



# *Song of Solomon*

A STUDY OF LOVE,  
MARRIAGE, AND INTIMACY

STUDY GUIDE







# *Song of Solomon*



STUDY GUIDE





# *Before You Begin*

## *About This Guide*

This guide is designed to help you grow in your relationship with God through his Word. It is a companion to our sermon series and is meant to be studied personally and discussed in groups. We believe that where these three elements (preaching, personal study, and community) combine, personal discipleship will flourish.

## *How To Use This Guide*

We have arranged the material with three basic elements in mind: personal study, preaching, and community. First, study each passage on your own. Begin by familiarizing yourself with the introductory material, then, leading up to each Sunday, study the passage for yourself. On Sunday, take notes on the sermon. And throughout the following week, find time to discuss the questions with a few others. Lastly, we have included a glossary of biblical and theological terms in the back. If a word is in bold, you will find a short definition in the glossary. Happy studying!

## *About The Song of Solomon*

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**Author:** King Solomon

**Date:** 10th Century (During Solomon's reign)

**Genre:** Poetry and Wisdom

**Theme Verse:** "Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy is fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the Lord. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it." (Song 8:6-7)

# Introduction

## *All You Need is Love*

The first song ever sung was by a man on a blind date. As he awoke from his deep sleep, what he saw took his breath away:

*“This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
because she was taken out of Man.”* (Genesis 2:23)

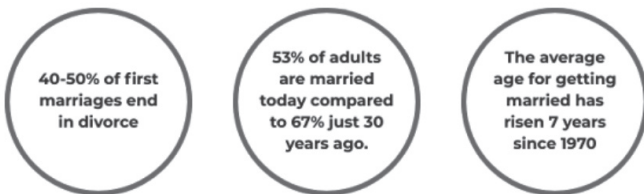
Although serenading on the first date is rarely (or never) recommended, Adam displayed something profound about human nature and relationships. *He showed that the native tongue of love is song.* Not only is song the way we best express our love, but it is how God shows his love as well: “he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing” (Zeph. 3:17). We were made to sing and be sung over.

This is the reason why love songs are the most popular type of music.<sup>1</sup> I mean, everyone can think of a few of their personal favorites: from “*Endless Love*” to “*Livin’ on Love*,” from “*Crazy Little Thing Called Love*” to “*I Will Always Love You*.” But in the Bible, there is one love song that claims to be the best: The Song of Songs.

Why would God include a book full of love poetry in the Bible? We will say more on this below, but for now, let’s just say he gave it to us as a guide in the areas of love, romance, marriage, and intimacy. You might wonder, do we need that kind of wisdom today? Let’s consider for a moment how we as a society are faring in these areas.

## *How Are We Doing?*

According to almost every major indicator, Americans are struggling with relationships:



These trends seem to indicate a growing skepticism toward marriage in our culture. Not only are Americans placing less emphasis on it, but many view marriage as a hindrance. Committing to a person inhibits accomplishing goals such as financial

stability, vocational success, buying a house, and traveling. This is why more and more young adults are opting to postpone marriage until they have “become stable.” Instead of seeing marriage as a cornerstone of young adult life it has become a final “capstone” achievement for the most successful (and a little lucky).<sup>2</sup>

So then, what are Americans doing in the meantime before marriage? While some are avoiding romance altogether (a kind of “Romantic Recession”)<sup>3</sup>, a growing number are choosing to try to meet the longings for intimacy and belonging without the commitment of marriage (sometimes called “cohabitation”). It’s estimated that today roughly 70% of couples cohabit before marriage. In fact, cohabitating couples “now constitute nearly 1 in 8 family households” which is “up from less than 1 in 100 fifty years ago.”<sup>4</sup>



But instead of finding a relational promised land, unmarried, cohabitating couples are 48% more likely to end up divorced than those who wait to move in with each other after marriage.<sup>5</sup>

Though these statistics on marriage paint a grim picture, it's important to remember that many people still value this God-given institution. In fact, over 70% of single adults hope to be married some day. And yet, those who pursue it are nonetheless finding it harder and harder to say “I do.” Nearly 70% of those within Generation Z (1997-2012) feel stressed about their love lives, and almost half of Americans agree that dating has become more difficult in the last decade. It’s hard to understate how many people feel stuck in their singleness.<sup>6</sup>

And this is just part of the story. Consider these additional stats:

- Pornography use continues to rise: 61% of the general population consume regularly.<sup>7</sup>
- The CDC reports that Sexually transmitted infections (STI) hit a record peak in 2023. Thankfully, there has been a recent dip, but the numbers are still astronomically high with 2.2 million cases reported in 2024.<sup>8</sup>
- The number of children born outside of the nuclear family has steadily grown to 40%.<sup>9</sup>

Despite loads of advice on the internet,<sup>10</sup> AI chat bots that will tell you exactly what to say on a first date or how to respond after an argument with your spouse<sup>11</sup>, perfectly manicured apps built to find you the most compatible person in the world, and countless options for contraceptives, we are still struggling. Clearly, we are romantically and sexually lost sheep in need of a Shepherd.

## *What does the Song of Solomon Have To Say?*

The Song of Solomon has many purposes. In ancient Israel, it was a wedding song. Friends and family would sing and act out portions together as they celebrated the couple for the entire week.<sup>12</sup> But in Old Testament Wisdom Literature, the main intention of the Song was not so much entertainment as it was instruction. It teaches us by providing an otherwise exclusive look into a particular relationship between a man (presumably Solomon) and his bride. As we read, it coaches us, "not by delivering imperatives, but letting us listen to the music so that we can sing in tune."<sup>13</sup>

What do we learn in this song? In general, we learn how to be in love ourselves—or better yet, what it feels like to love and be loved. As the Song unfolds, we will see six phases in healthy romantic relationships: attraction, dating, marriage, sexual intimacy, conflict, and maturity. Along the way, we'll also learn about the character and quality of genuine love: its strength, modesty, patience, passion, and even eternity.

## *What If I'm Not Married?*

Who is the Song of Solomon for? Frankly, everyone. The author of Hebrews wrote, "Let marriage be held in honor among all" (Heb. 13:4). Every Christian has a responsibility to honor marriage. And in a similar way, everyone has something to learn from this book (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Here is a little sample of how it might speak to your current situation in life:

- *For singles who do not want to be married*, the Song of Solomon reminds us of the dignity of a desire for intimacy embodied before God. Even if you choose not to embrace it, you can still appreciate it.
- *For singles who do want to be married*, it teaches us that even marriage is not ultimately satisfying since the book ends with longing (Song 8:14).
- *For dating and engaged couples*, it both prepares us for marriage and encourages us to be patient while we wait for it (Song 2:7).
- *For married couples*, the Song embodies what a healthy marriage should feel like, and it does so in a way that can nurture and expand your love for your God-given spouse.

But perhaps, the greatest benefit we draw from studying the Song of Solomon is a deeper understanding and appreciation for the kind of love relationship God wants to have with his people. At the end of the day, human marriage is a metaphor for something even more real: the marriage of Christ and his church (Eph. 5:32). May this book not only provide wisdom for human relationships, but even more so teach us to enjoy our union with Christ and long for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:6-10).





# Song of Solomon 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup>The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

She

<sup>2</sup> Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!

For your love is better than wine;

<sup>3</sup> your anointing oils are fragrant;

your name is oil poured out;

therefore virgins love you.

<sup>4</sup> Draw me after you; let us run.

The king has brought me into his chambers.

Others

We will exult and rejoice in you;

we will extol your love more than wine;

rightly do they love you.

## Questions For Discussion

- The woman remarks that the man is respected among his peers. What does nobility look like in relationships? And what does it look like to grow in nobility?
- What role does attraction play in a Christian dating relationship?
- What are some practical ways couples can celebrate one another?
- This couple is celebrated by their friends throughout the book. What are ways friends and loved ones can speak into dating and marriage?



## *The Modern Idol of Sex*

A key marker of our modern culture is our strange view of sex. In particular, our culture holds two contradictory perspectives on sex at the same time. On the one hand, it is the key ingredient to happiness and the greatest form of self-expression. On the other hand, sex is nothing but a physical act for self-gratification and pleasure. It is everything and nothing.

*Why do you think our culture seeks to hold these contradictory beliefs?*

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Let's take a closer look at the first perspective. In his landmark book, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, historian Carl Trueman tells the story of how sex became so aligned with our personal identities.<sup>15</sup> Here are three of the key figures he highlights in this narrative and their influential view of the self.

- *Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)*: You are fundamentally good, and so to be authentic, you need to look within yourself.
- *Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)*: You do not have some fixed nature from "God," but you are whatever you create yourself to be.
- *Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)*: You are fundamentally sexual in nature.

From the quotes above from these key philosophers, you can see the basic building blocks that form the way modern people understand themselves. We assume that each of us has an internal sense of who we are and it is our job to express it to others. This way of understanding your identity is known as "Expressive Individualism."<sup>16</sup> For an example of this, look no further than almost every Disney movie where the main actor throws off their cultural constraints to find and express their true self (e.g. Moana). Or consider Gavin Degraw's song, "I don't want to be anything other than me." Expressive individualism is the air we breathe.

Then, once you add in the influence of Freud, you have everything needed to understand the first foundation of modern sexuality: We are free individuals who bear the responsibility to express ourselves through our sexuality. Sex is not just important to modern people, it is integral to their very identity.

*Where do you see evidence of this for yourself or others today?*

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*How do you think Christians can help people see the biblical view of identity and sex as superior to the world's?*

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# Song of Solomon 1:5-2:7

## She

<sup>5</sup> I am very dark, but lovely,

O daughters of Jerusalem,  
like the tents of Kedar,

like the curtains of Solomon.

<sup>6</sup> Do not gaze at me because I am dark,  
because the sun has looked upon me.

My mother's sons were angry with me;  
they made me keeper of the vineyards,  
but my own vineyard I have not kept!

<sup>7</sup> Tell me, you whom my soul loves,  
where you pasture your flock,  
where you make it lie down at noon;

for why should I be like one who veils  
herself

beside the flocks of your companions?

## He

<sup>8</sup> If you do not know,

O most beautiful among women,  
follow in the tracks of the flock,  
and pasture your young goats  
beside the shepherds' tents.

<sup>9</sup> I compare you, my love,  
to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots.

<sup>10</sup> Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,  
your neck with strings of jewels.

## Others

<sup>11</sup> We will make for you ornaments of gold,  
studded with silver.

## She

<sup>12</sup> While the king was on his couch,  
my nard gave forth its fragrance.

<sup>13</sup> My beloved is to me a sachet of myrrh  
that lies between my breasts.

<sup>14</sup> My beloved is to me a cluster of henna  
blossoms  
in the vineyards of Engedi.

## He

<sup>15</sup> Behold, you are beautiful, my love;  
behold, you are beautiful;  
your eyes are doves.

**She**

<sup>16</sup> Behold, [you are beautiful], my beloved,  
truly delightful.

Our couch is green;

<sup>17</sup> the beams of our house are cedar;  
our rafters are pine.

<sup>21</sup> I am a rose of Sharon,  
a lily of the valleys.

**He**

<sup>2</sup> [As a lily among brambles],  
so is my love among the young women.

**She**

<sup>3</sup> [As an apple tree among the trees of the  
forest],

so is my beloved among the young men.

With great delight I sat in his shadow,  
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

<sup>4</sup> He brought me to the banqueting house,  
and his banner over me was love.

<sup>5</sup> Sustain me with raisins;  
refresh me with apples,  
for I am sick with love.

<sup>6</sup> His left hand is under my head,  
and his right hand embraces me!

<sup>7</sup> I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
by the gazelles or the does of the field,  
that you not stir up or awaken love  
until it pleases.

### *Questions For Discussion*

- What praiseworthy character traits do you see in the man and the woman?
- The man praises her in the face of her insecurities—what role have you seen the power of words play in your relationships?
- She describes the man as an apple tree and delights sitting in his shade. What are practical ways men can bring comfort and peace to their homes to ensure rest?
- Why is it important to continually encourage and declare affections in relationships?
- If we are “...not [to] stir up love or awaken love until it pleases,” what are the pitfalls of rushing a relationship? And what are some markers to know it is time to progress?

## *Idealism and the Internet*

*"Before you marry a person, you should first make them use a computer with slow internet to see who they really are." - WILL FERRELL*

Learning about the person before you marry them is the point of dating. But should dating be as hard as we make it? What if underneath a lot of our struggles with dating is a view of marriage that is foreign to the Bible? For many people today, the point of having a romantic relationship is self-fulfillment. As Tara Parker-Pope titled her famous article for the New York Times, "The Happy Marriage Is the 'Me' Marriage."<sup>17</sup> But, if it is all about me, then that's going to drastically affect the way I choose a spouse. Here's what Timothy Keller said in his book, *The Meaning of Marriage*:

"If your desire is for a spouse who will not demand a lot of change from you, then you are also looking for a spouse who is almost pulled together, someone very 'low maintenance' without much in the way of personal problems... You are searching, therefore, for an ideal person—happy, healthy, interesting, content with life. Never before in history has there been a society filled with people so idealistic in what they are seeking in a spouse."<sup>18</sup>

Since Keller wrote this, the powerful influence of the internet and social media has only exacerbated our idealism in two major ways. First, while idealism has always been a barrier for relationships, now, you don't just have to fight comparing yourself, your relationship, or your significant other with those in your town. Social media expands the parameters of the search to, well, the whole world!

Second, the very shape of the internet forms us into relational consumers. Samuel James compares it to the way pornography works: "If at the bottom of all pornography use is a fallen desire to be put at the center of our world, to feel favored and loved without any of the sacrifice or coming out of ourselves that such love demands, then the internet is a machine that exists in a very real sense for the sole purpose of facilitating this fantasy. The Internet does not merely contain pornography. It is a pornographically-shaped entity."<sup>19</sup>

In other words, the very shape of the internet is built to give us exactly what we want without having to sacrifice anything. Of course that will affect our relationships. We have walked into a store with an unlimited number of options and were told we must pick the one who perfectly meets our desires. No wonder so many feel crippled and unsatisfied.

So what's the answer? Unplug from the internet? Delete social media? Lower standards? Maybe. Those might be good next steps for you. But the answer for all of us is to move the locus of emphasis in our relationships off of ourselves. We need to see Jesus who came for us, the unlovely and imperfect, not for his self-fulfillment but to self-empty out of love (Phil. 2:6-11). Surely, we can entrust our relationships and our significant others to him.

*What are the ways you struggle with idealism?*

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*What does it look like to fight idealism in your relationships?*

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***Before You Date, Ask:***

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***Do I want to?*** - Just as the Song of Solomon begins with desire, so you should have a desire to be in a relationship with someone. Do not date just because our culture prioritizes it, or because your parents want you to, or because you feel like you should. Date someone if God has placed that desire in your heart.

***Do I need to?*** - If you feel like you have to date or be married in order to be happy, satisfied, or not lonely then, please, do not date! Dating will never satisfy the deep longings of your heart. Only Jesus will. If you look for someone else to satisfy you, you will crush them and disappoint yourself.

***Am I ready to be married?*** - The end goal of dating is marriage. So, if you are not anywhere close to marriage, seriously consider if dating is wise. Why would you want to date if you are not getting married?



# Song of Solomon 2:8-3:5

<sup>8</sup> The voice of my beloved!  
Behold, he comes,  
leaping over the mountains,  
bounding over the hills.

<sup>9</sup> My beloved is like a gazelle  
or a young stag.  
Behold, there he stands  
behind our wall,  
gazing through the windows,  
looking through the lattice.

<sup>10</sup> My beloved speaks and says to me:  
“Arise, my love, my beautiful one,  
and come away,

<sup>11</sup> for behold, the winter is past;  
the rain is over and gone.

<sup>12</sup> The flowers appear on the earth,  
the time of singing has come,  
and the voice of the turtledove  
is heard in our land.

<sup>13</sup> The fig tree ripens its figs,  
and the vines are in blossom;  
they give forth fragrance.  
Arise, my love, my beautiful one,  
and come away.

<sup>14</sup> O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,  
in the crannies of the cliff,  
let me see your face,  
let me hear your voice,  
for your voice is sweet,  
and your face is lovely.

<sup>15</sup> Catch the foxes for us,  
the little foxes  
that spoil the vineyards,  
for our vineyards are in blossom.”

<sup>16</sup> My beloved is mine, and I am his;  
he grazes among the lilies.

<sup>17</sup> Until the day breathes  
and the shadows flee,  
turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle  
or a young stag on cleft mountains.

<sup>31</sup> On my bed by night  
I sought him whom my soul loves;  
I sought him, but found him not.

<sup>2</sup> I will rise now and go about the city,  
in the streets and in the squares;

I will seek him whom my soul loves.

I sought him, but found him not.

<sup>3</sup>The watchmen found me  
as they went about in the city.

“Have you seen him whom my soul loves?”

<sup>4</sup> Scarcely had I passed them  
when I found him whom my soul loves.

I held him, and would not let him go  
until I had brought him into my mother’s  
house,

and into the chamber of her who  
conceived me.

<sup>5</sup> I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
by the gazelles or the does of the field,  
that you not stir up or awaken love  
until it pleases.

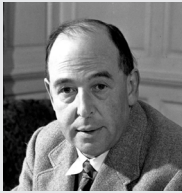
### *Questions For Discussion*

- What are ways you can know when the “spring has come” and you are ready to pursue a relationship?
- What are the “little foxes” that can destroy a relationship? How can couples proactively deal with them before they ruin the “vineyard”?
- What is the importance of seeking help or counsel when navigating periods of distance, conflict, or desire within a relationship?
- What does this passage teach us about a proper, God-given desire for intimacy and the active pursuit of a spouse?

## *Jack, Diane, and the Thrill of Romance*

“Say uh, oh, yeah, life goes on, Long after the thrill of livin’ is gone” - JOHN MELLENCAMP

In his song, “Jack and Diane” John Cougar Mellencamp wrote about two teenagers who fall in love and want to hold on to the thrill of their romance for as long as they can. Since 1982, this song has resonated with millions. Young love is the ideal love for many Americans. It’s exhilarating, passionate, and free! The movies herald it, older people remember it, and youth long for it! But is Jack right? Is life and relationships just about holding on to the thrill while it lasts?



Forty years prior, another guy who went by the name “Jack” spoke about the thrill of romance. From 1941-1944, C.S. Lewis (nicknamed “Jack”) gave a series of radio talks that would later be published as *Mere Christianity*. In a section on marriage, Lewis said, “In this department of life [romantic relationships], as in every other, thrills come at the beginning and do not last.”<sup>20</sup> So far, both Jacks would agree. But the difference lies in what you do with this.

Instead of needing the thrill, Lewis reminds us, “it is just the people who are ready to submit to the loss of the thrill and settle down to the sober interest, who are then the most likely to meet new thrills in some quite different direction.”<sup>21</sup>

What does that mean? Lewis gives the example of learning to fly: if the one who learned to fly doesn’t stop after the first rush of excitement, but instead, trains to become a good pilot, then he will find new horizons of enjoyment he could never have imagined before. And it’s the same for relationships: “It is simply no good trying to keep any thrill: that is the very worst thing you can do.” Instead, “let the thrill go—let it die away—go on through that period of death into the quieter interest and happiness that follow—and you will find that you are living in a world of new thrills all the time.”<sup>22</sup>

*In what ways are you tempted to live or long for the thrill? How can you fight this?*

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# ☪ Song of Solomon 3:6-11

<sup>6</sup> What is that coming up from the wilderness .....  
like columns of smoke, .....  
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, .....  
with all the fragrant powders of a .....  
merchant? .....  
<sup>7</sup> Behold, it is the litter of Solomon! .....  
Around it are sixty mighty men, .....  
some of the mighty men of Israel, .....  
<sup>8</sup> all of them wearing swords .....  
and expert in war, .....  
each with his sword at his thigh, .....  
against terror by night. ....  
<sup>9</sup> King Solomon made himself a carriage .....  
from the wood of Lebanon. ....  
<sup>10</sup> He made its posts of silver, .....  
its back of gold, its seat of purple; .....  
its interior was inlaid with love .....  
by the daughters of Jerusalem. ....  
<sup>11</sup> Go out, O daughters of Zion, .....  
and look upon King Solomon, .....  
with the crown with which his mother .....  
crowned him .....  
on the day of his wedding, .....  
on the day of the gladness of his heart. ....

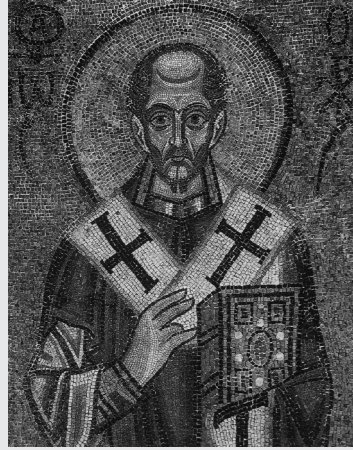
## Questions For Discussion

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- Why are weddings important for all Christians, single or married?
- Think about weddings you have attended or seen portrayed in the media. What tends to get the most attention? From a Christian perspective, what meaningful elements are often underemphasized?
- What are some practical ways that we can put more intentionality and effort into the expressions of our love for one another as the groom did in this passage?
- This passage overflows with imagery of extravagant, protective, and joyful love. How does experiencing God's exuberant and exhaustive love for us in Christ change the way we approach our daily lives?

## *Does The Devil Attend Weddings?*

Many think that the early church only looked down on marriage and sex. And while there were some who did (just as there are many today who do), St. John Chrysostom represented a different perspective. The 4th century Archbishop of Constantinople spoke often of the unique beauty and dignity of marriage. For Chrysostom, this flowed down into practical matters, like the kind of weddings you plan and how you act when you attend:



“Shall I also tell you how Marriage is a mystery of the Church? The Church was made from the side of Christ, and he united himself to her in a spiritual intercourse. St. Paul says, ‘I betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure virgin to her one husband,’ and ‘we are members of His body, of his flesh, and of His bones.’ Think about all this and stop treating such a great mystery so shamefully. Marriage is an image of the presence of Christ, and you will get drunk at a wedding?... Many are indifferent to what goes on at wedding celebrations, but great evil is the result. Looseness and disorder prevail... What I ask you, goes on at weddings? All of this, and more, for evil talk has become an art, and those who excel in it are applauded! Sins have become an art!... When drunkenness arrives, chastity departs. Where there is filthy talk, the devil is always eager to make his own contribution. Do you celebrate Christ’s mystery with entertainment like this, by inviting the devil?”<sup>23</sup>

*What do you think about Chrysostom’s conclusions?*

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Image: St. John Chrysostom, 11th-century mosaic in St. Sophia Cathedral, Kyiv, Ukraine. (From <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-John-Chrysostom>)



<sup>11</sup> Your lips drip nectar, my bride;  
honey and milk are under your tongue;  
the fragrance of your garments is like the  
fragrance of Lebanon.

<sup>12</sup> A garden locked is my sister, my bride,  
a spring locked, a fountain sealed.

<sup>13</sup> Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates  
with all choicest fruits,  
henna with nard,

<sup>14</sup> nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon,  
with all trees of frankincense,  
myrrh and aloes,  
with all choice spices—

<sup>15</sup> a garden fountain, a well of living water,  
and flowing streams from Lebanon.

<sup>16</sup> Awake, O north wind,  
and come, O south wind!  
Blow upon my garden,  
let its spices flow.

**She**

Let my beloved come to his garden,  
and eat its choicest fruits.

**He**

<sup>5:1</sup> I came to my garden, my sister, my bride,  
I gathered my myrrh with my spice,  
I ate my honeycomb with my honey,  
I drank my wine with my milk.

**Others**

Eat, friends, drink,  
and be drunk with love!

### *Questions For Discussion*

- Is it surprising to you that the Bible contains such an explicit account of a sexual relationship between a husband and wife? Why do you think God chose to include this in scripture?
- The bride is described as "a garden locked, a fountain sealed" (4:12) — imagery of purity and exclusivity reserved for her husband. How does our culture view this perspective? How does adhering to this perspective actually deepen intimacy?
- How does viewing marital intimacy as a gift to be celebrated (rather than something shameful) align with God's design? Is it difficult for you to have this view of intimacy? Why or why not?
- How does this chapter challenge or support your current understanding of love, intimacy and commitment?

## *The Essence of Marriage*

If you boil marriage down to its basic components, what do you find? The Bible's most distilled description of marriage is found in Genesis 2:24. It says, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Within this one sentence sit the two pillars of every marriage: holding fast and becoming one flesh.

When Moses says that a man should "hold fast to his wife," he's using a word that means to not let go. Later, both Jesus and Paul will quote this verse (Mark 10:7; Eph. 5:31), and they use a word that describes gluing together two items. Clearly, there is an enduring quality to this command. Bound within this little phrase is the idea of a covenant. A covenant is simply a relationship that is bound by promises.

Some people complain that promises stifle relationships. "True love doesn't need a contract to thrive," they say. But, in reality, love is drawn to promises like a moth is to a light. Couples love to say things like, "I'll always be there for you!" Why? Because true love is covenant love.

*Why might a covenant be a better foundation for marriage than passion?*

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The point of the husband holding fast to his wife is so that they might together become "one flesh." The word used here for "one" is very strong. It's the same one used in Deuteronomy 6:4 when Moses said, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." But notice, it does not say the husband and wife become one body, one spirit, or one checking account, but one flesh. That's because when the Bible uses the word "flesh" it's not talking about just one part of a person, like their body. It's referring to the whole person. So, to say that the man and woman come together and become "one flesh" is definitely not saying that they are just one physically or just one emotionally or just one financially. They're to live as one whole person, "a single organism."<sup>24</sup>

*What are some practical implications of a husband and wife becoming "one flesh?"*

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A series of 25 horizontal dotted lines for writing.



# Song of Solomon 5:2-6:3

## She

<sup>2</sup> I slept, but my heart was awake.  
A sound! My beloved is knocking.  
“Open to me, my sister, my love,  
my dove, my perfect one,  
for my head is wet with dew,  
my locks with the drops of the night.”

<sup>3</sup> I had put off my garment;  
how could I put it on?

I had bathed my feet;  
how could I soil them?

<sup>4</sup> My beloved put his hand to the latch,  
and my heart was thrilled within me.

<sup>5</sup> I arose to open to my beloved,  
and my hands dripped with myrrh,  
my fingers with liquid myrrh,  
on the handles of the bolt.

<sup>6</sup> I opened to my beloved,  
but my beloved had turned and gone.  
My soul failed me when he spoke.  
I sought him, but found him not;

I called him, but he gave no answer.

<sup>7</sup> The watchmen found me  
as they went about in the city;  
they beat me, they bruised me,  
they took away my veil,  
those watchmen of the walls.

<sup>8</sup> I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
if you find my beloved,  
that you tell him  
I am sick with love.

## Others

<sup>9</sup> What is your beloved more than another  
beloved,

O most beautiful among women?

What is your beloved more than another  
beloved,  
that you thus adjure us?

## She

<sup>10</sup> My beloved is radiant and ruddy,  
distinguished among ten thousand.

<sup>11</sup> His head is the finest gold;  
his locks are wavy,  
black as a raven.

<sup>12</sup> His eyes are like doves  
beside streams of water,

bathed in milk,  
sitting beside a full pool.  
<sup>13</sup> His cheeks are like beds of spices,  
mounds of sweet-smelling herbs.  
His lips are lilies,  
dripping liquid myrrh.  
<sup>14</sup> His arms are rods of gold,  
set with jewels.  
His body is polished ivory,  
bedecked with sapphires.  
<sup>15</sup> His legs are alabaster columns,  
set on bases of gold.  
His appearance is like Lebanon,  
choice as the cedars.  
<sup>16</sup> His mouth is most sweet,  
and he is altogether desirable.  
This is my beloved and this is my friend,  
O daughters of Jerusalem.

#### Others

<sup>6</sup> Where has your beloved gone,  
O most beautiful among women?  
Where has your beloved turned,  
that we may seek him with you?

#### She

<sup>2</sup> My beloved has gone down to his garden  
to the beds of spices,  
to graze in the gardens  
and to gather lilies.  
<sup>3</sup> I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine;  
he grazes among the lilies.

### *Questions For Discussion*

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- How does the woman's hesitation reveal the human tendency to prioritize comfort over costly love? Where do you see this pattern in your own relationships?
- What does the woman's immediate response after realizing her failure teach us about genuine repentance versus regret?
- How does reflecting on Christ's character reignite your affection for him when your heart grows cold or distant?
- The friends help search for the beloved rather than excuse the woman's failure. How can we create communities that help each other pursue restoration instead of settling for spiritual apathy?
- How does Christ's unwavering commitment to his bride shape the way we approach him after our own failures?

## *Made for Marriage*

Everyone is made for marriage. Let me explain: everyone is made to be married to God. Speaking this way might make you feel uncomfortable, but this is the Bible's favorite metaphor for God's relationship with his people. Let's take a 10,000 foot view of scripture to see how this theme develops.

The story begins in Genesis 2 when God took the man, Adam, and fashioned from him and for him a wife, Eve. But, this perfect marriage lasts for only one verse before their sin unraveled everything. It's surprising that this first sin actually occurs within the context of marriage at its very best!<sup>25</sup> Yet, God promised that sin would not have the last word. He guarantees that redemption would come and, despite their sin, it would arise from the fruit of their marriage: a child (Gen. 3:15).

When God rescued the Hebrews from Egypt and made a covenant with them, the Biblical authors looked for language to describe what happened, and the image of marriage seemed to fit. "I made my vow to you... and you became mine" (Eze. 16:8). Consider this, the eternal God married himself to a lowly, dirty, rebellious wife. And yet, sadly, the more he cared for them, the more they gave themselves away to other lovers. By worshiping the idols of the nations, they became spiritual adulterers.

By the time you get to the Old Testament prophets, spiritual adultery is central to their seething rebuke of Israel. (For examples, read Hos. 2:2-13; Jer. 3:1-3; Eze. 16:23-43, but beware, they can be quite graphic.) And yet, despite Israel's self-prostitution, the great hope was that God himself would restore their union once again: "For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer." (Isa. 54:5).

How will God accomplish this act of restoration? The New Testament answers with the Lord Jesus Christ who comes not with divorce papers but with wedding wine overflowing from his hands (John 2:1-12). He teaches on marriage (Matt. 19:1-12), gives parables about marriage (Matt. 22:1-2; 25:1), refers to himself as the bridegroom (Matt. 9:15), and even purchases his bride back from her suitors with his very own life as the ransom (see Hos. 3).

As the hymn, *The Church's One Foundation*, so wonderfully says,

*From Heav'n he came and sought her, To be his holy bride;  
With his own blood he bought her, And for her life he died.*

The apostles carry on this tradition. Paul speaks of betrothing churches to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2) and even explicitly identifies marriage as a fundamental metaphor for Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:30-32). Finally, the Bible ends with the glorious picture of the marriage supper of the Lamb, as Christ's people come down from heaven dressed in white wedding garments, they celebrate with Jesus, their beloved groom (Rev. 21:2). This is the marriage we were all made for.



*The Wedding at Cana* by Veronese (1563)

Ray Ortlund sums it up well: “The biblical story lifts up before us a vision of God as our Lover... The gospel reveals that, as we look out into the universe, ultimate reality is not cold, dark, blank space; ultimate reality is romance. There is a God above with love in his eyes for us and infinite joy to offer us, and he has set himself upon winning our hearts for himself alone.”<sup>26</sup>

*If you are single or married, how does the biblical view of marriage help you be faithful to the calling God has given to you in this season?*

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# Song of Solomon 6:4-13

He

<sup>4</sup> You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love,  
lovely as Jerusalem,  
awesome as an army with banners.

<sup>5</sup> Turn away your eyes from me,  
for they overwhelm me—

Your hair is like a flock of goats  
leaping down the slopes of Gilead.

<sup>6</sup> Your teeth are like a flock of ewes  
that have come up from the washing;  
all of them bear twins;  
not one among them has lost its young.

<sup>7</sup> Your cheeks are like halves of a  
pomegranate  
behind your veil.

<sup>8</sup> There are sixty queens and eighty  
concubines,  
and virgins without number.

<sup>9</sup> My dove, my perfect one, is the only one,  
the only one of her mother,  
pure to her who bore her.

The young women saw her and called her  
blessed;  
the queens and concubines also, and they  
praised her.

<sup>10</sup> “Who is this who looks down like the  
dawn,  
beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun,  
awesome as an army with banners?”

She

<sup>11</sup> I went down to the nut orchard  
to look at the blossoms of the valley,  
to see whether the vines had budded,  
whether the pomegranates were in  
bloom.

<sup>12</sup> Before I was aware, my desire set me  
among the chariots of my kinsman, a  
prince.

Others

<sup>13</sup> Return, return, O Shulammitte,  
return, return, that we may look upon  
you.

He

Why should you look upon the Shulammitte,  
as upon a dance before two armies?

C.S. LEWIS (1898-1963): *To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket—safe, dark, motionless, airless—it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable.*<sup>27</sup>

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### ***Questions For Discussion***

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- The man responds to the woman's failure with lavish affirmation rather than condemnation. How does this challenge our assumptions about how love responds to failure?
- Despite the conflict, he declares her beauty and uniqueness among all others. What does this reveal about the nature of covenant love versus conditional affection?
- How does the man's gracious response model the way Christ receives us after we've been slow to respond to him or wandered from him?
- The woman is overcome by his gaze. What does it look like to be transformed by being seen and known by Christ rather than hiding in shame after failure? See Luke 22:61.
- How should Christ's response to our failures shape the way we respond to others when they fail us or let us down?

## *Marriage and the Church*

**W**hile marriage is an institution as old as creation (Gen 2:24), Jesus' coming and the birth of the Christian faith transformed the way that this union was understood. Though Judaism treated marriage as the norm for any healthy adult, the Early Church, shaped by the life and teachings of Christ, reoriented the importance and meaning of marriage. While marriage was still honored, the Church understood that it was, at its core, a signpost to a deeper reality, namely the relationship of Jesus to His people (Eph. 5).

For the **New Testament** writers and Early Church Fathers, knowing and loving God in unity with Jesus Christ was treated as the highest good. Therefore, in a new way, the Church opened up space for single people to participate in the fullness of God's intention for humanity (1 Cor. 7). After all, though marriage is still a good creational reality, its purpose is not eternal. Instead, it is rooted in the love of God for His people, a love that all believers experience in the present and will experience fully in the coming kingdom.

As centuries passed, the influence of certain strands of Greek philosophy, which frequently treated the physical world as inferior to the spiritual, contributed to the subordination and over-spiritualization of marriage. The eventual outlawing of priestly marriage in **Roman Catholicism** reflects this trend. Amongst the many things that the **Protestant Reformation** sought to correct in the Church was this stilted view of marriage and singleness.

Yet in the years since the **Protestant Reformation**, many Christians have over-corrected and again begun to assume that every faithful believer ought to be married. In this way, we have often forgotten that marriage is not an end in and of itself, but a pointer to the deeper reality that we have access to through Jesus Christ. In the broader, secular culture, marriage has changed from a life-long covenant modeling the love of God for His people to a contract that can be nullified for any number of reasons.

For Christians caught in between a consumeristic, cultural understanding of marriage and an overly exalted view of marriage in many churches, it is always good to remember that, when the Lord returns and we go forth to meet him, we go forth as a bride meeting her bridegroom. This reality gives deeper meaning to Christian marriages, it uplifts the calling of single believers, and it reminds us that our fulfillment is not found in the things of this world (even the good things), but instead in the union with God promised to all who trust in Jesus Christ.

*How should we understand the place (and value) of marriage in light of the Gospel? How might this understanding conflict with our culture, both in the church and in the wider world?*

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### *Before You Fight, Ask:*

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Here are four questions from James 4 to ask next time you find yourself at the front lines of a fight:

***What do I want?*** - Do you know why we fight? “Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?” (4:1). Conflict happens when two people go to war for their passions/lusts/desires. The best way to understand what you are really fighting over is to examine what you want most. The flip side of the same coin is to ask what you fear losing. If you are fighting over finances, what do you fear? Losing money? Losing approval? Begin there. And be honest.

***Why do I want it?*** - Beneath our sinful desires are idols. James calls us “adulterous people” because conflict often reveals hearts that have latched on to this world more than God (4:4-5). What’s beneath your lust or fear? Consider these four “source idols”: Approval, Control, Power, and Comfort. If you can name the “demon,” then you can begin to fight it.

***What is a win?*** - Nobody goes to war to lose. So what is a win to you? What do you hope will happen from this fight? The best result of conflict is not for you to get your way—it’s for God to get his. What is his? He wants to give you grace (4:6). Do you want grace-infused conflicts? Then humble yourself and ask for more grace (4:6-10).

***What should I do now?*** - James says the reason we fight to begin with is because we don’t pray (4:3). The best way to defuse the situation and lower the temperature is to stop and pray for yourselves and each other.



## Song of Solomon 7:1-8:4

<sup>1</sup>How beautiful are your feet in sandals,  
O noble daughter!

Your rounded thighs are like jewels,  
the work of a master hand.

<sup>2</sup>Your navel is a rounded bowl  
that never lacks mixed wine.

Your belly is a heap of wheat,  
encircled with lilies.

<sup>3</sup>Your two breasts are like two fawns,  
twins of a gazelle.

<sup>4</sup>Your neck is like an ivory tower.  
Your eyes are pools in Heshbon,  
by the gate of Bath-rabbim.

Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon,  
which looks toward Damascus.

<sup>5</sup>Your head crowns you like Carmel,  
and your flowing locks are like purple;  
a king is held captive in the tresses.

<sup>6</sup>How beautiful and pleasant you are,  
O loved one, with all your delights!

<sup>7</sup>Your stature is like a palm tree,  
and your breasts are like its clusters.

<sup>8</sup>I say I will climb the palm tree  
and lay hold of its fruit.

Oh may your breasts be like clusters of the  
vine,

and the scent of your breath like apples,

<sup>9</sup>and your mouth like the best wine.

She

It goes down smoothly for my beloved,  
gliding over lips and teeth.

<sup>10</sup>I am my beloved's,  
and his desire is for me.

<sup>11</sup>Come, my beloved,  
let us go out into the fields  
and lodge in the villages;

<sup>12</sup>let us go out early to the vineyards  
and see whether the vines have budded,  
whether the grape blossoms have opened  
and the pomegranates are in bloom.

There I will give you my love.

<sup>13</sup> The mandrakes give forth fragrance,  
and beside our doors are all choice  
fruits,

new as well as old,

which I have laid up for you, O my  
beloved.

<sup>8:1</sup> Oh that you were like a brother to me  
who nursed at my mother's breasts!

If I found you outside, I would kiss you,  
and none would despise me.

<sup>2</sup> I would lead you and bring you  
into the house of my mother—  
she who used to teach me.

I would give you spiced wine to drink,  
the juice of my pomegranate.

<sup>3</sup> His left hand is under my head,  
and his right hand embraces me!

<sup>4</sup> I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
that you not stir up or awaken love  
until it pleases.

### *Questions For Discussion*

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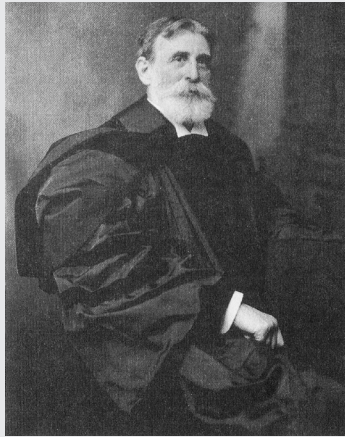
- What does the ongoing attraction in the passage say about the abiding nature of committed love and romance after years of marriage?
- The woman proclaims that she is her beloved's, and his desire is for her. How might this claim challenge our culture, which idolizes autonomy and encourages us to define our own identities?
- How does this passage push back on our culture's tendency to cherish young love?
- Even after all of the time they have shared, the woman still longs for more knowledge, understanding, and relational intimacy with her husband. What are subtle ways people can miss out on this depth of desire? What are ways it can become unhealthy?
- Where do you see these pictures and desires mirrored in relationship with Jesus?

## *A Story of Committed Love*

*“He has had only two interests in life—his work, and Mrs. Warfield.”*

**B**.B. Warfield (1851-1921) was one of the most influential theologians in American history. He was a professor and prolific writer at Princeton University. He was largely known for his reformed theology, piercing intellect, and foundational work on Biblical inspiration. When you look at him, you might not be surprised by any of that. But what you might not expect is that to those closest to him, Dr. Warfield was known primarily for his committed love to his wife.

When he was 25, he married his equally brilliant and beautiful wife Annie. On their way to Germany for their honeymoon, full of excitement and anticipation, they found themselves caught in a massive thunderstorm. The details are fuzzy, but likely she was actually (or nearly) struck by lightning. Amazingly she lived, but she was so scarred by the event that she was never the same after. One of Warfield’s graduate students wrote that “[i]t was such a shattering experience for Mrs Warfield that she never fully recovered from the shock to her nervous system and was more or less of an invalid during the rest of her life.”<sup>28</sup>



So day-in and day-out for forty years, Warfield tenderly cared for her. He took her out on long walks. When she eventually became bed-ridden, he would put aside his work to read to her for several hours a day. He did nearly all of his work from home, so that he would not have to leave her alone for more than an hour or two. And only once within a ten-year period did he leave Princeton, and it to get Annie out because he thought it would help her. Warfield’s tender love and care for his wife was so evident that people around town said, “he has had only two interests in life—his work, and Mrs. Warfield.”<sup>29</sup>





# Song of Solomon 8:5-14

5 Who is that coming up from the wilderness,

leaning on her beloved?

Under the apple tree I awakened you.

There your mother was in labor with you;  
there she who bore you was in labor.

6 Set me as a seal upon your heart,  
as a seal upon your arm,

for love is strong as death,

jealousy is fierce as the grave.

Its flashes are flashes of fire,

the very flame of the Lord.

7 Many waters cannot quench love,

neither can floods drown it.

If a man offered for love

all the wealth of his house,

he would be utterly despised.

**Others**

8 We have a little sister,

and she has no breasts.

What shall we do for our sister

on the day when she is spoken for?

9 If she is a wall,

we will build on her a battlement of

silver,

but if she is a door,

we will enclose her with boards of cedar.

**She**

10 I was a wall,

and my breasts were like towers;

then I was in his eyes

as one who finds peace.

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon;

he let out the vineyard to keepers;

each one was to bring for its fruit a

thousand pieces of silver.

12 My vineyard, my very own, is before me;

you, O Solomon, may have the thousand,

and the keepers of the fruit two hundred.

CHARLES SPURGEON (1834-1892) - On Song of Solomon 8:6: *“With steadfast steps, death marches over the world. No mountains can restrain the invasion of this all-conquering king. But Christ’s love is ‘strong as death’. As the sun dissolves the chains of frost, and bids the stream rush on in freedom, though once bound, as if it were in stone, so does this love of Christ. Wherever it comes, it gives life, and joy, and liberty, and snaps the bonds and has its way.”*<sup>30</sup>

He

13 O you who dwell in the gardens,  
with companions listening for your  
voice;  
let me hear it.

She

14 Make haste, my beloved,  
and be like a gazelle  
or a young stag  
on the mountains of spices.

### ***Questions For Discussion***

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- How have you experienced the security and comfort of knowing you are truly loved in your relationships?
- How does true, enduring, covenantal love cut across all cheap imitations of love?
- Why is pursuing sexual purity for yourself and others worth it according to this passage?
- How are purity and the gospel interrelated?
- The passage ends where the entire Bible ends: with a bride calling for her groom (Rev. 22:17, 20). What does this tell us about the nature of love? And how does this inform our relationship with Christ?

## ***Recommended Resources***

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### ***Singleness***

Article: “Singled Out By God for Good” by Paige Benton

Book: *7 Myths of Singleness* by Sam Allberry

Book: *Redeeming Singleness* by Barry Danylak

### ***Dating***

Book: *Letters to a Romantic: On Dating* by Sean Perron and Spencer Harmon

Book: *Dating with Discernment* by Sam A. Andreades

Book: *Outdated* by Jonathan Pohluda

### ***Engagement***

Article: “Questions to Ask When Preparing for Marriage” by John Piper

Book: *Catching Foxes* by John Henderson

Book: *Letters to a Romantic: On Engagement* by Sean Perron and Spencer Harmon

### ***Marriage***

Article: “X-ray Questions: Drawing Out the Whys and Wherefores of Human Behavior” by David Powlison

Book: *Marriage and the Mystery of the Gospel* by Ray Ortlund

Book: *The Meaning of Marriage* by Timothy Keller

Book: *Marriage* by Paul David Tripp

### ***Sex***

Article: “The Gospel and Sex” by Timothy Keller

Book: *Making All Things New* by David Powlison

### ***Additional Recommendations***

Book: *The Death of Porn* by Ray Ortlund

Book: *Is God Anti-Gay?* by Sam Allberry

## *Glossary*

**Idol** - Anything other than God you can't live without and still have joy in your life. In other words, it's something created that people worship as a god.

**Marriage** - The union between one man and one woman founded by a covenant and formed by God.

**The Marriage Supper of the Lamb** – The wedding feast described in Revelation 19 between Jesus Christ and his entire Church.

**New Testament** - The collection of 27 books beginning with Matthew and ending in Revelation. The word “testament” means covenant. Therefore, the title communicates that these books have to do with the New Covenant instituted by Jesus Christ.

**Old Testament** - The collection of 39 books beginning with Genesis and ending in Malachi. The word “testament” means covenant. Therefore, the title communicates that these books have to do with the Old Covenant.

**Protestant Reformation** - A movement in the sixteenth century, whereby church leaders and members “protested” the theology, liturgy, and leadership in the Roman Catholic Church. It was a “Reformation” in that those leading the movement wanted to reform the church to the standard of scripture. At the center of this conflict were disagreements over what later became known as the five solas (Latin for ‘alone’): *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture is the only infallible authority), *Sola Gratia* (Salvation is a work of God's grace alone), *Sola Fide* (Salvation is by faith alone, and not works), *Solus Christus* (Salvation is in Christ alone), and *Soli Deo Gloria* (For God's glory alone).

**Revelation** - The word “Revelation” is often used in two ways: (1) God's work of disclosing himself, his nature, and his will; and (2) the final book of the Bible written by John.

**Roman Catholicism** - One of the three main branches of Christendom (the other two are Protestantism and Eastern Orthodox). The word “Catholic” literally means universal, which described it when Rome had conquered most of the known world. And the word “Roman” identifies its association with and submission to the See of Rome and its Bishop (the Pope).

**Solomon** - The third King of Israel, the son of David. He was known for his God-given wisdom and wealth.

## Endnotes

1 Julia J. Hynek, "What's With All the Songs About Love?," *The Harvard Crimson*, April 23, 2024, <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/4/23/why-is-there-so-much-love-in-music-thinkpiece/>.

2 Hawkins, A. J., Carroll, J. S., Jones, A. M. W., & James, S. L. (2022). Capstones vs. cornerstones: Is marrying later always better? *State of our unions: 2022*. The National Marriage Project. 9.

3 Daniel A. Cox, "How Bad Is America's Romantic Recession?" - The Survey Center on American Life, February 6, 2025, <https://www.americansurveycenter.org/newsletter/how-bad-is-americas-romantic-recession/>.

4 Hawkins, A. J., Carroll, J. S., Jones, A. M. W., & James, S. L. (2022). Capstones vs. cornerstones: Is marrying later always better? *State of our unions: 2022*. The National Marriage Project. 46.

5 Scott Stanley and Galena Rhoades, "What's the Plan? Cohabitation, Engagement, and Divorce 2023 | Institute for Family Studies," accessed December 11, 2025, <https://ifstudies.org/reports/whats-the-plan-cohabitation/2023/executive-summary>.

6 Not only do singles feel stuck, but they also tend to have other struggles such as loneliness and financial challenges. For loneliness in singleness see, "New APA Poll: One in Three Americans Feels Lonely Every Week," accessed December 11, 2025, <https://www.psychiatry.org/443/news-room/news-releases/new-apa-poll-one-in-three-americans-feels-lonely-e>. For financial challenges see, Juliana Kaplan, "What Is the Financial Impact of Being Single in the U.S.? | World Economic Forum," accessed December 11, 2025, <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2021/10/what-is-the-financial-impact-of-being-single-in-the-united-states/>.

7 "The Most Up-to-Date Pornography Statistics," accessed December 11, 2025, <https://www.covenanteyes.com/pornstats/>.

8 CDC, "Sexually Transmitted Infections Surveillance, 2024 (Provisional)," STI Statistics, September 23, 2025, <https://www.cdc.gov/sti-statistics/annual/index.html>.

9 CDC, "Unmarried Childbearing," March 24, 2025, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/unmarried-childbearing.htm>.

10 Just Google "dating and marriage advice" and it will retrieve 105 million results in under one second.

11 Bruce Y. Lee, "AI Use in Dating Jumps 333%," *Psychology Today*, accessed December 11, 2025, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/a-funny-bone-to-pick/202506/ai-use-in-dating-jumps-333>.

12 Gledhill, Tom. *The Message of the Song of Songs: The Lyrics of Love*. Edited by J. A. Motyer. The Bible Speaks Today. England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994.

13 Eric Ortlund, “The Wisdom of the Song of Songs: A Pastoral Guide for Preaching and Teaching,” *Themelios* 45, no. 3 (n.d.): 496.

14 Quoted in J. A. Medders, “Your Soul Needs the Song of Solomon,” *The Gospel Coalition*, July 18, 2025, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/soul-needs-song-solomon/>.

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