



02DivineRomance

0:00:00.3 Speaker 1: Are you dissatisfied with your spiritual progress, feeling stuck without knowing why, even after deliverance, prayers or years of therapy? Recover your dignity, find your purpose and discover the thrill of walking with God once again. Explore spiritual consultations with Sonja at biblestudyevangelista.com. Click "go deeper" on the homepage, then "one on one", and find out how to cooperate more deeply the Holy Spirit's action in your life with a spiritual consultation.

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[music]

0:00:51.7 Sonja Corbitt: Welcome to the Bible Study Evangelista Show, I'm Sonja Corbitt Catholic evangelista and we are in our cherished series, episode number two, The Divine Romance.

0:01:02.4 SC: I love this subject. I have been looking forward to doing the show, and it took me a little bit to sort of get back in the swing of things after the craziness of my son's wedding, and they are actually back, they're on their way back from their honeymoon right now, so I'm looking forward to seeing them after all of the celebration. We're talking about how God uses your vocation to heal you, and we spoke last week about neediness and how we are created to be needy, and that's one of the lies I think that we believe from the enemy, especially when we're wounded. Particularly by our parents, and the Catechism actually says that it is our parents from whom we receive the first images and understanding of who God is, God our Father. And so because of that, our woundedness distorts, especially our woundedness through our parents, distorts our view of who God is, and the fact that he does cherish us, and the fact that we were made needy and that our neediness is not an inconvenience, it's not a mark of sin, it's not anything bad at all, it's actually part of our creativeness, and so to understand that and to lean into it...

0:02:30.1 SC: It's similar to what Paul was saying when he said, I will boast in my weakness. Because through my weakness, God shows the power of his strength. His strength is made perfect in my weakness, he said. And he's talking about that neediness, we need everything, and the sooner we can accept that and lean into it rather than resist it, the sooner we begin to make progress in the spiritual life. And it is woundedness that keeps us closed off, we build these walls and pretend that we don't need what we need. And so that's why we talked about that in that first show, we were made with that need, we were made with an eternal need, and so nothing created can assuage or satisfy that need because that need was created to be satisfied by God Himself, who is eternal, so he is the only one who can fill that need, and that neediness is... We could say, neediness is next to godliness. So we talked about that in the first show. Today we're gonna talk about the divine romance, what it means to be cherished, because I don't know about you, but I grew up...

0:03:46.7 SC: I was on restriction all the time as a child, and so I was confined to my room for days and weeks and even months, and the only thing I was allowed to do when I was on restriction is do work books for school. My dad would go like to Walmart or whatever, and buy workbooks that were meant to complement the grade in school that you were in, so he would buy those and I would do that, or my mom would take me to the library, and I was... I was able to check out as many books as they would let me at the time, and bring them home and read them, and so I would read a whole stack of 13 books in a day or two.

0:04:27.0 SC: Because that's all I was allowed to do when I was on restriction. And so I didn't understand God's love, I didn't believe He loved me, I believed I was bad, inherently, like there was something legitimately wrong with my whole being. I dealt with shame and guilt extensively, and because of that woundedness, I didn't understand God. I always felt like he was... He was out to punish me, he was looking for something that I had done wrong, and of course, there was plenty of that because I was constantly getting in trouble and doing things I shouldn't have been doing, and now of course, I know that most of that was acting out looking for that attention from my dad, but it definitely disordered my view of God and my view of love and my view of what it means to be loved particularly by another man, and so I looked for love in all the wrong places as everybody says, and I didn't understand God's love.

0:05:32.7 SC: I was afraid... I was afraid of God. And I tell the story quite often that it was my aunt who said to me one time that when she prayed, she imagined herself climbing up in God's lap, and I just remember thinking that was the weirdest thing I had ever heard. I had no desire whatsoever to be in God's lap, because being in my father's lap was very uncomfortable, not because of any sort of physical abuse, but just because I was so afraid of him, and although technically, I guess... Well, that doesn't matter. So...

0:06:08.2 SC: Because my view of God was disordered and my view of love was disordered, it was very difficult for me to believe that God did love me, and it wasn't until I became serious about my faith that God began to reveal himself to me and has loved to me. And so, we are made with that eternal need to be cherished, and we are made to have that need satisfied, but how do we get that need satisfied, how do we experience God's love at a level that is personal and life changing and transformative and healing because ultimately, it is God who heals, it is God and His love that heals us.

0:07:00.3 SC: Love heals, and that's part of why it's necessary that we have good relationships, because when we don't, especially in our infancy and adolescence and childhood and all that, if we're not loved properly, then we don't develop properly, we don't grow properly, and our view of love is distorted and so we have all kinds of issues with that moving forward as adults. And so part of what is important to understand about being cherished is that ultimately God wants us to experience His love.

0:07:35.6 SC: And it is a promise that he will. But we have to dispose ourselves for that, most of the time. Now, there are cases in which God overwhelms people out of the blue, they're not looking for him, and he just shows up and he gives them an overwhelming sense of His love. I actually just saw an account this week of a very amazing conversion, and it was like that, that's what happened, but that's not the rule, because God is not transactional, he wants to build a relationship. And so we get his love in these big healing doses, a lot of times, sometimes we get that in adoration or a

healing service or deliverance or something like that, we get a big dose of his love and it is very healing, but it's not complete. And so healing then is both an event and it's a process, but ultimately healing comes from God's love. So we need to know what it means to be cherished, we need to know what love really is. And so the Catechism tells us, and I absolutely love this statement, the Catechism tells us that the Trinity is the most intimate secret of God.

0:08:54.1 SC: I mean, I think I could sit and ponder that for the rest of my life. The most intimate secret of God. I have very often asked God, what is on your heart? What are you thinking about? What do you want? What do you want me to know about you? And I remember as I was sort of first stepping out in a very suspicious attempt to understand who God is, and mostly for me, that happened through the scriptures, as I sort of stepped out in this attempt to be disciplined in seeking God. That was one of the things that really drew me. I saw the account in Exodus where Moses goes to God and he says, I want to see your glory. And I just remember reading that and I thought, I wanna see your glory God. I wanna see too. I wanna know what Moses experienced. And of course, you have the story where God says, Okay, we'll meet with me on the mountain and I will hide you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with my hand, and I will pass by. And he does so, he passes by, and when He passes by Moses in the cleft of the rock under the covering of His hand, what He says to Moses is the proclamation of His name, and it is a more full description than the name that he gave him at the burning bush, which we'll come back to.

0:10:28.2 SC: That's a reoccurring theme. But what struck me about that story is that Moses asked God for something impossible. God actually tells him in that account that it would kill him, the account is actually in Exodus. I think I might have said Genesis, if I did, it's in Exodus, Chapters 33 and 34. And Moses asks God to see his glory in verse 18, and God said, I will make all My goodness pass before you and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion or mercy on whom I will have compassion. But He said, You cannot see my face, for no man shall see me and live. And the Lord said, Here's a place beside me and you shall stand on the rock, and so it shall be while my glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away my hand and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen. And I just find that the most compelling.

0:11:35.8 SC: I mean, I just I wanted to see God's glory too. If he can do it for Moses, and it was impossible, perhaps he would let me know something too.

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[music]

0:12:55.0 SC: I believe that God is simply waiting to be desired so strongly that he can reveal Himself in this kind of way to people. I believe it. In part, I believe it because I've experienced it. But the word glory there, when Moses says, I wanna say Your glory, you get the idea of the weight or the significance or the importance. And so Moses requested an even greater sense of God's presence than he had already experienced and he had already experienced more than any other person, apart from possibly Abraham, he saw God in the burning bush, he saw the fire of God in that burning bush, and yet he's asking for more.

0:13:41.8 SC: I just believe that God loves that kind of request, and I remember reading Teresa of Avila saying that God wants us to ask for big things because he wants to grant those to us, and I think that our disillusionment and the ways that we're wounded and that we grow up, we're afraid to do that, but my encouragement to you is that if you feel drawn to that kind of... This story about Moses, I pray you ask God, I pray you ask him for an experience of His love. So God actually responded in the affirmative. It says there, the goodness of God is speaking of His wonder, of His divine attributes, His majesty and that essential worth, the beingness of God. And it is amazing to me that he grants this gift to Moses so tenderly and so carefully, and it was a completely audacious response, or request on Moses part to ask for something like that, and perhaps it is for each of us, but I wanted that, I wanted to know who God is, but I wanted to know directly from him. I had heard lots of things about him, and you have too. You have heard a lot of things about God, but perhaps you've never, you don't know him.

0:15:12.8 SC: And this is your invitation today, I am asking you to ask him for that experience of His love, because the Trinity is the most intimate secret of God, and the essence there is the relationship. So for those of us who have been hurt and we put up those walls against relationships with other people, the stoic, we pretend we don't need other people. I can remember, I'm a pretty type A person, and I can remember being so frustrated with other people because they didn't do things the way I wanted them done, or they weren't done well enough or whatever, and I'd get frustrated and I would just... I would just do it myself. Just forget it, I'm not even gonna ask anybody else, I'll just do it myself. And I remember [chuckle] I got so dependent on myself and so self-sufficient and even self-righteous that God, He removed those relationships from me so that I had to depend on other people. There was a time in my life where I had to learn how to be independent because I had left my parents home, my mom's home, so I had to learn how to be independent, but I got very independent, and as I entered church and I started to really be active in church, that independence spilled over into self-sufficiency and self-righteousness, and as it did, the Lord sort of let me build that because I'm a firm believer in do things as excellently, you don't have to them perfectly 'cause we're not perfect, but we have to do them excellently.

0:16:43.5 SC: So he let me sort of grow in that until it got... It got very out of balance. And then he removed the ability for me to do things myself, and he started to direct me more toward community and toward relationship, and I found that very odd until I started to think about God in terms of Trinity, so for men especially this is a little more difficult because women are relaters and we get relationships, and we're all about those. Men are not so much. And so this is a great way to bring into balance a man's proclivity towards separation from relationships from other people, and I mean close relationships, the kind that are actually truly intimate, the kind that are cherishing. And so the Trinity shows us that we're meant for that, not just with God, although that is the primary relationship that we're talking about and the primary vocation, we're talking about God, how God

uses our vocation to heal us, this is our first vocation. So our relationship to him is first, but then we're also made to relate to other people, that's one of the things that Adam and Eve needed in the garden was the relationship between the two of them.

0:18:00.1 SC: And God is a relationship, and because He is, that tells us that relationships are very, very important to him. So we can't just cut people off out of a sense of hurt or revenge or anger or whatever. I have that in my family, and I was actually... That was a big habit for me, when I first got married I would give my husband the silent treatment 'cause that's how I grew up, and I just... If I wanted you to know I was upset, I just wouldn't speak to you, and that's how I learned, and he learned it from me, and then he started doing it to me and I was like, Oh, heck no, this ain't happening. So I started changing my ways because I didn't like that, I didn't like that separation. Reconciliation is of the Lord, and so we have to do everything that we can to provide reconciliation after we've been healed, but with boundaries.

0:18:49.9 SC: And that's a whole different subject. But my point here is that God is a relationship, and that's the most intimate secret of God, according to the Catechism, is that relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It says God has revealed His innermost secret. God Himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and He has destined us to share in that exchange, that's in the Catechism 2:21. And then in 2:34, it says the mystery of the Holy Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian faith in life. It is the mystery of God in Himself. So the Trinity is the most intimate secret of God, and it is the central mystery of the Christian faith. Not the Eucharist. I find that very interesting. The central mystery of the Christian faith is not the Eucharist, it is the Trinity.

0:19:40.6 SC: And so to contemplate the Trinity, to contemplate relationship, the relationship between the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and the relationship that we are to have as our primary vocation with the Trinity, I mean, mind blown, you could really just sit there with that forever and ever. Recently my youngest son was reading Dante, his Divine Comedy for school, and he was talking about this vision that Dante had in Paradiso of a rose, a rose in the center of the Heavenly realms, which included the disciples and apostles, the most holy saints, and then the Trinity.

0:20:26.0 SC: And I have heard that metaphor before, this flower of fire, the Trinity is said to be some sort of flower of fire, and that picture... I wish I could get my head around it, I can't. But that's sort of how I try to put in words this idea of the Trinity for me. For me, it comes from Dante. But I noticed in the readings over the last couple of weeks that a couple of scriptures were given to us in the readings that included the word cherished, and one of them was out of Proverbs 8, and it talks about creation and how wisdom was present at creation. Speaking of wisdom, in Proverbs 8, verse 30 and 31, it says, "When I was beside him like a master workman and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men." That delight and rejoicing, that's the word there for cherished.

0:21:36.6 SC: So, wisdom, cherished creation. And humanity, men and women, you and I, wisdom, the spirit of God cherishes creation. I love that, I love that idea of the dance, the play, the rejoicing, and it brought to mind as I read it in the readings, it brought to mind for me, Mary, my soul rejoices in God, my Savior, that rejoice idea, dance, play. Rejoice, that cherishing idea. And interestingly, this passage in Proverbs is the first reading for the mass on the Feast of the Holy Trinity, in [0:22:15.3] _____. I found that interesting too. There was also a passage from Tobit, "Give thanks to the Lord with righteousness and bless the King of the Ages so that your tabernacle may be rebuilt in you with joy." Your tabernacle being your house, your soul.

0:22:31.0 SC: "May he gladden within you all who are captives; may he cherish within you all who are distressed for all generations to come." I love that, there's so much in that to unpack too. "May he gladden within you all who are captives," that's all of us in bondage to sin and self-medication and disordered views of God and lack of love and all the things that we find ourselves mired in because of our wounded-ness. He said, "May he gladden within you all who are captives," that's you and me, "and may he cherish within you all who are distressed for all generations to come." And there's that idea of generational healing there in that passage in Tobit, and that was in the readings over the past couple of weeks during that break that we had.

0:23:19.2 SC: So beautiful confirmation of this idea of being cherished and cherishing. Now because the liturgy is given to us, the standard translation for the liturgy is the NAB, and so you won't get that word cherished in other translations, it's translated in the RSBCE as rejoice or delight, but in the NAB it is cherished, just for us, I'm sure.

[pause]

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[music]

0:24:37.0 SC: Now, probably superlatively interesting for me was, I was the lector for my son's wedding, and I read the readings from Genesis that talk about bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. And the two shall become one flesh. And then for the New Testament reading, I read out of Ephesians 5, which is the beautiful passage by Paul where he talks about the mystery of Christ and the church, and he talks about marriage. And in Ephesians 5:29, it uses the word cherished. And as I was standing there reading that passage, that word just leaped out at me in Verse 29, "For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church."

0:25:35.1 SC: Now, I'm not gonna read that whole passage because we're gonna probably do it next week, but I want to point out something exquisite. The Bible begins and ends with marriage, it begins in Genesis with Adam and Eve, and it ends with the marriage supper of the lamb in the Book of Revelation. So marriage is the picture of that divine romance, and the marriage is meant to be between you and your soul and God. Christ is the groom, and we, the church, are the bridegroom. Now, for men, this imagery is a little difficult, but every soul is feminine in relationship to God, because every soul receives from God. We don't give anything to God. God gives to us from the abundance and the overflow of His love, He created us in that love, and He gives to us from that love. So every soul then receives from God, every soul is feminine in relationship to God, so no matter what your state in life, or your tertiary vocation or your secondary vocation.

0:26:57.6 SC: Our first vocation is always to God, our secondary vocation would be marriage, singleness, religious life, priesthood, that kind of thing. Whatever your vocation is, as far as your state in life, it makes no difference because your vocation ultimately is to God himself, the Trinity,

the most intimate secret of God, and He has revealed it to us in His word, and He shows us with marriage as the two bookends of the Bible, that marriage is the picture of the relationship of God with the soul. So that passage then in Ephesians 5:29, it's talking about marriage and how it images that Trinity, how it is a picture of Jesus and the church, you are the church. And it talks about the cross and the Eucharist, it says that he gives his body to the church, so it is a full and complete self-donation. That is how he shows us how much he cherishes us in a general way, for all of us.

0:28:08.5 SC: The cross shows you what love means, it means a total and complete all consuming self-donation, self-sacrifice, that's what the cross is. Unto death, to give your body and your being to another. Now we'll talk about boundaries and all that in later shows, I'm just talking right now about your relationship to God. You cannot give too much to God, you cannot possibly... There is, if you gave everything you were and everything you had to God, it would still never be enough, we're just limited, we're limited. But the beauty of this trinitarian idea as the most intimate secret of God is that He wants you in that relationship with him, he wants that relationship with you. He wants you, he cherishes you already, but he wants to be cherished by you. And so approach him on those terms, on the terms of even on trembling knees, approach him with the desire for that love.

0:29:21.6 SC: Okay. So the cross and the Eucharist then show us what love is, it is a complete self-donation when it is in the best interest of the other. No, there was no salvation for humanity, there was no saving us, unless God came. And he did and he gave everything. We think of Jesus as just dying on the cross, and that was his sacrifice, but that's not the case. His sacrifice began with his conception. The sacrifice began when he left heaven, when he stepped out of heaven and entered into the body of a human woman, and as an infant, helpless, vulnerable, his first breath, every breath after that, every act of obedience, every single action of his as a human being, first of all, but then also as a Jewish man in relationship to God, the Jewish God, all of those things were sacrifices. And had he failed in any of those up to the point of his final donation on the cross, that last final and complete sacrifice, where he gave His very body and blood. If he had failed in any of those moments before the cross, then none of it could have been salvific eternally for us.

0:30:58.5 SC: He was a perfect sacrifice. He is a perfect sacrifice, but then he goes even further. I mean, he's resurrected from the dead, and then he gives himself to us in the species of bread and wine. I mean just, that is love, people. That is love. We're looking for love in other people, when the love has been demonstrated to us from the foundation of the world, if we will just sit and contemplate the cross and the Eucharist, and the love with which Jesus came and died. And this is another thing that blew me away about Dante's Divine Comedy, and I mentioned this on the community, you can go to my website and click community there, and we had this little discussion about how God creates every soul directly, that was a quote out of Dante's Paradiso. And Beatrice, who was his spiritual guide through heaven, she makes this comment that God creates each soul directly, and I just...

0:32:05.3 SC: I was totally arrested by that. I believe that, I always have, and it's actually talked to us in the Catechism, but the way it was presented in that poetry and the word directly, it just struck me that God has a personal... His activity in creating us is personal and immediate. It is direct, the Catechism uses the word immediate, but the point is, it is a direct action of God himself, and that is why the soul is eternal because it is directly created by God, and everything God creates is from love. You were directly in God's mind and created by God from love. You are cherished. Right now, this very moment, you are cherished, you were made out of that love directly by God. That means... And I don't know why that struck me as so shocking, except that when you think of

reproduction and the science behind it, it seems so automatic. Two bodies come together, the sperm meets the egg, and voila, you have another human being, or you have another cat, or you have another duck or whatever.

0:33:24.3 SC: Reproduction is a... It's a matter of science and biology and stuff, it's automatic, and yet the Catechism uses the word procreation, not reproduction, it uses the word procreation because we're co-creators with God, God immediately creates a human soul from the act of love in marriage. Oh gosh, I'm sorry. [laughter] And it is his particip... Well, it's our participation in His creation, that we are doing in that act of love, sexual intimacy in marriage. I know I'm not conveying the half of how spectacular and lofty and mysterious all of this is, but the whole marriage idea is this image of the most intimate secret of God, the Trinity, and we are made to participate in that, God wants you to experience being cherished. And so the Bible begins and ends with marriage, we see that mystery of Christ in the church, we see the word cherished in Ephesians 5:29, that talks about that mystery of Christ in the church, marriage images Trinity, the Trinity of God, and we, each of us is married to God.

0:34:55.7 SC: However you can get your mind around that, then do so, and for the guys, I know it's harder, but whatever idea you have in your mind of the ultimate life or the ultimate female, God can fulfill that for you. And for us, ladies, whatever idea in your mind you have of the perfect husband, the perfect man, the perfect father, for all of us, the perfect father, God can and will fulfill that for you if you will just seek Him on those terms. And I will prove it to you through the Song of Solomon when we get back.

[music]

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[music]

0:36:37.1 SC: My very first Bible Study that I ever wrote was called the Secret Place, and it was about the themes in The Song of Solomon. The Song of Solomon is in the wisdom genre, remember we talked about creation and wisdom, and cherishing and dancing and playing out of Proverbs. The Song of Solomon is in the wisdom genre, and it's called The Song of Songs, in some translations, depending on which one we use. The Song of Songs. And I've said this before, in the Hebrew language, they did not have superlatives. In English, we say good, better, best. But in the Hebrew, they didn't have that kind of language. Instead, when they wanted to convey the superlative of something, they would say it three times, holy, holy, holy Lord God of host, or they would say, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, song of songs. So the Song of Solomon, that is the most beautiful song ever written, it's in the wisdom genre, it's racy. [chuckle]

0:37:44.0 SC: It's racy in ancient language anyway, it's kind of corny, actually in several places, which I'll show you in just a moment. But it's racy enough that only Jewish men were allowed to read it first of all, remember that this is part of the Old Testament, so this... It's written in Hebrew.

And so only Jewish men were allowed to read it, but then they could only read it once they reached the age of 30. And it's this love poetry, it's a song of love poetry, and that's part of what makes it so hard to read, because you've got all these parties, it's like a play. You have this group of people saying this and then this group of people chimes in, and it's just like a play where you've got lots of different actors with lots of different roles and lines, and so that makes it hard to read, but I dare you to read it, I dare you. The Song of Solomon gives this beautiful love song, sort of play idea, and when I say play, I mean like theater, and although there's a play on words there, isn't there, in cherish, the playing and rejoicing and dancing. But it is a song about a poor peasant woman and the richest king to ever live, King Solomon.

0:38:56.1 SC: And, he falls in love with her and she with him, and the very first Bible study I ever wrote was on this book, which is funny that God is really kinda bringing me back full circle to this in the last little bit. But part of what drew me in with this song is the very first couple of lines, the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's. The Shulamite, the word Shulamite. Now, this is a designation for the female protagonist, the Shulamite, that word Shulamite comes from shalom, peace, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love is better than wine. Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is ointment, poured forth. Now, ointment in the Old Testament was healing, okay? Your name is ointment or healing poured forth. Therefore, the virgins love you. Now, this means literal virgins, but it also means pure in heart. Therefore the virgins love you, draw me away. Oh my gosh, the language of that is so... Oh my gosh. It just drew me in, right? Draw me away. I was like, "Yes, me Lord, let me be drawn away." And then we have the Daughters of Jerusalem who say, "We will run after you."

0:40:13.4 SC: And then the Shulamite speaks again, "The King has brought me into his chambers." Now, the chamber was the inner most sanctuary of the king's palace. The chamber. You don't invite somebody into your bedroom who's just visiting, you don't invite a stranger into your bedroom if they come and drop by. And God does not invite his people into his chamber simply because they demand to see him. We have to seek him with a heart, a pure heart, a heart of love. When I say a pure heart, I don't mean chastity. Purity in the Bible is not a chastity idea, although it is sometimes, I shouldn't say it's not, but it's not just that. Purity in the Bible, when Jesus said, "The pure in heart shall see God." The pure in heart shall see God. What that means is a single focus, focused singly on Him, focus your neediness on God, focus your desire on God, focus your longing and your desperation and your... Gosh, there's no other word but neediness. Focus it on Him like a laser, and ask Him to draw you into his chambers. His most intimate secret. The King has brought me into His chambers.

0:41:33.6 SC: Oh my gosh, I'm not gonna be able to finish. I'm gonna have to stop because it just... It's overwhelming. But the whole book... Let's get to the corny parts 'cause it's funny. God is a poet here, He has written you this beautiful song, this poetry of love, it's a real live love song from God to you. The Israelites, the Jewish people understood this Song of Solomon to be about God and His people, the Jewish people. The church understands it to mean God in the church. And what I love about John of the Cross is that he understands it to mean God in the soul. So, God has written you a love song, inviting you into His intimate chamber, the King and the peasant, and that is what the Song of Songs is. In Chapter 4, we have this corny little stuff here, "Behold, you are fair my love, behold, you are fair. You have dove's eyes behind your veil." Now, that's pretty innocuous. And then he says, "Your hair is like a flock of goats going down from Mountain Gilead," which always makes me laugh, because my hair is like a flock of goats too. [chuckle] It is very unruly. But he's talking about her hair, right? "Your hair is like a flock of goats."

0:42:47.5 SC: And that doesn't really sound very complementary. And then he says, "Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep which have come up from the washing," so they're all clean. He's inspecting her teeth. He says, "Your lips are like a strand of scarlet, your temples behind your veil are like a piece of pomegranate, your neck is like the Tower of David, built for an armory, on which hang 1000 bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, which feed among the lilies." Now, you can see how kind of corny this sounds to us because this is ancient language. And I don't know, who inspects his lover's teeth? [chuckle] I think that part of this language of this book is meant to be a little off-putting, just so only the serious will push in, I really do think that. One day I'm going to do a whole series on just this book, but I can't do it now, because we're almost out of time here, and I want to get to the last chapter of this book of The Song of Solomon.

0:43:53.5 SC: He talks about in Chapter 8, he says, "Set me as a seal upon your arm, as a seal upon your heart, for love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave, its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame." The seal spoken of there is like a tattoo. God wants to mark your heart, He wants to stigmata your soul with Himself, and that's what He does with confirmation and baptism. That's what that does. It's a configuration. It is an indelible mark, the Catechism says, "He would brand you with Himself because you are His." Now, it goes on to say that jealousy is as cruel as the grave. Now, this is not the petty suffocating jealousy of men, this is the engorging jealousy of full potential. And God's name is jealous. In Exodus 34:15, it says, "God's name is jealous." The names in the Bible, they mean stuff, they aren't just a title that you hang on somebody.

0:45:05.7 SC: Moses means drawn out both from the Nile when he was born, and then later he drew the people out of Egypt. Jacob meant cheater. Jesus means God with us or Immanuel. And God's name, He says in Exodus 3:14 to Moses in the burning bush, is I am who am. Meaning, He is completely transparent, there is nothing fake, nothing deceitful, nothing cloudy. He is utterly simple in His purity. And He gave that name to Moses in the burning bush. And here He says in Exodus 34:14 that His name is jealous. This is a jealousy that will not endure competing loves. This is why purity is needed to seek God and His love on this level. You have to give Him everything because nothing... He deserves it first of all, and that is the only way you get invited into the chamber of God, the intimate secret of God. Song 8:6 says that he is... Jealousy is as cruel as the grave, its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame.

0:46:22.3 SC: That phrase most vehement flame means super blessed, hyper-increased, exceedingly, urgently, utterly heaped up, abundantly reproduced, exponentially multiplied. It's so potent, it would kill you to merely look at or approach the flame of God, a most vehement flame. That is in the original Hebrew, that is a poetic form of God's name, Yahweh. It is Y-A-H, I Am Who Am, a most vehement flame. He is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:29 says, "So sin devours by wasting away, but God's love in flames and engorges the soul with its fire." It makes the soul long to be given to it forever, but God only gives himself fully to those who give themselves fully to Him. And that is how you experience being cherished, you go all in, you give Him everything. Therese of Lisieux said, "An invisible power seemed to plunge me wholly into fire, but oh! What fire! What sweetness!" That is my prayer for you. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

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