

Worship:

Jesus love is very wonderful - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaMVjO_GruA

Furious - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIX-90xaNzE>

Here is Love - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTOP304FOG0>

Song of Solomon

*1 I am the rose of Sharon, And the lily of the valleys. 2 Like a lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters. 3 Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods,
So is my beloved among the sons.
I sat down in his shade with great delight,
And his fruit was sweet to my taste. 4 He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me was love.*

The Song of Songs is a Holy Spirit inspired book which describes the relationship of Christ with His church.

Ephesians 5:25.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

We need a constant, daily, renewed revelation of just how much we are loved by God – Believing in His Word, in Jesus and His incredible act of love, experiencing His presence in our lives, His favour, His kindness – experiencing a real and life-giving relationship with Him. For every one of us, there is so much more to know, to feel and to experience of His unfathomable 4-Dimensional love (how wide and long and high and deep – Eph 3:18).

His love saves us, transforms us, shapes us, frees us and overflows from us to everyone around us! But to pour something out you have to first be filled up - to love we have to know the love of Christ first and be constantly filled up with Him. ☺

From our scripture in Song of Songs this morning the first lines are:

"I am the rose of Sharon, And the lily of the valleys."

The Shullamite knew how the Beloved saw her ... With some degree of certainty I can say that none of us quite see ourselves the way HE sees us ... We see so many flaws, both inside and out, so many failings – we are probably our own worst critic in many ways – a bit like the word from last week “The accuser has been hurled down” but we also need to

hurl down our own criticisms and accusations of ourselves and allow our hearts to see ourselves in the way HE SEES US! As the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys!

The Rose for many is the most beautiful and fragrant of flowers and the Rose of Sharon is thought to be the most beautiful of the roses. This is how God sees us – as His most beautiful and valued treasure - It is not difficult for God to see us as beautiful but it is hard for us to believe it. We have to allow the loving words of God to heal our hearts and let us fully know His love.

Jesus speaks about the lily as a flower that does not toil or spin yet even Solomon himself was not arrayed like one of these. The Shullamite knew how to fully rely on her lover to provide everything she needed.

God's love is active, for God 'love' really is a verb – a DOING word – We are not only beautiful to Him but cared for and provided for:

Psalm 103

- ¹ Praise the LORD, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
- ² Praise the LORD, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—
- ³ who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
- ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,
- ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

In the beginning, Adam and Eve were naked yet they knew no shame. Because sin came into the world, our 'nakedness' brings guilt and shame but God, in His great love for us sent Jesus who took all of our shame on the cross that we might be fully confident and free in who we are, clothed in white like the Lily.

Matthew 6:28

²⁸"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

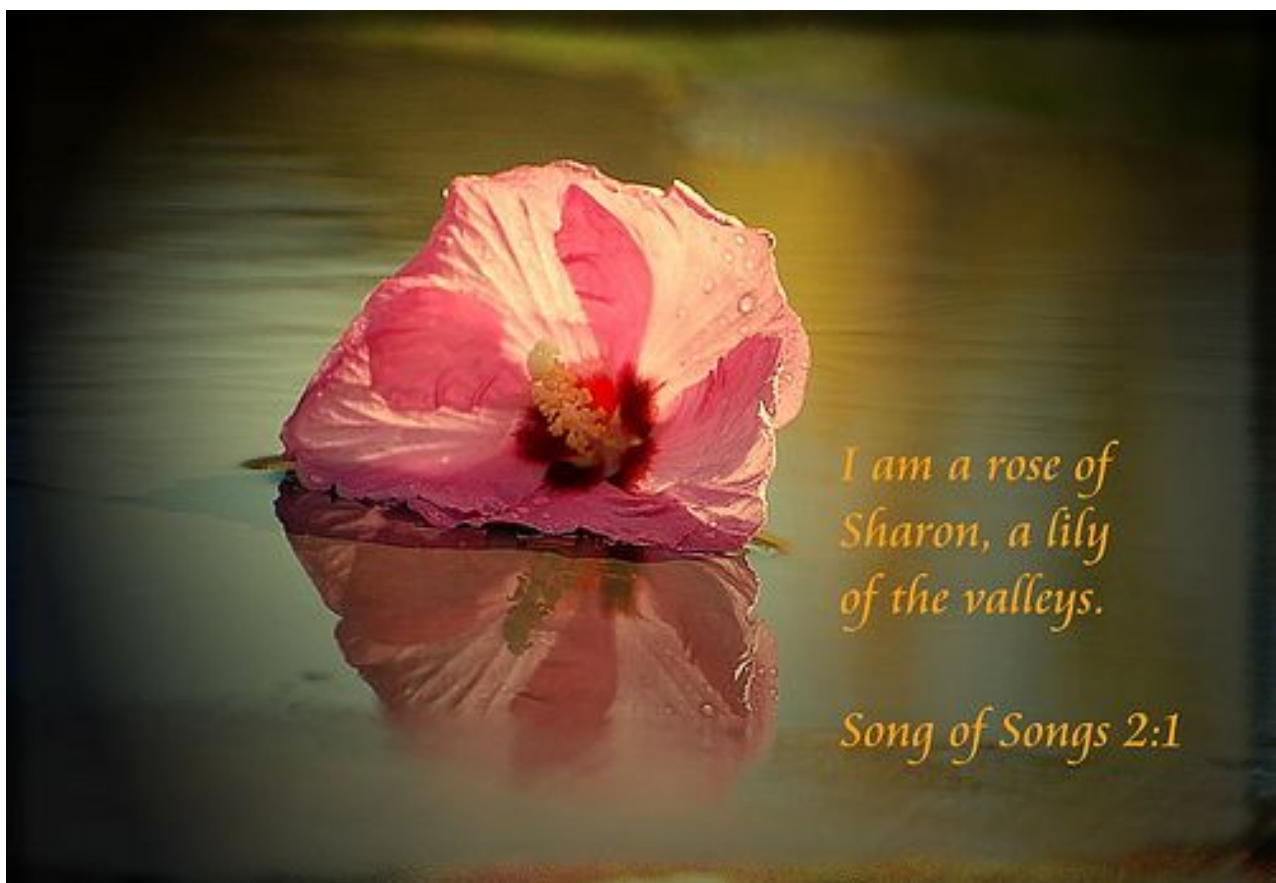
The lily of the valley describes a humble position, not lifted up by her own strength or might but noticed, chosen and loved by God in the valley. Last week we talked about mountain top and valley experiences in life and it's so good to glean from this scripture that HE SEES US in the valley, that He is interested in the small things, the small details - we might be a very small part of a huge picture but Jesus is passionate about loving and caring for us.

There is so much more to get out of this scripture but we can leave that for another time ...

The key points for reflection this morning are the importance of putting value on our time receiving His love – for us to be filled, renewed and healed but also for His love to overflow into the lives of everyone around us ... Jesus said the most important commandments were to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’” It genuinely is paramount to our love for those around us that we first love ourselves – by spending time allowing Jesus to pour His love into us and changing how we think about ourselves by seeing us the way He sees us!

Final song – Get comfortable, close your eyes and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal again the incredible Love of God for you!

Oh how He loves us - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDSE438XMaQ>



(P.S. – Expecting some more beautiful flower pictures to appear on our WhatsApp group this afternoon 😊)