

## HOW TO COME TO TERMS WITH YOURSELF

### INTRODUCTION

We have just completed our 25 days' study of Song of Solomon. For those of us who participated, we have found ourselves falling into a deeper love-relationship with Jesus. We found ourselves captivated by the love of Jesus as we unraveled this beautiful love story, the song of ALL songs. It is symbolic of the love Jesus has for His bride and it serves as an example of how we should love Him, as well as our spouses, in return.

Jesus is absolutely amazing and its actually not so hard to fall in love with Him. **Simple acceptance of ourselves is however an entirely different concept!**

Sadly many people struggle with this very thing – they can't accept themselves, they even despise and hate themselves because of things they have said or done, mistakes they have made, failures and so on. This can manifest in their character in a number of ways for example:

- They suffer from low self-worth, or they feel they have to prove themselves to others, or they can become withdrawn and avoid contact with others. In extreme cases they can hurt themselves e.g. cutting.

But did you know that loving ourselves is actually a biblical expectation? Jesus said to the teacher of the Law – the second and EQUAL commandment after loving God is to love your neighbour ...**as yourself.**

Then Paul wrote in **Ephesians 5:28-29** (NLT) In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives **as they love their own bodies.** For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. 29 No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church.

- Do these verses speak of a vain type of love (I'm too sexy for my shirt!)? **No**, that has its roots in pride and reflects the attitude in **2 Timothy 3:2** For people will love only themselves and their money.
- Does it speak of an acceptance of ourselves and a comfortable relationship with our very person? – Yes.
- To go deeper, does it speak about coming to terms with ourselves with all our faults, failures and even our not-so good looks? – Yes.

So if God expects us to love ourselves – **the Bible states it as a given** – and even instructs us to love others like we love ourselves, then we have a big problem if we are battling to come to terms with ourselves.

This morning I want to share some keys to dealing with this problem so many people struggle with.

### MESSAGE

## I AM DARK

This woman we read of in Song of Songs is key in helping us come to terms with ourselves. She was dark skinned, not like the other maidens otherwise she would not have mentioned it.

**Song of Solomon 1:5 & 6a**(NLT) I am dark but beautiful, O women of Jerusalem— dark as the tents of Kedar, dark as the curtains of Solomon's tents. 6 Don't stare at me because I am dark— The sun has darkened my skin.

Kedar or Kadaar, means to be black skinned like the black goats from which the tents were made.

Do you see what she has done? As You read Song of Solomon 1, The "Beloved" doesn't mention her skin, but she is acutely aware of it. "I am beautiful but..."  
**Don't stare at me because I am dark... and she blames the sun!**

**Illustration:** By example, let me show you this in a familiar picture:

A husband and wife are getting ready to go to a glitzy year-end party at his workplace. The husband gets dressed, puts on his fancy shirt and tux with once-a year bowtie. He's ready in 10 minutes.

The wife on the other hand started much earlier, she's been out since early morning. She's had a facial and her nails are stunningly done. She had a hairdo, not a hair is out of place. She slides her R 2000 dress on with her matching high heel shoes (another R 1000) and her handbag (another R 3250). Around R 8000 later she is absolutely stunning she looks perfect. He looks at his gorgeous wife and thinks wow. I am so blessed, and I get to bring her home!

She looks great, she goes to the mirror and as she stands there in all her beauty. Suddenly, she sees the slightest bulge in the dress as it hugs her hips and she bursts into tears, mascara running all over, hairdo damaged as she wipes her tears over her beautiful locks. He looks at her gob smacked... "what's wrong?" he says, to which she replies, "Everything's perfect...**but**...I'm just so fat and ugly!".

- *In Song of Solomon the young man says: "You are beautiful my darling, beautiful in every way". That's what Jesus thinks as He sees us who are born-again.*
- *And today, there are people here who are saying – I believe, I'm born-again, but...*

*There is always a but, and that but is what is keeping you from the fullness and abundance of life that this wonderful Saviour of ours has for us!*

- ***Until that but is dealt with, we will never be able to accept the grace that is theirs in Christ Jesus.***

- ***Until that but is dealt with, we will never be able to love others as they love themselves because we will be struggling to love ourselves.***
- ***Until that but is dealt with, husbands, we will never be able to love our wives as we are instructed in Ephesians 5 – that we love them as we love ourselves. And I believe it works the same for the wives.***

### **THAT “BUT” MAKES US FEEL LIKE OUTCASTS!**

In our study on Song of Songs, the Solomon states that the Shulamite woman despised the thought of having to wear a veil, and for good reason:

**Song of Songs 1:7** (NKJV) Tell me, O you whom I love, Where you feed your flock, Where you make it rest at noon. For why should I be as one who veils herself By the flocks of your companions.

**Why would she need to veil herself?** Could it possibly have been to hide this darkness that she was so aware of? She detested the thought – “Why should I need to veil myself”.

- In Bible times, prostitutes wore veils – to hide their identity and to hide their shame, but also to identify them for who they were.
- Lepers too had to cover the lower parts of their faces. They were rejected by society and lived incredibly lonely lives.

The veiled face speaks about shame and loneliness. Our failures and sins have the ability to make us feel guilty, full of shame and unworthy of the love of Christ. They can easily make us turn away from Him and say, don’t look, I’m so dirty”. This is a lonely place and like the Shulamite woman, I believe that the Lord wants us to detest such thinking of ourselves.

***But this woman had the answer too. She wanted to be in her lover’s presence (where are you my love), there, she would find no need to wear a veil, there she would sense and experience unconditional acceptance.***

- ***God is calling us today to shun the veil of guilt and the sense of rejection.***
- ***He says “You don’t need to be alone anymore!”***
- ***He is calling us to seek His flock and remain in His presence.***
- ***Romans 8:1 says – there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.***

We need to start seeing ourselves the way Jesus sees us:

**Song of Solomon 4:7**(NLT) You are altogether beautiful, my darling, beautiful in every way.

### **SO HOW DO WE GET TO THE POINT OF ACCEPTING OURSELVES?**

We realise that we are accepted in the beloved:

**Ephesians 1:3-6** (NKJV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

- We realise that God chose us since before the foundation of the world.
- He predestined us to be adopted as His children.
- We realise that it was never up to us – God did it through Jesus Christ.

Here's that same scripture I read earlier, but this time I read the NKJV:

**Song of Solomon 4:7**(NKJV) You are all fair, my love, And **there is no spot in** you.

God knows us inside out, He knows we are sinners and He is able to make us beautiful in His sight:

- When we give our hearts to Jesus, He covers every spot. God doesn't see our dark skins, He doesn't see our guilt and shame, He sees Jesus!

**Ephesians 5:25-27**(NLT) For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her 26 to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. 27 **He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.**

- We are cleansed, without spot or blemish (darkness of sin) by the blood of Jesus Christ. He makes us holy and without fault.
- As we accept Jesus work on the cross for us, it will remove our guilt and help us to love and accept ourselves, just as He loves and accepts us!

***My challenge today is that we will accept what Jesus has done for us***

- ***We are without spot or wrinkle or any other blemish.***
- ***We need to speak it out!***
- ***We need to ask God to give us a revelation of how He sees us - our study of Song of Songs will go a long way in helping us to do so.***

## **CONCLUSION**

How do we come to terms with ourselves today? How do we not see ourselves as dark, or like the wife in my illustration, "fat and ugly"? How do we stop the tears? In fact, how do we learn to love ourselves again?

- 1.** We simply believe!
- 2.** We realise that Jesus sees us as beautiful beyond words.
- 3.** We realise that He has dealt with the darkness, He has removed the spots and blemishes and He sees us as holy and without fault!
- 4.** We run into His presence and ask Him to grant us the grace to see ourselves the way that He sees us.

Jesus wants to restore our self-worth. He wants to remove our self-condemnation. He wants to take away the hurt and the pain that makes young girls want to cut themselves. Let us call out to Him and trust Him to help us love ourselves the way His Word says we should.