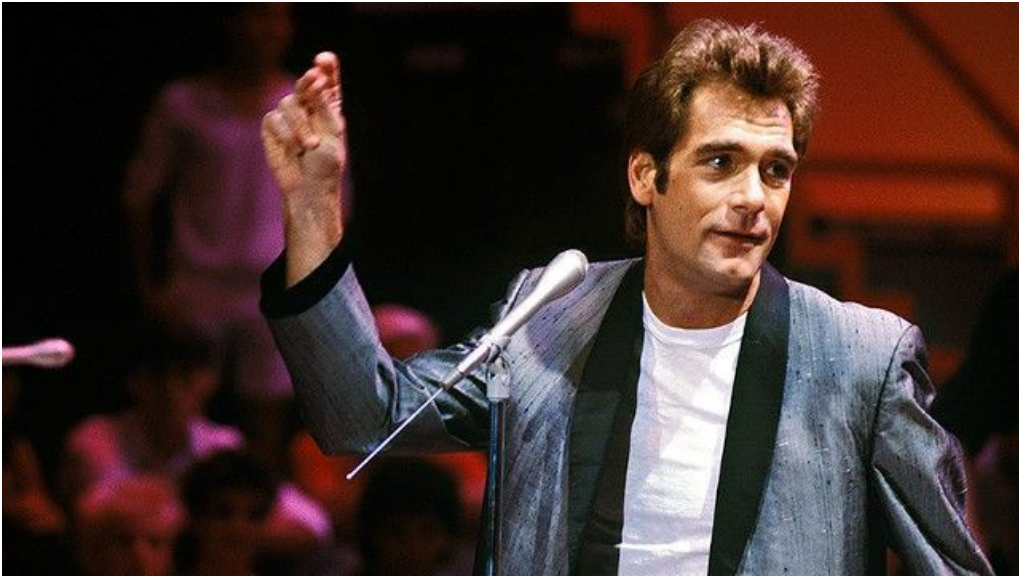


Lesson 14: The Power of Love?

Intro:



Big Idea: Love, when properly _____, can endure all manner of _____.

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.

- This section has its own set of questions, like who is speaking and when?
- This begins similar to 3:6, the couple is leaving the _____ to enter the city where they are greeted by a _____.
- “*Leaning on her beloved*” points us to intimacy and mutual _____.

The Song of Songs

- She does not address _____; she addresses _____.
- “The apple tree, being a fruit tree with a sensuous scent, evokes an appropriate atmosphere for the act of love, which may itself bear fruit.”¹⁰⁶
- She could simply be _____ him up. Or this could be awakening or arousing love.
- She speaks about his mother this time reflecting a _____-centered society.
- “*in labor*” could also mean “*conceived*” which makes more sense in light of the apple tree.
- Like her, they made love in such an exotic locale hoping it will bear _____.



- She wants to be a seal, _____, upon his heart and arm: exclusivity.
- The _____ seal, which was common in Palestine, was pressed down into clay.
- The _____ seal, common in Mesopotamia, was rolled across the clay.
- Either seal would signify identity and ownership. She wants others to know he is hers.
- “She wants their union to be intimate (*over your heart*) and public (*on your arm*).”¹⁰⁷
- Love is stronger or at least as strong as death. Nothing can stop _____, and nothing can stop _____.
- Death was often personified as the god _____. In mythology he temporarily defeated _____.

¹⁰⁶ Longman, pp. 208.

¹⁰⁷ Gledhill, pp. 227.

The Song of Songs

- Jealousy is a _____ - _____ devotion to someone or something. It is about _____, here positively.
- Jealousy is the dark side of _____ which is a good thing. Zeal asserts our _____ claims, an _____ of God Himself.
- Two relationships are marked by such exclusivity & zeal: _____ and _____.
- We can only have one God or provoke his jealousy. Our spouse should expect us to be faithful.
- Both jealousy and the grave are marked by being _____ or _____.
- This intensity is also revealed by the _____ of _____.
- Fire can _____ you up, or it can _____ you up. Be careful! (see Proverbs 6 below)
- Love is like a fire that the waters cannot _____. Not even _____.
- There could be the _____ powers of water at work. Baal defeated _____, god of the sea to be _____ of the gods.
- The word translated “*flashings*” can be translated “*lightening*” and is the name of the Canaanite god of _____ and _____ (Reshep).
- Love strikes like lightning, _____ and _____.
- Money cannot buy love though many people buy _____ & _____.
- The man who tries to buy love is put to _____ by his community.



“For the giving and receiving of sexual pleasure is one of the several means of binding and strengthening an ever-growing relationship of love.”¹⁰⁸

²⁷ Can a man carry fire next to his chest
and his clothes not be burned?

²⁸ Or can one walk on hot coals

¹⁰⁸ Gledhill, pp. 225.

The Song of Songs

and his feet not be scorched?

²⁹ So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife;
none who touches her will go unpunished. **Proverbs 6**

Allegorical Interpretation: The physical action of leaning is a metaphor for faith in Christ. We lean on the Beloved Son of God. Faith seeks Him in prayer so He will arise. The fires refer to the burning coals in the tabernacle and then the temple. Christ's love, like them, is never extinguished (Romans 8).

Dramatic Interpretation: This is seen as a vacation in the country where love is awakened (vs. 5), defined (vv. 6-7), developed (vv. 8-12) and enjoyed (vv. 13-14). Love is intense and invaluable. It is developed by a caring family and responsible choices before enjoyed.

"I've realized it isn't about doing what you love but doing things with the one you love." **Gary Grobowski** in *The Break-Up*

Song of Songs might suggest this: "Where there is love there is a community in which it rightly thrives." What elements of this book support this statement? In what ways is the context of Christian and church community important to the love of a man and a woman in all its stages?¹⁰⁹

Wisdom Literature: Love is a "single-hearted, lifelong, jealous devotion between one man and one woman."¹¹⁰ Only death can part them.

Typological Interpretation: The love of a married couple is intended to mirror the love of Christ for His people and His people for Him. If maintained as it ought (faith, repentance, worship) that love grows and is stronger than all that seeks to destroy it. Where that love is neglected, but us, it may wane. That isn't the point, but it is a reality. This is a young couple in the throes of passion, not the description of mature love. If we think such a passionate love cannot die, we lie.

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;

¹⁰⁹ Nielson, pp. 159.

¹¹⁰ Duguid, pp. 155.

The Song of Songs

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.

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.

- While we find many speakers in this passage we are taking it as a whole to conclude our studies.
- Longman sees this as a few poems. The first is about protecting the sister (vv. 8-10).
- She is young, and this is prior to _____ since she has not developed.
- They look forward to the day she is spoken for and wonder how they should _____ her.
- Some, like Kinlaw, think this is the woman's _____ whom she will help protect.¹¹¹
- They represent social _____ on her and _____. Most teens resent such restraint. They want to _____ and _____.
- Are the two halves synonymous parallels or antithetic parallels? Complementary or opposites?
- If she is a wall (city wall, not wall of a house) she is _____, a virgin who has not been _____.
- They will encourage her and help establish additional _____, the silver battlement. They _____ her.
- Her virginity is a treasure to be protected because it brings a _____.
- If complementary, the door is closed and they make it _____ with engravings.
- If antithetical she is _____ or sexually open to others (or at least one).
- If she is open they will enclose her so no one can get in. They use cedar which is quite _____.

¹¹¹ Kinlaw, pp. 1242.

The Song of Songs

- The sister _____ some of their claims. Though she is a wall, she has developed though her breasts are secure, like _____.
- Perhaps, as Gledhill suggests, the mature woman is looking _____ in time to before _____.
- Her virtue bodes well for the _____ of her future _____ and family.



Think about this waited-for, exclusive giving of oneself in marriage, and then think about our society today. What do you see?¹¹²

“The biblical witness is united with the Song of Songs in encouraging both women and men to save the intimacy of sexual intercourse for the deep emotional and covenantal commitment of marriage.” **Allender & Longman**¹¹³

- Vv. 11-12 represent another poem for Longman. The speaker is unclear (ESV thinks it is _____).
- It is quite disconnected from the previous lines.
- She may be declaring her _____ from an oppressive male like Solomon.
- We are uncertain about the location mentioned here. Solomon has too many vineyards, primarily used _____ in the Song for a woman’s sexuality.

¹¹² Nielson, pp. 157.

¹¹³ Allender & Longman, pp. 119.

The Song of Songs

- This could refer to Solomon's _____ (he had 700 wives and 300 concubines- so much for her conjugal rights!- 1 Kings 11:3).
- Her vineyard is hers and is not for sale. This may be a critique of _____. She is virtuous.
- Solomon is used as a _____, a bad example. He is the man who uses power & money to obtain "_____."



“Accumulating wives is not the same as accumulating wealth. In fact, it is the opposite, for multiplying wives means forfeiting the true peace and wholeness to be found only in a single-hearted commitment between one man and one woman.”¹¹⁴

- The third and last poem of this section and the book is a short exchange.
- The man and the woman express a yearning for union.
- Is this a picture of _____ life: _____ instead of “happily ever after”?
- The grammar of vs. 13 is very difficult to understand particularly w/regard to the male companions.
- It seems to be that she is in the garden, but _____ from him. He longs to be close.
- Earthly love cannot _____ us, though it may bring us great joy at times.
- She wants him to speed to her with all _____ and _____.
- The mountains may be _____ for him to scale, or refer to her breasts upon which she wants him to _____.
- The song ends on this note of _____, not _____.
- Marriage does not end the pursuit of the Beloved. It must continue though the dynamics change.



¹¹⁴ Duguid, pp. 158.

The Song of Songs

Allegorical Interpretation: “In these last verses we see Christ and his beloved church, like a loving husband and wife, consulting together about their affairs, considering what they are to do.”¹¹⁵ Gill, and others, think the sister represents the Gentiles who will enter the church. Her immaturity (no breasts) speaks to them having no special revelation. Today we should see her as the elect who have yet come to faith. Don’t take this to mean that big breasts indicate greater blessing! Solomon’s vineyards represent the Church, yet each person must keep their own vineyard. Vs. 13 is His last word to the Church after ascension: He wants to hear our prayers. Vs. 14 is our final word to Him: “come quickly” (Rev. 22)

Dramatic Interpretation: The bride’s brothers are concerned about her future marriage and happiness. They take measures to protect her based on her character. Like towers, her breasts were what you saw first but she was virtuous and repelled all who sought to despoil her. She takes responsibility for her own sexuality and purity instead of leaving it to others. She flashes back to when she and Solomon met. Her brothers cared for his vineyards. Solomon and the woman call to one another, inviting pleasure together.

Wisdom Literature: fidelity in monogamy is seen as the height of marital wisdom. It enables the greatest intimacy and security. Even the best human love is only a faint reflection of our truest peace, when we surrender ourselves to our Beloved.

Typological Interpretation: The longing (and disappointment) we experience in marriage mirrors our longing and sometimes disappointment in our relationship with Christ. We want more of Him, to know Him better and experience grace more completely. But often we are disappointed: we choose sin over Christ, He seems absent etc. Our expectations may not be biblical and our sin & misery contaminate everything. But His love is strong and keeps us despite these problems.

Conclusion:

¹¹⁵ Fortner, pp. 223.