



# SONG OF SONGS

## Group Reading Plan

### Week 1: Song of Songs 1:1-3:5

**Get the big picture of Song of Songs:** As we start this four-week discussion of Song of Songs, a great first step is to look at the whole book. If time allows read through whole book in one sitting. It's only 8 chapters, and it takes less than 15 minutes to read. Or check out this [great video](#) from [the Bible Project](#) which gives you a helpful overview of the book.

Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are walking through Song of Songs with you:

- What are some cultural assumptions about romance, dating and marriage? Where do these beliefs come from and how do you see them expressed in media and in people's lives in the places where you live, work and play?
- Read Song of Songs Chapters 1 and 2. How do these verses echo cultural assumptions of romance? In what ways do they differ?
- Read Genesis 2:15-25. What is God's design for a relationship between man and woman? How does Song of Songs 1-2 reinforce God's purpose in romantic relationships before the Fall?
- Look at Genesis 3:1-14. What changed in the man and woman's relationship after they sinned? What changed in their relationship with God?
- God created us holistically; we have a body, a mind, a heart and a spirit. These scriptures in Song of Songs and Genesis show how these parts of us are intertwined. Our bodies and what we do with them can either draw our spirit closer to God and one another or they can drive us apart through the power of sin. Similarly our heart and emotions or our mind and thought life can either deepen our connection to God and other people or drive us apart.

- As someone who is single, dating, engaged or married, how is the way God designed your body and its physical desires helping you grow in connection to Him and others? Are there ways your attractions are harming your relationship with Him or other people? Similarly are your emotions, especially romantic feelings, helpful or harmful to your relationship with God or others right now? What about your thought life, especially in connection to your romantic relationships?
- Close by reading Romans 12:1-2. What do these verses say about our bodies? What do they say about our minds? As we seek to live out these commands, what will we be able to do? In what areas of your life do you need discernment and the ability to know God's will for your life?



## Week 2: Song of Songs 3:6-5:1

**Especially for Couples' Groups:** This sermon series is for everyone, but if you are in a Couples' Life Group, there are some unique opportunities to use this series to enrich your marriages. Before the group meets this week, ask everyone to bring their wedding picture to share with the group. Also, encourage couples to spend a few minutes reflecting together about their wedding and the thoughts and emotions that led them to get married.

Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends, or others who are walking through Song of Songs with you:

- Talk about a wedding you've attended or been a part of recently. What stood out to you about the couple's relationship? What qualities did you admire in them?
- Read Song of Songs Chapters 3 and 4. Some scholars believe this part of the book describes the wedding of Solomon and the woman. Do you see any parts of this description that are similar to weddings today? Why do you think these elements have lasted through history and in various cultures?

- In Chapter 3:7-11, we see both the bride and groom surrounded by community who are part of their wedding (i.e. “sixty might men” and “daughters of Zion”.) How do the other people in our lives, especially our friends, affect the health of our romantic relationships? If you are single or dating, how does your community help you have healthy and godly relationships? If you are engaged or married, how are you cultivating other relationships that support a Christ-centered marriage?
- God’s purpose in sex is far beyond procreation; He designed it for His glory and our good. Read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20. Why is it important that both married and unmarried people keep sexually pure? Thinking back to our discussion last week about being created holistically, what happens to our minds when we are sexually immoral with our bodies? What happens to our hearts and emotions when we step outside God’s boundaries with our bodies? What happens to our spirit?
- The scriptures’ teachings about marriage are far deeper than just a ‘how-to’ manual on having a healthy relationship. Read Ephesians 5:25-33. What relationship does Paul compare marriage to? What are some specific examples he gives of how these things are similar? In Ephesians 5:33 he commands husbands to love their wives and wives to respect their husbands. How is this similar to how Christians relate to Christ? How can you grow in receiving the love of Christ or in honoring and respecting Him?
- Close by reading Isaiah 62:4-5. What do these verses say about God’s relationship with you? How does God feel about you? Is this easy or challenging for you to accept? How could trusting God’s feelings towards you affect the way you live, work and play?



## Week 3: Song of Songs 5:2-8:4

**Especially for Couples’ Groups:** This sermon series is for everyone, but if you are in a Couples’ Life Group, there are some unique opportunities to use this series to enrich your marriages. This week we’ll be talking about (cont.)

communication skills and conflict resolution. Start off with a short, fun couples' icebreaker games for a few or all the couples to try. After the game, discuss together positive ways the couples communicated with one another and solved problems.

- **Minefield:** Minefield is a game where one of the partners is blindfolded and guided verbally through the room by the other. The goal of the game is to get the blindfolded partner safely across the room by using verbal cues to avoid the obstacles, aka mines, you set in front of them. *This game requires the couple to trust each other and be precise when instructing to achieve the goal.*
- **Helping Hand:** "Helping hand" is a game that seems rather easy, but it can be quite frustrating. The goal is to accomplish an everyday activity such as buttoning a shirt or tying a shoe while each person has one hand tied behind their back. *This game provides a chance to build effective teamwork and build communication through seemingly simple tasks.*

Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are walking through Song of Songs with you:

- Talk about a recent conflict that you experienced or observed in your family, with friends, or at work. Did anyone do something to help bring understanding and reconciliation? Were there things that made the situation worse instead of better? Ultimately, did the conflict strengthen the relationship between the people who disagreed or did it cause division?
- Read Song of Songs Chapters 5:2-6. Describe what is happening between the man and the woman in these verses. Where do you see each of them causing miscommunication, disappointment or rejection? Do you see either of them doing anything positive to connect with each other?
- In any close relationship, like a marriage or friendship, conflicts happen. Actually not disagreeing from time to time isn't a sign of health—it can indicate apathy, inauthenticity or relational distance. The goal isn't to never fight; it's to fight in a way that actually strengthens the relationship and honors Christ. Look at Colossians 3:12-17. What are some principles and practices that Paul gives that can guide us in conflicts? Which one of these is the hardest for you to live out?

- Return to Song of Songs, and read Chapter 5:8-16. What is happening in this passage? Who is the woman talking to and what does she tell them? Keep in mind, this “conversation” happens right after the conflict between the man and woman. Do you think the woman’s words and actions are helpful to her relationship with the man or harmful? Think of an example in your life when you talked to other people about a conflict you were having with someone. Did it impact the conflict positively or negatively? Is there anything you would like to differently next time?
- Close by reading Matthew 6:9-15. Why do you think Jesus followed his teaching on prayer with these words on forgiveness? Ultimately, what is our motivation to forgive when we’re in a conflict? Is there anyone you need to forgive right now? What tangible actions can you take to restore the relationship?



## Week 4: Song of Songs 8:5-14

**Take the “5 Love Languages” Quiz:** When we know the ways someone best receives affection and appreciation, we can cultivate more connection over time. The Five Love Languages are a simple way to strengthen relationships by understanding how people give and receive affirmation in friendships, romantic relationships and families. Have each person in the group take this short quiz and share how they feel most loved and appreciated:

<https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language>. You can also check out <https://5lovelanguages.com/learn/> to learn more about the each of the Love Languages.

Talk through these questions with your Life Group, your family and friends or others who are walking through Song of Songs with you:

- Think about a time you felt deeply appreciated by someone like a friend, co-worker, spouse or family member. What did they specifically do or say? How did it make you feel? Did that one experience change your relationship long-term?

- Read Song of Songs Chapter 8:6-7. Put in your own words what the woman is saying to her beloved. These verses are the only place in the whole book where the name of the Lord is used. What are they comparing the ‘flame of the LORD’ to? Why do you think they use this imagery?
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 are some of the most famous verses in the Bible. Read this passage in several different translations to overcome their familiarity. (You can use the Bible App to do this or go to [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).) Then share specific instances where you’ve experienced this kind of love in various relationships. For example, did a friend and co-worker cheer for you instead of being envious when you got a promotion? Or was a spouse or parent quick to forgive and forget about something you did wrong?
- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 again, but this time insert your name in all the places it says “love”. For example, “Susan is patient and kind” or “Tyler is not arrogant or rude.” Which one of these descriptions of love was the most natural to say about yourself? Which ones were the hardest? In each of the spheres of your relationships (family, friendships, work, marriage or dating) what is one specific way you want to act more loving in the ways described in 1 Corinthians?
- Culture can flip the truth of 1 John 4:8 that “God is love” and instead make us believe that “love is God” through its emphasis on romantic relationships in what we watch, read and listen to. As we’ve learned in Song of Songs, God did design romantic relationships for our good and for His glory within the parameters He sets out. However, a relationship between a man and woman is only one expression of love.
- Close by reading 1 John 4:7-12. How do all of our relationships reflect our relationship with God? How did God show His love for us? If the way God loves us is an example of how we are to love (1 John 4:11), what should characterize our love for people? What are we promised if we love one another (see verse 12)? What is one part of your life where you long to see God work?

