

Song of Solomon 1:1-8

Song of Solomon 1:7,8 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? If you do not know, O fairest of women, follow in the footsteps of the flock, and feed your little goats beside the shepherd's tents.

The first episode recorded by the Song implies a history in which our couple has fallen in love. There are stages of falling in love such as interest, attraction, conversation, positive shared experiences, desire for more, decision to pursue, mutuality, and commitment. In the first 8 verses of the Song most of this list has become history. The woman's desire for more, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth," suggest that they have passed through the stages of interest, attraction and conversation. Her description of his attractiveness, "For your love is better than wine. Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is ointment poured forth..." is evidence that they now have shared very positive experiences. So, "Let him kiss me..." is an expression of desire for more as is the appeal to "Take me away!"

It also seems legitimate to see in the woman's self description that she is making a case for herself, arguing that she has been hindered by her brothers and could actually be even more attractive than her man has already found her to be. She seems then to have made the decision to pursue the relationship. She is as we might say, all in.

In our final two verses she specifically seeks to know where the man who she desires is keeping his sheep. If she were to go out among the shepherds, where would she find him? His answer appears to be vague. Where she advanced to the decision to pursue the relationship, he seems to have not advanced quite so far. He seems to be between positive shared experiences and a desire for more. Their relationship is moving along but we can note first that each person in a relationship will tend to advance through the various stages at their own pace. Secondly, it is trust that is the foundation for commitment. He hesitated to tell her how to find him. This suggests that he was not convinced that he could trust her.

To move into the realm of the spiritual, how important is trust in our relationship with God? I think we would all agree that there are degrees of trust in any relationship. On

one level we might trust God but on another level maybe not so much. Most of us have not hesitated to trust God for the forgiveness of our sins. We trust Him with our salvation. This is possibly out of desperation for who else can forgive sin or promise salvation and eternal life? But, we, who do not hesitate to trust God with these spiritual matters, may not be ready to trust Him when it comes to some of the practical issues that we encounter. For example, a person might want to reserve the right to marry whoever they please and fail to seek God's will in so personal a matter. Another issue might be the hows and whys of our money or vocation or time. These are all matters of surrender in the language of discipleship. To surrender to God, we must learn to trust Him. Trust is the application of faith in concert with the lessons of experience as they apply to questions of obedience. God might direct you to give a certain amount a month to a missionary family. You believe that this is something that He wants you to do even though this is uncomfortable for you, how can you be sure that the money will always be there? But, you felt the same way when you started tithing 2 years ago and you have seen God take care of you during that time so, since you want to please Him, you decide to trust Him again.