

S.O.S. – Part 1

“Courtship: Choosing the Right Spouse”

Song of Solomon 1:1-3:5 - January 11, 2004

Overview of S.O.S.

S.O.S. – God’s Help for Love, Marriage, and Sex (A 6-week study of the Song of Solomon)			
Date	Song of Solomon	Movement in Relationship	Sermon Title
Jan 11	1:1-3:5	Courtship	Choosing the Right Spouse
Jan 18	3:6-11; 2:15	Wedding Vows	Marriages That Endure Defeat (Guest: Dr. Gene Smith)
Jan 25	4:1-5:1	Sex	God’s Great and Complicated Invention
Feb 1	5:2-6:13	Conflict	When the Honeymoon is Over
Feb 8	7:1-8:14	Renewed Love	How to Stay in Love
Feb 13	Renewal of Vows Valentine’s Banquet		
Feb 15	8:6-7	Love Aflame	Only Long-Term Marriages Need Apply

(highly recommend The Book of Romance by Tommy Nelson isbn#0785274715)

The First Step to a Great Marriage

- #1 way to prevent heart attacks = choose _____
- #1 step to have a great marriage = choose _____

The Consequences of Choosing the Wrong Spouse

- **Proverbs 15:17** – *Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf with hatred.*
- **Proverbs 21:9** – *Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.*
- **Proverbs 21:19** – *Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and ill-tempered wife.*

Introduction to the Song of Solomon (1:1)

- **1 Kings 4:29-34** – *God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. Solomon’s wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man.... He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He described plant life... and taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.*
- Of the 1005 songs that Solomon wrote, this one is the _____:
 - Hebrew title: “The Song of Songs”
 - English title: “The Song of Solomon”
- This song is a poetry record of the historical romance between King Solomon and a Shulamite shepherdess/vineyard keeper.

- The song had singing/speaking parts for 4 main characters:
 1. The bride (beloved, Shulamite)
 2. The king (lover, Solomon)
 3. The chorus (friends, daughters of Jerusalem)
 4. God (5:1c)
- The song reads like a movie with flashbacks (starts on wedding day and then flashbacks to their courtship; includes dreams in the middle).
- The song uses lots of dated illustrations. The song alludes to 21 species of plants and 15 species of animals.
- The song is a bold and positive endorsement by God of _____ in all its physical and emotional beauty.
- **Something I wrestle with:** At the writing of this song, Solomon had 140 wives (S.O.S. 6:8) and by the end of his life he had 1000 wives (1 Kings 11:3). This may be the only pure romance that Solomon ever experienced. Most of his marriages were political arrangements. This song was written while Solomon was younger. It wasn’t until later that Solomon’s heart was turned after other gods (1 Kings 11:4).

Choosing the Right Spouse – Who to Look For

1) Someone you are _____ attracted to (1:2-4,15-16; 2:9)

- Example: Jacob’s attraction to Rachel (Genesis 29:9-30)

2) Someone who is _____ to God (1:3)

- NAS: “your name is like purified oil”
- Snapshots of Solomon’s relationship with God
 - 1) Solomon was a worshipper (1 Kings 8:14-15,22-23,54-55)
 - 2) Solomon was a man of prayer (1 Kings 8:22-23,54-55)
 - 3) Solomon was a giver (1 Kings 8:62-63)
 - 4) Solomon had a servant’s heart (1 Kings 3:5-14)
- **2 Corinthians 6:14** – *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.*
- Avoid the Shallow Soil Syndrome (Mark 4:16-17)
- An Important Commitment

I commit to date only growing Christians and to choosing a spouse who is given over to God.

x _____

- Why does God tell His children to do this? Because He knows that spiritual intimacy is the greatest intimacy!
 - _____% of the relationships in which couples live together without marriage vows end in separation
 - _____% of couples who are married by a justice of the peace get divorced
 - _____% of couples who are married in church eventually divorce

- Only ____% of couples who go to church together AND pray together regularly divorce (Graham)
- Only ____% of couples who read their Bibles together daily get divorced (Nelson)
- Couples who pray together regularly report a higher sexual satisfaction (Greeley)

3) Someone who has fully revealed their _____ and has been actively pursuing healing (1:5-6)

- Some great beginning questions to ask each other:
 1. Who was the most important person in your life growing up? How did they treat you?
 2. What are your best memories?
 3. What are your worst memories?
 4. What are your scars? What are your wounds? What hurt you so bad that you thought you were never going to recuperate from it?
 5. What healing have you experienced from some of these past wounds? How did you experience that? What do you feel like is your next step in pursuing continued healing? How much of a priority is that for you?
 6. What have you not told me about your past yet?
 7. Would you be willing to go to a Christian counselor with me to talk about our relationship?
- Some recommended Christian counselors:
 1. Guy Gourley, MA, LPC (713-984-1314)
 2. Bill Ritter, MA, LPC (281-277-8811)
 3. Misti Matchett, MAMFC, LPC (281-498-4673)
 4. Dick Conant, MA, LPC (281-277-8811)
 5. Beverly Conant, MA, LPC (281-277-8811)
 6. Ruby Renz, MEd., MDivBL (281-646-1903, x.123)

4) Someone who _____ with their words and actions (1:9-2:4)

- “a mare” (1:9)
- “sachet of myrrh” (1:13)
- “rose of Sharon” (2:1)
- “apple tree” (2:3)
- “sit in his shade” (2:3)
- “taken me to the banquet hall...” (2:4)
- Question for Married Couples: Do you still do this?

5) Someone who loves you enough to _____ for a sexual relationship (1:7; 2:6,7; 3:5)

- The Biblical commands to wait (Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:27-30; 1 Corinthians 6:13,18; Galatians 5:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:3)

- Practical Suggestions for Successfully Waiting:
 1. Decide to
 2. Go on group dates (vs. 1-on-1 dates)
 3. Never be _____ (1:16)
- **Romans 13:14** – Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. (NAS)
- Warning: If your boyfriend doesn’t have the self-control to wait with you, how is he going to have the self-control to stay faithful to you when (if) you get married?
- Sex before marriage is a fox in the vineyard (2:15)
- A Note to Couples Who Already Have Blown It:
 1. Confess it as sin (1 John 1:9)
 2. You are forgiven in Christ (1 John 1:9; Romans 8:1)
 3. Now go forward and sin no more (John 8:11)

6) Someone who is willing to work through a _____ process (2:8-3:5)

- Solomon and the Shulamite’s Courtship Process
 - Exclusive dating (2:10,13,14)
 - Work through the foxes (2:15)
 - Commitment (2:16)
 - Intensified longings (3:1-4)
 - Yet restraint until married (3:5)
- Neil Clark Warren’s “Seven Deadly Errors That Contribute to Badly Matched Marriage Partners” (from Finding the Love of Your Life):
 1. The decision to marry is made too quickly
 2. The decision is made at too young an age
 3. One or both parties is sometimes too eager to be married (i.e. “marriage will fix my problems”)
 4. One or both parties move prematurely into marriage in order to please or placate someone else
 5. Spouse selection is based on too narrow an experience base with the partner (i.e. don’t fully know each other yet)
 6. The mistake of unrealistic or uncommunicated expectations of marriage
 7. Unaddressed personality or behavioral problems – hidden pockets of brokenness or dysfunction that don’t get discovered until after the marriage.

My Response at the Prayer Altar

1. Single person – Praying for the right spouse. Make some commitments before God now.
2. Parents – Praying for the right spouse for your children.
3. Married with foxes in the vineyard – Commit before God and each other to work through and chase the foxes out.
4. “I think I married the wrong person” – Psalm 139:15-18; Jeremiah 29:11; Matthew 5:31-32; Revelation 19:6-8
5. Everyone – Give yourself over to God!