



Day One: Nothing He Didn't Give

We've just seen last week that in YOU, Jesus finds the most incredible things. In you He finds joy, beauty, inheritance and treasure, and that He has fixed His eyes on you – out of everything in the entire universe, including heaven - as the most prized possession He could imagine!

He wants you to understand just how much He wants you! Imagine King Jesus, living royally in heaven, surrounded by incredible and intricate beauty. Experiencing the joy and peace of having every need met... the streets under His feet paved with gold and the buildings made with precious stones. Nothing to bring pain of any description.

Surely He could have been satisfied to stay there forever. But for you...

You see, He wants you to realise that no matter how much joy He experienced in heaven, it was nothing compared to the joy He found in you. The exquisite and perfect beauty He could see from every perspective in heaven was no drawcard to Him compared to the beauty He saw in you. The streets of gold and the sparkling treasures meant nothing to Him compared to the treasure and the inheritance that He saw in you. And so He stood up, and came down to rescue you. In short, **He gave up His past for you.**

He continued to give throughout His life on this earth. He gave of himself and of His strength. He ministered healing, deliverance, peace, joy and hope. He gave His time, His finances, His every resource. And then He went beyond that and He stretched His arms wide on that cross and gave every single thing He could possibly give. He gave every single drop of His precious life-giving blood.

John 19:33 – 34 (NASB) ...but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

One of my pastors recounted her experience of being called for jury duty in a murder case. The intruder had come into a girl's bedroom and slit her throat and left her to die. The jury was required to see the evidence, and it was explained to them that blood and water had come from her... because water is what comes out when there is not a drop of blood left in the body.



In so doing, Jesus gave up His life for you. **He gave up His present for you.** He chose death so that in that moment, you could choose life.

But yet even that was not enough to satisfy the love and the desire that He has for you. What is Jesus doing right now – this very moment – for you?

Hebrews 7:25 (NLT) *He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf.*

He is sitting at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for you. Not only this moment, but it says He lives to do this forever. **He has given up His future for you.** There will never be a moment in which He is not interceding and loving you through the intercession that comes forth from His heart.

He is dedicated to interceding for you every moment of every day, whether you are awake or asleep, whether you living in the flesh or the spirit, whether you're paying any attention to Him or filled with your own agendas, whether you feel strong or weak. He has dedicated Himself to your future with the very same dedication with which He remained nailed to a cross that He didn't have to endure. It's a finished promise.

His past, present and future. All for you.



How do you feel about the fact that not only has Jesus given up His past and present for you, but that He has also given up His future for you?



Day Two: How Could That Be For Me?

It's almost too hard to believe, isn't it? Like many women, you may at this point be thinking, 'How could that be for me?' We are so aware of what we're not, in the flesh... we have a tendency to wonder how Jesus could possibly ever see anything in us apart from our faults, which is what taunts us so glaringly when we look at ourselves. We can sound much like the Shulamite woman in Song of Songs:

Song of Songs 1:5 (TPT) *Jerusalem maidens, in this twilight darkness I know I am so unworthy – so in need!*

But the Shepherd-King replies:

Yet, you are so lovely!

Sometimes you still don't believe it. So you say it again:

I feel as dark and dry as the desert tents of the wandering nomads!

And He again replies:

Yet you are so lovely – like the fine linen tapestry hanging in the Holy Place!

If you continue reading through Song of Songs, you'll see that it took a little while for her to be convinced, but the Shulamite bride had to make a choice. She could either continue believing what she felt about herself – that she was unworthy, in need, dark, dry and wandering. Or she could choose to believe what her Shepherd-King said about her – that she was lovely!

And incredibly, she chose to believe Him! The realisation – when she received the revelation of it - was absolute joy for her:

Song of Songs 2:1 (TPT) *I'm truly His rose, the very theme of His song! I'm His ever-fresh lily, thriving on His love, growing in the valley!*

And this, my precious and beautiful friends, is the choice that each and every one of us must now make.

We have spent many, many weeks peering in to the love that Jesus has for us. And be sure, we may feel amazed at what we've seen, yet it is still only a glimpse, because He told us we would never plumb the height, depth, width



and length of it. Yet the point comes in which we must decide whose report we will believe. The report of Jesus? Or the report we've written about ourselves?

We may not understand how He can look at us and call us lovely despite how we look in our own eyes, or to the outside. Yet He sees us not after the flesh but after the spirit. He accepts us regardless of our outward actions – because He's not focussed on that at all. He knows that we've been made in the image of Christ, He knows the jewel that is inside of us, and He speaks to it prophetically in honour and love. He doesn't even remember our sins, and His love for us has no basis whatsoever in our performance because He loves us by His grace.

So what are YOU going to believe?

It's time to settle the issue of receiving the love of Jesus - the love of your Bridegroom - once and for all. Do not receive the lie that to believe yourself to be lovely is pride. It is not pride. It is faith. Of all the people in the world, you know best every fault and every failing. To believe that you are lovely because Jesus said you're lovely is a pure act of faith. To believe in the image of God and the heart of Jesus planted within you when you may not always feel or see evidence of it, is a pure act of faith. Are you going to believe what God says about you, or what you say about you?

"Any time you say anything about you that conflicts with what God says, even though it looks humble, you are in fact exalting your opinion over God's opinion and you don't have the right to have an opinion about yourself that is not based on what God says about it." Jim Richards

It's time to choose, today. Whose opinion will you believe?



Whose report have you chosen? What does it say?



Day Three: From His Side

It is only when we choose to believe in the loveliness that Jesus sees in us – His righteousness in us - that we can possibly accept the truth about our identity as His bride. Consider the symbolism of the sword which was thrust in to Jesus' side as He hung on that cross for you and I.

Just as man was both female and male and God separated the female and the male, taking the woman from Adam's side, we were part of Jesus before the foundation of the world. He is referred to in the Bible as the last Adam (see 1 Corinthians 15:45). The first Adam came and woman was taken from His side. They become one in marriage and God intended for them to rule and reign together in dominion over His creation.

In the same way, Jesus - who is called the last Adam – came and stepped into the role of the Bridegroom. His side was pierced and as every drop of blood and water flowed out of it, the church came from His side. His bride, His counterpart.

Just as Eve was Adam's counterpart – she completed him – we have been made to be Jesus counterpart and completer. While it might sound incredible for me to say this, consider how Jesus has treated His bride. He gave up His past, present and future for her. He laid down His life for her – laid Himself low to lift her up. He didn't consider His life worthier than hers. He also says she is seated in heavenly places with Him right now (see Ephesians 2:6), and that He intends for her to sit with Him ON HIS THRONE! (See Revelation 3: 21). This is how Jesus thinks of His bride – this is how He thinks of you!

Consider the words of Brian Simmons, translator of the Passion Translation, with relation to John 3:5 – 6:

John 3:5 - 6 (TPT) *Jesus answered, "I speak an eternal truth: Unless you are born of water and Spirit-wind, you will never enter the kingdom-realm of God. For the natural realm can only give birth to things that are natural, but the spiritual realm gives birth to supernatural life!*

Notes: C 3.5 This is the water of the Word of God that cleanses and gives us life. See Ephesians 5:26; 1 Peter 1:23; and James 1:18. Some see in the water and Spirit analogy the creative beginning of Genesis 1, where God's Spirit hovered over the chaotic waters. New creation life comes the same way. It was water



*and blood that came from the side of our Lord Jesus. **He was the last Adam giving birth to His bride from His pierced side.***

This certainly gives a new perspective to scriptures such as Ephesians 5:25 – 26. Jesus never tells us to do anything He has not already done Himself:

Ephesians 5:25 – 26 (NLT) *For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word.*

Jesus has given up His life for you. He has made you holy and clean. He looks at you and He sees only His counterpart, His equal, His beloved one. His side was pierced for you. He is your husband, longing for you.

All He asks for is one thing...



You are the counterpart for Jesus! How does that make you feel?



Day Four: Only One Thing

There is nothing Jesus has not done for you. There is nothing that He has not given. He doesn't ask for your perfect performance. He doesn't ask for a flawless track record. He asks for one thing and one thing only:

All He asks for is your hunger. If you are hungry for Him, He'll take care of the rest.

He has chosen us – without doubt! But He has also given us a choice. Two choices in fact! We choose whether or not to accept the cup – will we enter into betrothal with Him? This is representative of our salvation. And we also choose whether or not to step into the romance with Him.

Isaiah 30:18 (NLT) *So the Lord must wait for you to come to him so he can show you his love and compassion.*

Like a pursuing suitor, He doesn't force Himself and His will on you. We have spent months looking at how He has told you in no uncertain terms that He is enthralled by you and adores you. We've seen how He has pursued you and continues to pursue you each and every day. But now you are the one who decides how far this relationship will go. Will you accept the cup? AND will you enter into the romance as His bride?

He is saying, 'Draw near to me and I will draw near to you.' (James 4:8). You are the one who decides how close He can draw near. You are the one who sets the tone for this relationship, and it is set by your hunger – have you ever known a romance which was not characterised by the hunger to pursue, to be together, to learn more about one another, to surprise each other and bless each other? Will you pursue Him and long for Him like a hungry stomach longs for food or a thirsty tongue longs for water? Will you trust Him when He invites you further...even when you feel afraid? Will you chase him down, even when you don't see Him? Will you get up day after day after day, and pursue Him above all else?

You may well have chosen to drink from the communion cup, but are you hungry for Him and willing to romance Him and be romanced by Him? To run hand in hand with Him wherever He leads you? This is the difference between intellectual acknowledgement and romantic pursuit. Will you make this relationship one of duty and contract – like a mundane marriage? Or will you



make this relationship one of romance, adventure and longing? The ball is in YOUR court.

Soak Time

You've been asked the question many times, many ways. How close will you draw to Him and allow Him to draw to you?



Day Five: Ruined for the Ordinary

Let's distinguish this much - it's not about salvation. We see this in the allegory with the Shulamite women – she's saved, but the story is about her every increasing journey of intimacy with Him and becoming His bride (the very term indicative of romance and intimacy). We are as the Shulamite woman. The romance only truly begins when we are hungry for it. The first words she says in Song of Songs are, *"Smother me with kisses – His Spirit-kiss divine"* (Song of Songs 1:2 TPT). Hunger. She desires Him and she desires intimacy with Him.

Throughout the Song of Songs, He speaks beautifully to her, and she has to decide whether or not she believes it. As she aligns her opinion of herself with His opinion of her, she is willing to believe more, speak more and see more. She follows Him further. And the further she goes with Him, the more she wants Him, the more she trusts Him, and the more adventures they share.

Her desire for Him intensifies continually. Just listen to the hunger in her voice:

Song of Songs 1:7 (TPT) *For I wish to be wrapped all around you...It is you I long for with no veil between us.*

Song of Songs 3:1 – 4 (TPT) *How my heart now aches for Him...*

Song of Songs 5:16 (TPT) *Everything about Him fills me with holy desire.*

And of course these are just some of many references to her hunger. As we follow on, we can see that each encounter becomes more intimate. Each step requires more faith. But one day she makes the decision that defines all decisions...

Song of Songs 4:6 (TPT) *I've made up my mind...In spite of shadows and fears – I will go to the mountain top with You... **Yes, I will be Your bride.***

And after that, there's no turning back. She looks past her fears and makes the choice to enter into the romance. She chooses to be His bride.

This is the privilege also given to us. We must say yes to more than the betrothal - the cup. We must say yes to being His bride, and yes to His ongoing pursuit of us - to take His hand and run with Him!

As the words to *Unstoppable Love* (Kim Walker-Smith) so poignantly remind us: 'No height, no depth, no fear, no pain and no death can separate me from Your



love'. If distance can't separate us from His love, fear and pain – the devil's strategies - can't do it and even death can't tear us apart from Him, then what on earth can possibly separate us from His love?

Only ourselves. We are the only ones who can separate us from His love. His love is consistent and unchanging. It's always in hot pursuit of us. We can never extinguish His passionate love. It's always there, burning like a fire. But we can walk away from it. We can distance ourselves from Him. We can refuse to run with Him when He asks us to take His hand.

In other words, we can shut down the process at any time.

Or, we can be hungry and choose to step fully into it. It's up to us. We have to let ourselves be loved and abandon ourselves to the journey.

You are as deeply in the romance with Jesus as you want to be.

So we've come full circle, back to the beginning of the *One Heart* message, in which we said that:

There is a difference between:

- *Loving Jesus and being in a romance with Him.* This is our **HUNGER & ROMANCE.**
- *Who we think we are in Christ Jesus, and who He says we are.* This is our **IDENTITY.**
- *Believing in Jesus, and being one with Him.* This is our sense of **ONENESS with Him.**

Have your eggs been scrambled?

*Once you see the difference... once you taste His love... once you understand the treasure inside of you... once you know how it feels to be one with Him... you will be **ruined for the ordinary.***



Yes, I will be Your bride.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.