Relationship Goals - Part Three

# Finding the One

## (Song of Solomon 3:1-4)

Welcome everybody. We’ve been talking about relationship goals and today in part three of our series, I want to talk about Finding the One. My goal is that whether you are married or not yet, parents or hoping to be, happily single or looking, that you would cultivate a deeper relationship with that One that would be a blessing to you and yours for generations to come. And so, we’re going on a spiritual journey, searching for and finding the one that is the reason for our being, the one for which we exist, the one who gives our lives meaning.

This is important because finding that one is a tremendous spiritual asset, that right one can build you up, finding the right one can encourage you and equip you spiritually. In fact, our identity is found in that One, it is he who defines us, because the Bible says in John chapter one,

“To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).

And so, it is necessary that we find that One, that we are pursuing that One, because the Bible says that God’s desire is,

“That men (and women) would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:27).

We’ve been studying the Song of Solomon in this series and today we’re going to be reading from the first few verses of chapter three. But what I want to do is overlay that passage with a text from Genesis chapter 22 that is going to take us deeper. And so, we’re going to have two different texts, two different stories, laid side-by-side as we consider the topic of Finding the One. As we look at the Shulammite woman searching for that one, that one relationship, that one significant other that she longs for, we’re going to bring it into a deeper application as we consider this journey of Abraham and Isaac.

Let’s begin reading together from chapter three of Song of Solomon, verses one through four. This young woman tells us,

“All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves; I looked for him but did not find him” (Song of Solomon 3:1).

“I will get up now and go about the city, through its streets and squares; I will search for the one my heart loves. So, I looked for him but did not find him” (Song of Solomon 3:2).

“The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. "Have you seen the one my heart loves?" (Song of Solomon 3:3).

“Scarcely had I passed them when I found the one my heart loves. I held him and would not let him go till I had brought him to my mother's house, to the room of the one who conceived me” (Song of Solomon 3:4).

We’ve discovered in the past two weeks that Solomon and the Shulammite woman were looking back, reminiscing about getting to know each other. And so, the context here is that she is looking back to a time when Solomon had returned to Jerusalem, leaving her at home with her parents in the town where she had been raised.

Verse one tells us, “All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves.” In other words, she dreamed of him all night long, and so the experience she is describing took place in a dream. She was longing for Solomon, she dreamed of the one that she loved, and she was alone in the middle of the night imagining herself seeking after him, searching through the streets and squares of the city, because she feared she had lost him.

She asked the watchmen who guarded the city at night if they had seen him, but they had not, and yet no sooner had she asked them did she find him. She found the one her heart loves, and so she says,

“I held him and would not let him go” (Song of Solomon 3:4).

This is a young girl’s dream, expressing her desire to marry the king, she held onto him until she had brought him to her mother’s house. And so, this was a happy dream, and I would compare her grip on Solomon to that joyful embrace which Mary Magdalene had upon Jesus when she first encountered him after his resurrection. In fact, we know that she would not let him go because Jesus had to say to her,

“Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father” (John 20:17).

And certainly, the foreshadowing of our text to the relationship between Jesus and his followers is significant. No matter whether we lose our sense of his presence in a dream or in reality, we must search for him, and once we’ve found him, refusing to let him go.

I’m reminded of that time when God met with Jacob, wrestling all night with him like a man.

God said to Jacob, “Let me go, for it is daybreak” and he would have slipped away easily if Jacob had loosened his grip, but Jacob refused to let go, holding him firmly. In fact, he replied,

“I will not let you go unless you bless me” (Genesis 32:26).

And so, God did not overpower him, he could have, but he would not go unless Jacob first let him go. And God did bless him, he changed his name to Israel, and so Jacob called the place Peniel, saying,

"It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared” (Genesis 32:30).

As we talk about Finding the One, I wonder how many of you have wrestled through the night, you’ve found yourself dreaming about the one who loves you as you lay in your bed in the night hours. Solomon’s father David did, he said in Psalm chapter 119,

“In the night I remember your name… My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises. Hear my voice in accordance with your love…” (Psalm 119:148-149).

You see, there is one whom you must seek, one relationship above all, and yet that one is easily neglected, but you must not allow him to slip away.

You see, if you are willing to let Jesus go, he won’t force himself upon you, he will never intrude on your privacy, and he will go away from you leaving you until that time you begin to search for him again. And so, I want to caution you like the Shulammite, it’s time to wake up and pursue that one. She said,

“All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves…” (Song of Solomon 3:1).

One night Abraham had an encounter with God that was a pivotal point in his life, it not only impacted his faith, but it impacted our theology today. In Genesis chapter 22, God awakened Abraham and told him to go in search of a place that he’d never been before, not to look for the one that he loves, but God said,

"Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah" (Genesis 22:2).

And so, God tested Abraham, to see which he loved more, the giver or the gift. He said,

"Sacrifice (Isaac) there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about" (Genesis 22:2).

And so, the Holy Spirit uses very specific language here telling Abraham, “Take your son, your only son,” and sacrifice the one you love. It’s a powerful foreshadowing of the love of God, a reflection of Jesus Christ, who heard these words from heaven:

“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17).

And so, now God tells Abraham to take his only son Isaac, the son whom he loves, and offer him up as a burnt offering, a sacrifice, on a mountain in an undisclosed location. He says, “I will tell you how to get there, but I’m not going to give you an address.” And so, trusting God,

“Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about” (Genesis 22:3).

In other words, God said it’s over there, just go to the place I will show you, and that’s why finding the right place is so important. Four times the place is mentioned, because the place is important, and he doesn’t want him to make the sacrifice in the wrong place. But Abraham doesn’t have any directions, he’s walking blindly in the dark, like the Bible says,

“We live by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

And so, he’s walking in the direction that God told him to go, trusting God’s promise that when he got there, he would tell him.

Like the Shulammite woman, we have got to walk by faith and not by sight, walking without understanding, walking when we’re confused, walking even when we don’t have a word from God. In verse two, she said,

“I will get up now and go about the city, through its streets and squares; I will search for the one my heart loves” (Song of Solomon 3:2).

And so, you’ve just got to get up and go, you’ve got to walk by faith, you’ve got to search, and when you get there, God will show you.

Now, the Bible doesn’t tell us how Abraham knew he was in the right place, maybe the Holy Spirit told him, but the Bible says he saw it.

“On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance” (Genesis 22:4).

There may be some of you here who see it, but you’re not there yet, and I hope you recognize the importance of being able to see the place.

If you remember when Jesus met the Samaritan woman, they got into a debate about the place. She said,

“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is (over there) in Jerusalem" (John 4:20).

And so, she said, my people worshiped on this mountain, but Jesus said,

“You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know…” (John 4:22).

In other words, Jesus tells her that her people are worshiping in the wrong place, on a strange mountain, and they are worshiping what they don’t know. And so, he says, you don’t know what you’re doing, you’re in the wrong place, because Jerusalem is the place to worship, for salvation is from the Jews.

And so, this mountain where Abraham was is the right place. We know this because the Bible says in Second Chronicles, chapter 3,

“Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah…” (2 Chronicles 3:1).

And so, Abraham is on Mount Moriah, he’s in the right place, Jerusalem is on Mount Moriah, and yet the Bible says that there is still a place that you have to find. In John chapter 4, Jesus said,

“A time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth” (John 4:23).

And so, you’ve got to go to that place, you’ve got to fight to get in that place, you’ve got to go for yourself, you’ve got to get down on your face, you’ve got to worship the Father in spirit and truth. You’ve got to find that place.

Watch what Abraham does now, the closer he gets to the place, the more he separates himself from other people. As he got closer, he told his servants, you can’t go where I’m going, because he recognized that they weren’t ready for it. Abraham understood that the place where he was going, he couldn’t take everybody with him, and so he said to his servants,

“Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you" (Genesis 22:5).

Maybe that’s why you missed it before, you were looking for the place, searching through the streets and squares of the city, but you tried to take the wrong people with you. And so, they were just slowing you down because they didn’t have the same hunger as you to get in the presence of God. They weren’t seeking to get into the place where the glory of the Lord was about to be released. And so, for you to get into that place of worshiping in spirit and truth, you’ve got to let some people go.

Leaving the servants behind, Abraham and Isaac went on together,

“Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together” (Genesis 22:6).

Three times in this chapter the Holy Spirit mentions the fact that they are together, and so when God said,

“Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love” (Genesis 22:2).

They’re in this together, they’re in a partnership. And remember, Abraham had waited 100 years to have this son, he understood that this was his descendent, this was his destiny, his legacy. And so, not only did he have a son, but this was his only son, the son of the promise, and Isaac had the anointing of God on him. But at this moment, there was a strange anticipation in the air, this unspoken expectation, until finally,

“Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together” (Genesis 22:7-8).

Abraham and Isaac went on together, foreshadowing God the Father and God the Son going up to the Place of the Skull, known as Golgotha. And so, the two of them went on together, not independent of each other, but they were in it together, and the Bible says,

“When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it” (Genesis 22:9).

And so, they have arrived at the place, Isaac is no longer questioning, he hasn’t been coerced, he’s not the victim, because he’s old enough to fight, he’s old enough to escape, but he became obedient to death. Isaac was willing to climb on the altar and die.

I hope you can feel the power of this, the anointing of God on this scene on that mountain. As Isaac is carrying the wood up the hill, recognizing that he was there to do the will of his father, like Jesus said,

"Not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

And just as Jesus became obedient to death, even death on the cross, as they stretched him out and hung him high. This was a holy moment between the Father and the Son, this was the exact spot, this was the right place, and Abraham,

“Bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood” (Genesis 22:9).

I want you to notice the submission of Isaac, a grown boy stretched out on the altar, able to resist, but becoming obedient unto death. Like a lamb tied to the four horns of the altar, like Jesus nailed by his feet and his wrists to the cross, Isaac is laid on top of the wood, and the Bible says that Abraham,

“Reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son” (Genesis 22:10).

When he raised his hand to slay his son, a voice spoke from heaven and said,

"Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied” (Genesis 22:11).

"Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God…” (Genesis 22:12).

In other words, this was a test, now he knows that he can give Abraham something and it won’t become an idol in his life. In the same way, somewhere and sometime in your life God will give you something to see if you will give it back. He needs to know that he can give you something, he can give you that job or that family and it won’t become your God, you won’t start worshiping it and it won’t replace him, taking his place.

And so, there is a place, and somewhere along the way your faith will be tested to prove that you are not just following God because you’ve fallen in love with the gifts more then you have with the God who gave them. That’s why we give tithes and offerings as part of worship, because it’s giving evidence, demonstrating that we trust God, and showing him that he is worth more than the gifts that he has given. And I’m afraid that there may be some of you and the reason why you aren’t growing, the reason why you aren’t moving forward, is because you are holding onto the gift instead of the giver of the gift.

The Shulammite, found the one she was searching for and she said,

“When I found the one my heart loves. I held him and would not let him go” (Song of Solomon 3:4).

And she brought him home with her, she didn’t want to let him out of her sight, because she knew she couldn’t handle that separation again. And so, she would not let him go, she refused to allow anything to separate her from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39).

Here on the mountain, we find Abraham about to slay his son, his only son whom he loves, the wood is ready to be burned, his son is tied on top of it, he raises his hand with the knife when God says,

"Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son” (Genesis 22:12).

“Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns…” (Genesis 22:13).

This is amazing when you think about it, because the provision was already provided, the ram was caught in the thicket, but Abraham had to be on Mount Moriah. In other words, God had only provided one ram, and so Abraham had to worship in the right place. He couldn’t just worship wherever he wanted, he couldn’t go up any other mountain, because this was the place where the ram was provided.

The Bible says that Abraham “went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. So, Abraham called that place (Jehovah Jireh) The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided" (Genesis 22:13-14).

Notice that Abraham did not say that God should be called Jehovah Jireh, he called that place Jehovah Jireh. In other words, there is a place where the Lord will provide, and so we’ve got to get in the right place like the Shulammite woman. She said,

“I will get up now and go about the city, through its streets and squares; I will search for the one my heart loves” (Song of Solomon 3:2).

And so, we’ve got to get into the right place, because there is a place called Golgotha, there is a place called Calvary, where the Lord will provide, where the ram is caught in the thicket. And you have got to search for it, you have got to find it, because it is the place of your provision, it is the place of your anointing, and your ram is caught in the thicket. And so, as I close, I dare you to believe that there is a ram caught in the thicket, waiting for you to get in the right place, waiting for you to find it, waiting for your worship.

Pastor John Talcott

Christ’s Community Church

303 West Lincoln Avenue

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

February 27, 2022

(301) 447-4224

[www.cccaog.org](http://www.cccaog.org)

*Graphics, notes, and commentary from LifeChurch, Ministry Pass, PC Study Bible, Preaching Library, and Sermon Central. Scripture from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.*