

(Reading) Jesus Our Bridegroom

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having an intimate relationship with the Lord, recognizing His love for us, and being diligent to catch the little foxes that can destroy our walk with Him.

Duration: 8:45

Topics: "Spiritual Intimacy", "Christian Discipleship"

Description

This sermon focuses on the relationship between Jesus as our Bridegroom and us as His Bride, emphasizing that it is His love for us that initiates our love for Him. The invitation to come away from the world signifies a call to draw closer to the Lord as the time of His return nears. The importance of addressing 'little foxes' that can harm our spiritual life is highlighted, urging believers to guard their hearts and relationships diligently. The sermon also underscores the need for believers to prioritize listening to the Lord and being responsive to His call, ensuring that He is the primary focus in their lives.

Transcript

Jesus our Bridegroom, Zach Poonen, in Song of Solomon chapter 1, verse 1. We notice that this is Solomon's song, the Bridegroom's song, primarily, and not the Bride's. That means it is our Lord's song to us primarily, and not our song to Him. We love Him, because He first loved us.

1 John 4, 19 We did not love Him first, He loved us first. It is only because He sang this song to us first, that we can sing a song to Him now. Never ever begin by thinking of your love for the Lord.

Our starting point must always be His love for us, then we won't go wrong. And we won't ever get discouraged or condemn ourselves. The Bridegroom then says, My darling, come along with me.

He invites His Bride now to come away from the world. The winter is past. The flowers have appeared.

Song 2, verse 11 The approach of summer is likened to the nearness of the Lord's return to earth. We are now living in that time when summer is near. The Bridegroom then says endearingly, O my dove in the clefts of the rock, let me see your form, let me hear your voice.

For your voice is sweet and your form is lovely. 2, 14 The rock here is Christ in whose sight we are hidden. These words show the intensity of the Lord's love, affection and care for us.

If we believe this, it would remove all insecurity and fear from us totally. Then the Bridegroom says, Catch the little foxes quickly before they ruin the vineyard of your love while the great vines are. In Blossom, 2, 15 This is a word that we need to hear constantly.

It is easy to see the big foxes' obvious sins that ruin our vineyard. But there are baby foxes that creep into our vineyard and eat up the grapes, and these are more dangerous because they are less noticeable in married life too. It's not the big dangers that we need to watch out for, like the husband hitting his wife.

Most of us may never do such things. The little foxes that destroy a marriage are usually the little irritations and the raised voice. Catch those little foxes and kill them before they ruin your marriage.

Your marriage is like a vineyard, preserve it like any wise farmer would. Your relationship with the Lord is also like a vineyard. It's not the big sins like adultery and murder that drive most believers away from the Lord.

It's the little things, impure thoughts, love of money, an unforgiving attitude, etc. that come between us and the Lord and ruin our walk with Him. So let us be diligent to catch the little foxes.

In chapter 4, we hear a long appreciation of the bride from the bridegroom. One mark of spiritual growth is that we learn to listen to the Lord's more than to talk ourselves. The bride is maturing, and as she listens, she finds her bridegroom expressing his admiration of her.

He admires every part of her and then concludes by saying, You are altogether beautiful, my darling. Then he invites her saying, Look down from the summit of Amana, from the summit of Senna and Hermon, from the dens of lions, song, for to wait. This is an invitation to live in the heavenlies.

The Lord says, don't look at things from a low earthly standpoint. Come with me to the heavenlies and look at everything from that standpoint. The things of earth will then become small, dim and worthless.

As you look at them from there, the Lord wants to lift us to a higher plane, true. There are lions there, demons, evil principalities and powers. But we will be with the Lord there and together with Him we will overcome all those evil powers.

The bride is now being invited to spiritual warfare. The bridegroom calls the bride a locked garden for twelve, an exclusive garden. Exclusively for the bridegroom, she doesn't belong to anyone else.

She belongs exclusively to her Lord. Is your relationship with the Lord like that? Can the Lord say to you, you are my private garden, exclusively mine? There are many things out in the world that can attract us like opportunities to make more money than we need. To get earthly power and fame and to earn a name for ourselves, etc.

Such temptations can be compared to other men trying to seduce the bride. But the bride here is not attracted, she is taken up with her beloved alone. She belongs to her bridegroom exclusively.

Very few believers live in such a relationship with Christ and that is why they don't know Him, intimately and don't understand His word. The secret of understanding the Bible is to have an intimate relationship with the Lord first of all. Who better than He can explain to us what His word means.

Walk with Him like the early disciples did and longed to hear Him speak to you. Then your eyes will be opened like theirs and your hearts will be set aflame like theirs. This is what I have discovered in the

several years that I have walked with my Lord.

The bride now speaks of what happened one night. I was asleep but my heart was awake. Suddenly she heard the voice of her beloved.

The Lord calls us suddenly at times. He wants us to be alert at all times to hear His voice. We read in the Old Testament that God would call Abraham suddenly at times saying, Abraham, Abraham, and Abraham would respond immediately saying, Here I am, even if it was in the middle of the night when he was fast asleep.

In Genesis 16, 16 and 17, 1, we read that after 13 years of silence, God suddenly called Abraham one day and Abraham responded at once. In the midst of his many other preoccupations, he was always alert to hear the Lord's voice. The Lord called Samuel too in the middle of the night and Samuel woke up and listened.

That's how we all must be. But here we see that when the bridegroom came in the middle of the night calling, Open to me, my darling, the bride was too lazy to dress up and open the door. She was concerned that her feet that she had washed would be soiled.

He tried to unlatch the door himself, then the bride changed her mind and opened the door, but found that her beloved was gone. He went away because she did not respond at once when he called her. That can happen to us too.

The Lord may say to us, now drop everything that you are doing. Stop reading that book. Stop that conversation.

Get alone with me and talk to me. Let's go for a walk together. And we may respond saying, Lord, just wait.

I have something important to do. It will be finished in 15 minutes. Then I'll come, and 15 minutes later, when we have finished that important work, we say, Lord, I am ready now, but we find that he is gone, we can't find him.

That is the experience of many believers. The Lord tests us to see if he is more important to us than the conversation we are having with our friends, than the book we are reading or the work we are doing, etc. He will test us to see if we are willing to drop everything and to listen to him.

Do you want to be an effective servant of God? Develop this habit of dropping everything when the Lord calls you, and of listening to him. You will never regret it. The bridegroom then expresses his appreciation for his bride.

Song 6, 4-10. He says that among all women, no one is like his bride, his perfect one. I choose her above everybody else.

Every husband should look at his wife like this. There are many attractive women in the world, but there is no one like my wife. She is number one in my eyes.

This is what the Lord says about us. He appreciates us more than all the clever people and the rich people and the great people in the world.

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