

The Most Beautiful Bride – Teaching Notes

(Song of Songs 6:4-12; 1/10/16)

Introduction: A key idea in today's Sunday School material is that the writer expressed great appreciation for a woman's beauty. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to work on both our inward and outward beauty, so that God can be glorified.

Body:

Read Song of Songs 6:4-7

I. Overwhelming Beauty. The writer expresses his admiration of the beauty of a woman who has his attention. He talks about her hair, teeth, and temples. It is almost humorous to hear him mention that she is not missing any teeth in vs. 6.

Applications –

- **Physical beauty.** Notice in vss. 4-7 that the woman is described as being very beautiful. First, physical beauty is not everything and is rather subjective. However, having some level of beauty/physical attractiveness is important. It is important for marriage (i.e., who wants to marry someone who is unattractive?), self-esteem (who wants to see themselves as unattractive), and it brings glory to God. Think about how you want your children to look, and then think about how you are a child of God. Second, a great portion of beauty is a matter of being healthy. Diet, exercise, and stress management play foundational roles in being healthy and physically attractive. *Let's work on being wise stewards of our physical beauty.* A part of this application is to determine how much "stuff" are we to add to what God has given us, so we can be "beautiful." Some believe that the more natural you are, the more truly beautiful you are. Others believe that if you can buy it then it is yours and it is fair game to be used (e.g., fake hair, fake nails, padded clothing, etc.). The Pastor will gracefully bow out of this discussion ... smile.

- **Commenting on beauty.** Notice in vss. 4-7 that the writer expressed his appreciation of the woman's beauty. First, since so many people enjoy having their efforts and attributes appreciated, it is often kind to express appreciation for a person's efforts and attributes. This may be even more the case after a couple has been married for a while. A person may doubt if they are as attractive to their spouse because the spouse doesn't express appreciation like they used to. Second, we should make sure that our expressions are appropriate. In other words, especially married men should be careful about commenting on the beauty of especially another married woman. It may be true that her 36 - 24 - 36 measurements, caramel chocolate and flawless complexion, graceful walk, and intoxicating perfume are very, very, very attention getting and holding ... smile. However, there are times when we ought **not** to comment on all that we see. And there are some things that we need to glance at and move on, instead of stay and stare. *Let's work on expressing our appreciation for beauty wisely.*

Read Song of Songs 6:8-12

II. Blessed Beauty. The writer talks about how unique the lady he loves is. She stands out among queens, concubines, and virgins. In fact, the queens and concubines praise her.

Applications –

- **Description vs. prescription.** Notice in vss. 8-9 that the writer having many women was a description of “what was,” not a prescription for “what should be.” As believers, we should focus on having one spouse at a time, if we get married at all. And if we decide to get married, we should work on a list of issues related to compatibility and discerning God’s will. *Let’s focus on being married to one person at a time (if we are going to be married at all), not multiple people, as in the text.*

- **More than outward beauty.** Notice in vss. 8-9 that the woman is blessed and praised by apparently the writer’s other women. This seems to imply that this woman had more going for her than physical beauty. As believers, there should definitely be more to us than physical beauty. We should strive to have and demonstrate Christian character. Even when time takes our outward attractiveness away, we can still have inward attractiveness that is honored by God. *Let’s work on having Christian character, in addition to physical beauty.*

- **Live by what is known.** Notice in vs. 12 that there is great debate about what this text means. A great point for us is to make sure that we don’t become so distracted by the unknown that we stop living by what we do know. On one hand, we should seek God’s wisdom about how much energy should be given to understanding the unknown. Some of what we know today used to be unknown. On the other hand, there are many things in the Bible that believers don’t have a common understanding on. This is one reason why we have a number of Christian denominations. However, we all understand and should live by things like we must accept Jesus as our savior by faith, in order to be saved. As saved people, we should strive to love God with all that we have and to love others, as we love ourselves. *Let’s work on living by what we know, instead of simply being distracted, by what we don’t know.*

Conclusion: Let’s work on both our inward and outward beauty, so that God can be glorified. God has much for those who obey His will.