me to do this or do that thing you're not important enough it's also the sin of saying no there he is knocking at the door child come away sit with me what an astounding idea spend some time with me did he go to you and say spend some time with me and then you say no no do you see how evil that no is how evil that no is because it's not just a person that's asking it's almighty God and we say no to him well imagine this young man is getting married it's his wedding day and the church is packed full and all of a sudden the groomsman comes out the best man comes out and he stands up there it's at the time it was supposed to start at 11 o'clock and there it is he's out there so he's standing in his spot and the pastor just kind of being thrown off balance there sees the best man out there and so he comes out there and so he stands out there and when the organist realizes what's going on she starts the wedding march everybody stands up and then the bride she's like you know starts walking down the aisle and her smile is huge and she's glowing beautiful dress long train on her dress and she's walking down her father's taking her down and she's smiling and as she's walking down the aisle her smile begins to slowly disappear and as she gets further her smile starts turning into wrinkles of concern and something's not right here where's the groom and so she gets all the way down there and the father's standing there holding his daughter's arm waiting to put her hand into the man's hand that she's going to marry but he's not there and the woman's on the verge of tears just going what's happening my whole wedding what's going on what's going on and so the silence is up there and the pastor's just kind of flipping out going how do I deal with this one now you know I mean it's like what do you do and so finally trying to be cool and calm and collective and everything else he says well we've got a little mistake here we got started and everybody wasn't ready we'll have to just get the groom and we'll pick up again so if everybody would be seated half hour later the church is almost empty nobody could find the groom and the bride is back in the room where she was changing and just bawling her eyes out just weeping finally she takes off her wedding dress puts on her regular clothes and rushes out the door and hops in her car and starts driving wildly away says I gotta find him something happened something terrible's happened she goes from one place to another finally ends up at his apartment she goes and she knocks on the door knocks again hears some noise knocks again says I'm coming I'm coming and there he is he comes and opens the door and he has this dirty old t-shirt on and his pajama bottoms and bare feet and a big huge bowl of chocolate covered cocoa bombs and you know he has the TV blaring whatever it is that he's watching and she just looks at him in astonishment and he says oh I wasn't expecting you and she says where you been well I've been here you were supposed to be at church she said he said oh is it Sunday did I get my days mixed up says no it's Saturday well why was I supposed to be at church and she in almost rage says we were supposed to be married today the guy goes I forgot I'll tell you what that girl needs to run from that guy as fast as she can you see that's not a man that wants to get married that's not a man in love when a man and a woman are truly in love there is their minds are

filled with it consumed with it you know it's this desire the desire is for the lover for the beloved and the beloved for the lover it's just there it's what happens it's how God created it to be there's something really sick with us when we don't have that desire for God that's not how we were created we were created to desire God we were created to yearn for Him we were created to have the entirety of our life and sustenance and everything from Him that's what we were created for and for us to not have that means there's something very very sick inside of us it means there's this spiritual disease that's eating us out from the inside out it's destroying us it's a sign of something that is really wrong it's just like a person that has no hunger anymore and they don't eat because there's no hunger there's something wrong with the body there's something happening there and they know there's a sickness and it must be dealt with when we don't have the spiritual hunger after God the spiritual thirsting after God there is something very bad going on inside of us and unless we recognize it that lack of spiritual desire after God will kill us it will kill us it will take us away from or never allow us to come to Him because we'll never see the reality of our need and what we were truly created for it took the absence of Christ to awaken desire so in the story here in Song of Solomon she comes to the door and Jesus is gone and all I can imagine she's standing there going why did He leave? why did He leave? well, He only took an hour getting to the door you know, you took your sweet old time you just didn't think Him important enough to run to the door your heart wasn't pending after Him just to run as fast as you can the moment you heard that knock or even more so to be waiting as beautiful as you could be waiting for Him to knock in expectation knowing He would knock that evening knowing He was coming you didn't think Him of value enough you didn't think Him important enough to seek Him it took the absence of Jesus to awaken this desire and so what does she say? this beautiful thing when she's running through the streets you see desire just awakening her finally where she leaves the comfort of her home she gets herself all dressed she's now running through the streets and even in the pursuit of her lover even in the pursuit she is beaten she is mocked for that pursuit but she will not relent she will not stop she keeps going after she says I must find my lover and so she comes to the friends and she says tell Him I am faint with love tell Him if you see my lover tell Him I am faint with love I must have Him because her heart is aching that she would have so neglected Him so reduced Him to manageable terms so degraded Him that she didn't think Him of value enough to give the entirety of herself and so Jesus is working and laboring to awaken in us a growing desire for Him because He knows we need Him more than anything He knows we desperately need Him and He's working in us trying to bring us that place of true holy desperation after Him that hell can attack us and it will not put out that holy fire inside a man that was mightily used of God with seeing signs and wonders blind, seeing, lame, walking, even dead raised to life again and this isn't make-believe this is real so you can deny the reality of miracles but it takes place whether you like it or not his name was Smith Wigglesworth and he says no man enjoys more the riches of divine grace and performs the Lord's will to a higher degree than the man who walks with God in continuous worship just like was brought about here, right? a life of worship this place of worship this place where your heart is this constant song this worship unto Him it's just what's there it just flows it's just because He becomes so rich in your life and so rich in your mind and it's just the natural thing that your heart is aching and panting after Him and it's what's going on during the day while you work it's what's going on when you hide away at night because you gotta be with Him and when you get up in the morning you're trying to hide away because your heart is aching panting after this God because you see when we start having a passion for Jesus we will have a passion for prayer without that passion for Jesus prayer becomes this burden we gotta do it I gotta do it so you gotta do it you got your time you gotta do now this being in the program you do it but if it's not becomes who you are then when you're out of here it's not what you'll do and you can do the prayer thing religiously just like the Pharisees did and Jesus rebuked them in Matthew 23 because they did to be seen of people it was the outward externals of dead

religion but He wants us to live in relationship where our heart is panting after Him desiring Him yearning for Him and we are wanting Him to make us more and more beautiful for the day that we see Him for the day that we see Him that we wanna make ourselves the most beautiful people we can on the inside that it is the desire of God to call us home kinda like what happened with Enoch see a passion for Jesus produces a passion in prayer and the thing is there's gonna be times in prayer where it's hard it's dry it's difficult but you know what takes you through those hard difficult times? the times you remember when He wrapped His arms around you those times of the sweetness where you broke down weeping and you're overwhelmed with the goodness of God the kindness of God that He would break in your world you see those are the experiences we need to experience God God wants us to rightly experience Him that is a part that is necessary for us as human beings to experience the taste and see that God is good to taste the reality of who He is and to taste it so full so rich that when hell attacks and when the flesh wants to rise up we've got this love that is so pure so good so wonderful that we will cling to it and say I can't I can't go back I can't be what I once was because Jesus is worth the pursuit He pursued me He is so good He is so great He has condescended so far to stoop down and to grasp me to grab hold of me and what does that deserve in return? we cannot pay back God for what He's done for us but I'll tell you what an understanding of who this God is and what He did in our lives should cause us to have such a zeal for Him such a passion after God that we will not let our lives grow lukewarm that we will tend the holy fire inside of us because we want to know this God that so pursued us that knocked on the door of our heart when we were hostile to God knocked on the door of our heart even when we were lukewarm precious man of God that was used in revival in Scotland in the 1830s as Robert Murray McSheehan he made this powerful little point what a man is on his knees before God God is all that He is this and nothing more you will not rise above the relationship you have with Jesus you will not you cannot you have a shallow relationship with Jesus you are on a path to failure but you begin to learn and to know the depths and heights and riches of His love in that place of intimate fellowship which demands of us a holy life a holy life is not optional it's mandatory but a holy life a truly holy life is all about relationship that you want to make yourself the most beautiful bride for Jesus that you can possibly be so you go to the one who makes us beautiful that we have uglified ourselves through sin and we go to Him and say God beautify me with your blood beautify me with your spirit beautify me with the fruit of the spirit beautify me God make me beautiful and all the ugliness that's inside of me God help me to get it out of me I don't want it in me it separates me and you but we've got to understand who this God is we've got to dismantle this manageable deity and begin to see this God that is so big we can't wrap our minds around and yet He is the one who has broken our world when we were enemies of God He broken our world wanted us wanted us final point and I'm going to close with this as you see probably one of the most powerful expressions of evangelism in this portion of scripture and it's missed people don't see it and so what happens this woman that was now in her lukewarmness in her indifference in her apathy she is now with the absence of Jesus she now begins to awaken and she says I must have Him and she now begins to run through the streets crying out after Him wanting Him and comes up to friends and says have you seen my Jesus have you seen my Jesus I must have my Jesus my heart is panting for Him have you seen Him and they go and say how is your God better than my God oh let me tell you of His beauty let me tell you of His beauty let me tell you how beautiful this God is let me tell you how beautiful it is when He forgives the wretched sinner let me tell you how beautiful He is when He wraps His arms around you when life is so hard and you're hurting let me tell you the beauty of His embrace the beauty of the indwelling Holy Spirit let me tell you the wonder of who this God is and that's what God wants in our hearts to be so full of desire for Him that the natural outflowing of our heart is we just want to give Him away we just want to talk about His beauty and His goodness let me tell you about my Jesus Smith Wigglesworth said I know that only God can satisfy my

thirst I know this that the man that is to be possessed with a zeal for God's work can only possess it as he is thirsty after God I don't know your lives and if right now there isn't some pastors and missionaries in here then it won't be long before there are because people are clergy doesn't mean that they have a passion for God you see it's this passion for God that makes us fruitful in the work we do whatever work that is and it's only that passion after Him that makes it fruitful Father we come before you now in the precious and wonderful name of Jesus Lord I truly mourn over the men that are here that have never truly experienced you or they have experienced you but only on the efforts of others your presence that has moved in these chapel services but they have not known you in that personal way themselves they do not know the wonder of your embrace Lord I have tasted I have tasted of your goodness of your kindness I felt your arms wrap around me Jesus I've wept at your feet like that sinner woman and what joy is found in that place at your feet Jesus what joy is found there God I'm asking for a work in men that have never known personally the depths of your presence never tasted of it Lord and it is your longing desire for them to know that Lord this isn't about seeking after experience it's about seeking after you and a God that draws near to those who see their neediness it's your heart oh God it's your heart you invited us to taste and see you invited us into this place of relationship and it's not make believe it's not some dead religion it is real oh God and the relationship we can have with you is even more real than any relationship on this world because dear God the relationship we have with you can last throughout eternity Lord awaken the desire in these men awaken a desire you're knocking at the doors of some men's hearts that do not know you at all for they once walked with you and they are backslid back in the world oh God so immersed in their sins so bound up in what they have done in the sin that they practice so self condemning that they can't even see the reality of a God that is wanting to forgive God there's others that have come into salvation and they have not yet learned your infinite value and how precious you really are oh God how we need that revelation how we need that revelation of who you are that we may know you better God how we need that revelation the freshness of who you are to gaze upon you and the beauty of your holiness to be undone in your presence God that you may set a fire in us dear God you can set a fire in men here that will take them through all the days of their life oh God you can set a fire in them that will protect them from this world they may have to battle devils and people oh God but there's a holy fire that can be hot enough to keep us through all the trials and testings and that's what David did one thing I desire oh God one thing I want to behold the beauty of God I want to dwell in your temple I want to be with you Jesus one thing and yet he's being attacked by all these enemies oh God there is victory with you but it's in the place of fellowship and nearness it's in the place of aching and yearning for you oh God Jesus I even pray for the staff that may be weary Lord I have known as a minister as a pastor as an evangelist I've known what it is to be exhausted so exhausted on the inside that it's like your bones are hurting and weary Lord I'm asking for refreshing for the staff Lord that their prayer times would become fresh and new that an ache would come into them Lord you've never called us out of the war we are to be in this battle till our last breath but Lord you want to be that high tower and refuge that place of refreshing in God we need that refreshing we need it oh God breathe into the staff here freshness oh God precious and wonderful name of Jesus thank you Jesus thank you Jesus thank you Savior I think I'm going to open this altar up and I just want to make this really simple Jesus has been knocking on the door of your heart and you've not been letting him in whether you're an unsaved man maybe religious but never a true follower of Jesus or a backslider or you are a Christian and you know you've got some junk and he's knocking at that door and you're just saying Jesus right now I don't value you important enough I don't make you important enough in my life you right now are kind of a burden and I'm just trying to do this because well I got to get through the program and he's knocking wanting you to come fall at his feet and know the joy of that and what I'm going to do at this altar I'm just going to open this up for anybody that wants to be up here that you come to this altar with one

desire God open help me to open this door to you help me to let you in help me to let you clean out these idols that I have clung to the bitterness, the anger the attitudes, all the junk all the filth begin to let them come in and it may really hurt as he does some scrubbing but I'll tell you what that cleanness is worth it when he wraps his arms around you when this holy God embraces you and you begin to know the sweetness of that fellowship that he's calling you to and so this altar is going to be open for you whatever time you want to take or if you need to go on the prayer trail later but you need to think on this message and let God do the work

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