



March 10, 2019

REFLECTIONS

This is how sin works: it whispers to us about the goodness of something not good. It makes distortions feel good. It tells us we'd be better off with pleasure in hell than sanctification in heaven.

Lauren F. Winner
Contemporary North American historian, author, and lecturer
Real Sex: The Naked Truth about Chastity

The Song of Songs celebrates human love. This is abundantly clear. Yet, within its frolic and carousal, its delightful exploration of love and lovers, is a serious warning to beware of the thing being celebrated. Love is also dangerous. . . . Love is described as a conflagration that cannot be doused with many waters and rivers. Love's inferno will not surrender to any jurisdiction. To restrain it is beyond the capability of mortals.

George M. Schwab
Contemporary North American professor
The Song of Songs' Cautionary Message Concerning Human Love

An idol is anything besides God where we try to find the ultimate meaning of life. It goes without saying that people live for sex in the twenty-first century, and the advertisers know it. To many, a life without sex is a life that is not worth living—and not just sex, but sexuality without constraints. Again, though, the Song reminds us of the danger and the power of sexuality. To make sex the center of one's life is to devote one's life to a capricious and dangerous god. Love and sex have important roles in our lives, but they should always be subordinate to our devotion to God. Just as the Song finds its proper interpretation only in the context of the canon as a whole, so our sexual life finds its place only in the broader context of our devotion toward God. Love and sex are not the final answer to life's troubles or meaning.

Tremper Longman III
Contemporary North American professor and author
Song of Songs

GATHERING

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Call to Worship

based on Isaiah 61:10
Rev. David Fisk

Leader:

Praise the LORD!

Let us delight in the LORD; let us rejoice in the God of our salvation.

All:

For he has clothed us with the garments of salvation;

He has covered us with the robe of righteousness,

Leader:

As a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress,

And as a bride adorns herself with her jewel.,

Praise the LORD!

All:

The LORD's name be praised!

What a Beautiful Name

Prayer of Adoration (Concluded by the Lord's Prayer)

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

Amen.

How Deep the Father's Love

Prayer of Confession

Leader:

Lord, we live in a world in which lust is exalted as a virtue rather than acknowledged as sin.

Promiscuity is encouraged. Adultery is excused. Indecency is mass-marketed. Perversion is championed as normal behavior. Precious human beings are exploited for destructive, wickedly indulgent purposes.

All:

We confess that we as fallen human beings are too easily tempted by the lust of the flesh.

We confess that we are prone to the same types of behavior that have lured the world away from you and your desire for purity and chastity.

We confess that in our sin of lust we have exchanged your truth for a lie and have worshipped created things, placing them above you, our Creator.

Leader:

Cleanse us with hyssop, and we will be clean.

Wash us, and we will be whiter than snow.

All:

Create in us a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within us.

Leader:

*We ask you to wash away our sin and help us to walk in newness of life.
In the name of Jesus and through his cleansing blood we ask this.
Amen.*

Silent Confession

Words of Encouragement

1 John 1:8-9 ESV

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Heal Us Emmanuel

Prayer for Christ's Church and the World

Luke 18:1, NIV

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

The Passing of the Peace

*The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.*

Children's Worship:

Parents who wish may send children grades K5-3rd to meet leaders in the Lobby. Children will return to their families following Communion, through the side doors to your right.

THE WORD

Scripture Reading

Song of Solomon 1:15; 2:3-7; 4:1-9; 8:4, NIV

Lover

^{1:15}How beautiful you are, my darling!
Oh, how beautiful!
Your eyes are doves.

Beloved

^{2:3} Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest
is my lover among the young men.
I delight to sit in his shade,
and his fruit is sweet to my taste.
⁴ He has taken me to the banquet hall,
and his banner over me is love.
⁵ Strengthen me with raisins,
refresh me with apples,
for I am faint with love.
⁶ His left arm is under my head,
and his right arm embraces me.
⁷ Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you
by the gazelles and by the does of the field:

Do not arouse or awaken love
until it so desires.

Lover

^{4:1} How beautiful you are, my darling!
Oh, how beautiful!
Your eyes behind your veil are doves.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
descending from Mount Gilead.
² Your teeth are like a flock of sheep just shorn,
coming up from the washing.
Each has its twin;
not one of them is alone.
³ Your lips are like a scarlet ribbon;
your mouth is lovely.
Your temples behind your veil
are like the halves of a pomegranate.
⁴ Your neck is like the tower of David,
built with elegance;
on it hang a thousand shields,
all of them shields of warriors.
⁵ Your two breasts are like two fawns,
like twin fawns of a gazelle
that browse among the lilies.
⁶ Until the day breaks
and the shadows flee,
I will go to the mountain of myrrh
and to the hill of incense.
⁷ All beautiful you are, my darling;
there is no flaw in you.
⁸ Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
come with me from Lebanon.
Descend from the crest of Amanah,
from the top of Senir, the summit of Hermon,
from the lions' dens
and the mountain haunts of the leopards.
⁹ You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride;
you have stolen my heart
with one glance of your eyes,
with one jewel of your necklace.

Beloved

^{8:4} Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you:
Do not arouse or awaken love
until it so desires.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Dr. Jimmy Agan

Learning to Love God's Word: Song of Solomon

Worship through Giving

Isaiah 62:5(b)

Wake Up, O Daughter of Zion
based on Isaiah 52:1-2, Isaiah 62:1-5 and Psalm 45

Call to Renewal: Preparing for the Easter Season

Rev. Luke Brodine

SENDING

The Solid Rock

Benediction

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, NIV

Loving our community to life by pursuing gospel restoration