



Sermon Discussion Guide for All Saints Small Groups

"Very Dark But Lovely"

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

Sermon Date: November 5, 2017

Song of Songs 1:1-2,

5-6; 4:1-4, 7

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

She

Let him kiss me with the
kisses of his mouth!
For your love is better than
wine;

⁵ I am very dark, but lovely,
O daughters of
Jerusalem,
like the tents of Kedar,
like the curtains of
Solomon.

⁶ Do not gaze at me
because I am dark,
because the sun has
looked upon me.
My mother's sons were
angry with me;
they made me keeper
of the vineyards,
but my own vineyard I
have not kept!

He

Behold, you are beautiful,
my love,
behold, you are beautiful!
Your eyes are doves
behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of
goats
leaping down the slopes
of Gilead.

² Your teeth are like a flock
of shorn ewes
that have come up from
the washing,
all of which bear twins,
and not one among them
has lost its young.

³ Your lips are like a scarlet

INTRO Question

Are there things in your life that you or the world tell you are life-giving but are actually stealing life from you?

Background:

Tim introduced the historical context of Paul's writings to the Ephesians with a description of the art found in Pompeii as it had been preserved by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. Casual sex and curious practices seemed to have flourished there; and thus, Paul's word was not much different than ours: fraught with ways of living that are so discordant with how we were created that they bring consequences in real time.

Citing Song of Songs, Tim highlighted the restraint, affection, and love evident in this excerpt of ancient Hebrew love poetry. The husband in this passage sees his bride through the lens of love, and his love makes her beautiful, despite her claim that she is "dark," indicating a life of labor and poverty. The spiritual application of this text is that God sees us and delights in us. Jesus's death enables us to be seen as lovely.

The goal of God's grace is to cleanse and love us, enabling the church to be presented to him without "dark spiritual sun-spots." With every touch of grace: the word preached, the sacraments, the table, baptism and corporate prayer, we are made more holy.

Read the sermon Scripture text aloud ([see below](#)).

Discuss:

- 1.) Tim said that what led to Christianity's spread through the Roman world was actually its stark contrast to the Roman culture. In what ways do your life practices look different than those of the culture around you? In what ways do they look the same?
- 2.) A culture's art displays its values. Among other things, art can mean music, movies, shows and advertisements. Do you participate in live-giving art?
- 3.) God sees you as beautiful. Where is the gospel at work in this concept?
- 4.) How could a real belief in the source of your true worth affect what you do with your body and mind?

Conclusion/Application:

Tim closed with Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians: put it to the test. "Walk in the way that's pleasing to the Lord and you will not be disappointed. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8-10).

thread,
and your mouth is lovely.
Your cheeks are like halves
of a pomegranate
behind your veil.
⁴Your neck is like the tower
of David,
built in rows of stone;^[a]
on it hang a thousand
shields,
all of them shields of
warriors.
You are altogether
beautiful, my love;
there is no flaw in you.

Ephesians 5:1-10, 25-27

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ²And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. ⁵For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

John 4:7-10, 13-17

⁷A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸(For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) ⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

¹³Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.^[a] The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ¹⁵The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." ¹⁷The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'.

By: Erin Holcomb