

Song of Songs: Song of Relationship Song of Songs 2:8-3:5

This Semester, we're studying the Song of Songs to see how the melody of a relationship can present the message of the Gospel. This week, we're looking at the way a couple can reflect God as they approach marriage by Revealing the Person, Revealing the Problems, and Responding with a Promise.

Read: Song of Songs 2.14-16

Intro: Every stage of a relationship questions the timing of moving to the next stage: When you've got a crush, when do you call them pretending to be a Domino's guy? When do you start dating? When do you become official? When do you meet families? When do you talk about marriage? When do you get engaged? When do you take your mom out for pizza?

The Truth is...

- About 95% of us are going to get married at some point in our lives, so it's less a question of "if" and more a question of "when?"
- Some of us would get married tomorrow while some of us can't imagine ourselves ever making that kind of commitment. Some of us are in relationships we consider already married in God's eyes while some of us are in relationships we KNOW will never make it that far.
- No matter where we currently fall on the relationship spectrum, 95% of us are getting married, so when are we ready? When is it time? In other words, How do we move towards marriage?

This Semester...

- We've been studying the Song of Songs to better understand God's design for relationships. Just as a song has a melody and a message, God created relationships to function the same way. We don't want to just pursue great relationships, we want to pursue Godly relationships that sing His beautiful song over the broken noise of our world! We want to see how the melody of a relationship can reflect the message of the Gospel!
- We've discussed How to find attraction, How to move towards your attraction, and How to maintain a healthy dating relationship?

This Morning...

- We're looking at that next stage: How to move towards Marriage? In this passage, we see them Reveal the Person, Reveal the Problems, then Respond with a Promise...

Revealing the Person

- Read: Song of Songs 2.10-13 – Remember, the man just jumped over hills in his excitement to speak with the woman in the most non-mysterious way possible. And now he calls her out because it's spring time – timing is everything!
 - Certain conversations and situations have to occur naturally over time – extended interaction and observation bring revelation
 - App: It takes Time - The couple is willing to wait for the right time & the right season – they don't rush physical or emotional intimacy
 - "The man's invitation calls her out of hiding. Her inaccessibility heightens his desire. His excitement rises as he waits for his first glimpse of her"
 - More than half of new American marriages are preceded by cohabitation - "Research shows that less than 30% of couples who cohabit before marriage have marriages that last 5 years or more compared to 78% of non-cohabiting couples"
 - Rushing always creates Regret – doubts about self-control; connections that leave deeper

scars when it doesn't work out

- Read: Song of Songs 2.14 – In what could be a separate song, the man compares the woman to a dove in the rocks
 - He's full of nature examples because it's an Agrarian society
 - Ex: "your hair is dark like a football game with 8pm kickoff, your cheeks sharp like the pain of losing to Alabama"
 - He's moving and she's cooing
 - He's still overwhelmingly positive, building upon her beauty; she's responding & initiating affection
 - App: It takes Transparency – The man and woman are moving towards each other clearly and consistently – the only mystery is flirty
 - You don't need a DTR every date, but you need to be clear about how you're feeling and what you're thinking
 - It's easy to assume someone knows what you're thinking, but no matter how long you've dated, they don't!
- As you reveal more of the person, it naturally leads to...

Revealing the Problems

- Read: Song of Songs 2.15 – The woman points out that there are foxes in the vineyard! Oh no?
 - We think foxes are cute but they are not
 - Foxes are bad news because they can cause bad things and prevent good things
 - No foxes is worse news because they're there, but hiding
- App: What are your Foxes?
 - Baggage – could require counseling
 - Communication – in good times & bad
 - Unclear/Mismanaged Expectations – what's your future look like?
- As you reveal more of the problems, it calls us to...

Responding with a Promise

- Read: Song of Songs 3.1-4 – In what could be yet another song, we see the woman either not finding the man while in bed or not finding the man in the bed where he should be – either way, there's a disconnect in the relationship – so she seeks him out until she finds him & takes him back to the place of greatest intimacy – Mom's House
 - In a few weeks, we're talking about conflict in much greater detail, but realize this: "Conflict presents an opportunity to possibly LEAVE. Resolution shows you will STAY! Conflict shows the REALITY of LOVE in good and bad times. Staying creates SECURITY"
 - And this security leads to intimacy – Mom's house!
- You've got to find the problems, because one day the problems will directly affect you – and you've got to be ready to react with love and grace
- App: It's not looking for the person with no problems, It's looking for the person you want with you when problems arise
 - The question isn't "who doesn't have foxes?" The question is "who do I want with me on the fox hunt?"
- Read: "Love is not a passing fling but rather a demanding and exhausting relationship"
- Read: Song of Songs 3.5 – When are you ready for the next step? How do you move towards marriage? You don't Rush. You Reveal the person, you Reveal the problems, and if you're willing to press through those problems for that person, you respond with a Promise.

Reflecting the Gospel

- If we love & pursue & commit to each other in this way, the world will notice!
- I know this person, so I know they're sinful just like me. Thankfully, I can commit myself to love and sacrifice for this broken person because I am strengthened by the God who loved both of us so much that he sacrificed his own life to save us.

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.
Catch the foxes for us,
 the little foxes
that spoil the vineyards,
 for our vineyards are in blossom.”

My beloved is mine, and I am his;
 he grazes among the lilies.

(Song of Songs 2:14-16)

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience — among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved

(Ephesians 2:1-5)

[10] My beloved speaks and says to me:

“Arise, my love, my beautiful one,
 and come away,

[11] for behold, the winter is past;
 the rain is over and gone.

[12] The flowers appear on the earth,
 the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
 is heard in our land.

[13] 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.

[14] 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.

[15] Catch the foxes for us,
 the little foxes

that spoil the vineyards,
 for our vineyards are in blossom.”

(Song of Solomon 2:10-15 ESV)

[1] On my bed by night
I sought him whom my soul loves;
 I sought him, but found him not.

[2] 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.

[3] The watchmen found me
 as they went about in the city.
“Have you seen him whom my soul loves?”

[4] 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.

[5] 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.

(Song of Solomon 3:1-5 ESV)