

## **Love Life Dead?: Dating**

### **September 24, 2006**

### **Song of Solomon 1:9-2:7**

#### Introduction:

A rather legalistic Seminary student who wanted to have a scriptural basis for everything he did. He felt he was on solid ground if he could quote Bible book, chapter & verse to okay his actions.

He did all right with that until he began to fall in love with a beautiful co-ed. He wanted very much to kiss her, but he just couldn't find a scripture to okay it. So, true to his conscience, he would simply walk her to the dormitory each night, look at her longingly, & then say "Good night."

This went on for several weeks, & all the time he was searching the Bible, trying to find some scripture to okay kissing her good night. But he couldn't find one, until finally he came across that passage in Romans that says, "Greet each other with a holy kiss." He thought, "At last, I have scriptural authority for kissing her good night."

But to be sure, he went to his Bible professor to check it out. After talking with the professor, he realized that the passage dealt more with a church setting than with a dating situation. So once again he simply didn't have a passage of scripture to okay kissing his girl good night.

That evening he walked her to the dormitory & once again started to bid her "good night." But as he did, she grabbed him, pulled him toward her, & planted a 10-second kiss right on his lips.

At the end of the kiss, the Seminary student gasped for air, & stammered, "Bible verse, Bible verse." The girl grabbed him a 2nd time, & just before kissing him again, said, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

For the Series: Love Life Dead - Going through the Song of Solomon

Garth Sundem, author of "Geek Logik" has developed a formula to predict the success of celebrity marriages. The different variables to the formula are the following:

- Celebrities ages
- Length of courtship
- Previous marriages and relationships
- their fame (determined by google hits)

Although I don't know of any one formula that will determine the success of your marriages or the success of your future relationships, I do know that there are variables that can strengthen and equip our marriages or they can cripple.

We see so much on the television these days of what love is supposed to be. We see commercials and television shows (Sex and The City; The OC; King of Queens). We watch with curiosity the celebrities and their relationships

We think that God knows nothing of love, the romance kind, that God does not understand our need for passion. We think that God is up there in the cosmos naïve about

the subject of sexuality and romance. And yet who do you think gives us our passion, our drive for love and romance. It is not an animal instinct, it is purely human. It is God given.

So where do we look when we want to know more about love and romance? We turn on Oprah. We turn on Dr. Phil. We read manuals and books. We pick up the latest Cosmo, Seventeen, Elle. We watch the latest romance movies and wish, we wish our relationships were not so screwed up. Did you know that 90% of the World Wide Web is dedicated to this issue: people want to know, “How do I fix my relationship? How do I fix my marriage? There is no other place our society needs to turn right now, but this book. As much as the church of the 16th century needed to hear the book of Romans (that faith is a gift from God), we need to hear today that love, romance, sex, and commitment are created by God to be in a marriage. We find this the “Song of Solomon”

I can remember the first time reading this book. I was just barely a teenager when a friend told me I should read it because it talked about having sex. I started to read it and I’m thinking... “I don’t get it, what in the world are they talking about? Deer and gazelles, doves, gardens, trees and towers?”

This book is hot. It will make you sweat, it will make you turn red. But it is a part of scripture. And if all scripture is God breathed, than this scripture here is for teaching and training in righteousness so that the people of God can be well equipped. The SOS can be interpreted in so many ways. Some believe it is a love poem between Solomon and his bride others believe it is an allegory for Christ and his love for the church. I believe it to be both. For the next few weeks, Pastor Tim and I will be looking at the love story between these 2 people. This book isn’t just about sex, it speaks of the emotional, relational and spiritual nature of our relationships. It walks us through the real aspects of a relationship: Dating / Engagement / Wedding / Honeymoon / Conflict Resolution / Faithful Commitment.

The SOS is an ancient conversation that unlocks the mystery of modern day intimacy. Pastor Tim and I will be taking you through this relationship, this love story that speaks to those who are seeking out a mate and those who’ve already found theirs.

Pray

Today, one variable that can strength a relationship is dating. Yeah dating. Dating is a time when you gain firsthand knowledge about a person through your conversations and shared experiences. It is important for those entering into a relationship, and those who are married.

### **Song of Solomon 1:9-2:7**

*Young Man*

**“9) You are as exciting my darling, as a mare among Pharaoh’s stallions, 10) How lovely are your cheeks; your earrings set them afire! How lovely is your neck,**

**enhanced by a string of jewels. 11) We will make for you earrings of gold and beads of silver.**

- First of all men, if you don't have a poetic bone in your body...it's probably best not to describe your wife as a horse. But Solomon knew that great horses were rare, extravagant and highly thought of, representing grace, beauty and nobility, so this "first date" begins with a great comparison
- "Darling" is "rah-yaw" the feminine of the word "Friend" in other words, my female friend.
- Compliments abound
- An offer to provide jewelry doesn't hurt

*Young Woman*

**12) The king is lying on his couch, enchanted by the fragrance of my perfume. 13) My lover is like a sachet of myrrh lying between my breasts. 14) He is like a bouquet of sweet henna blossoms from the vineyards of En-gedi.**

- I smell good, you smell good
- We can identify with having something precious, or close to us, hanging from our necks (a locket, jewelry, BFF Necklace). Not only would it be close, but this would indicate that she thinks about him day and night.
- En-gedi was an oasis, it stood out in a barren place by the Dead Sea, the vineyards there were rare

*Young Man*

**15) How beautiful you are, my darling, how beautiful! Your eyes are like doves.**

- Looking into someone's eyes, making eye contact. His descriptions have been above the neck!! What an incredible respect.
- Use of the word, "dove" suggests purity and tenderness

*Young Woman*

**16) You are so handsome, my love, pleasing beyond words! The soft grass is our bed; 17) fragrant cedar branches are the beams of our house, and pleasant smelling firs are the rafters.**

**2:1) I am the spring crocus blooming on the Sharon Plain, the lily of the valley.**

- Continuing the compliments, where are they? Outside, it may be secluded, but their relationship to this point is out in the open.
- 2:1, we see that his compliments have taken with her, she has the confidence to call herself beautiful...a flower on the Plain or in the Valley.
- You want to ruin a date or relationship? Make that cut.
- The more I read and studied this book, the more I felt like a loser for all the times I may have belittled my wife. I had to sit my wife down and apologize for being a punk.

*Young Man*

**2) Like a lily among thistles is my darling among women.**

- He not only agrees with her but expresses even more how much she stands out! Now men, that is smooth.

*Young Woman*

**3) Like the finest apple tree in the orchard is my lover among other young men. I sit in his delightful shade and taste his delicious fruit. 4) He escorts me to the banquet hall; it's obvious how much he loves me. 5) Strengthen me with raisin cakes; refresh me with apples, for I am weak with love. 6) His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me. 7) Promise me, O women of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and wild deer, not to awaken love until the time is right."**

- She's talking to her friends now!

- A tree signifies strength, shelter, protection. A refuge from the sun and a place to be refreshed.

- He's taking her by the arm in front of many stating to the world his love for her

- She's weak with love.

- Ark of the Covenant brought back to the city, David celebrates, dances, and sends the people to their homes using the aphrodisiac of their day, raisins! 2 Sam. 6:19, "Then he gave to every Israelite man and woman in the crowd a loaf of bread, a cake of dates, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people returned to their homes." Why? To multiply!

- She imagines his embrace and then gives a stern warning about love & sex, wait till the time is right! Wait for marriage!

### **I. 3 Things required for successful dating:**

1) Real Time - Putting in the time it takes to grow a relationship

- Plan your dates to involve conversations (movie doesn't make sense)

- Date nights for husbands and wives

2) Reason - Understanding the Purpose of Dating

Dating vs. Hooking Up

#### **HOOKING UP, HANGING OUT**

Scholars from the Institute for American Values conducted a survey, "Hooking Up, Hanging Out, and Looking for Mr. Right," that asked 1,000 college women about courtship in the new millennium. The survey found that courtship—dating a male with the hopes of finding a lifelong mate—has been replaced by "hooking up." Hooking up with a male partner usually is fueled by alcohol and entails engaging in sexual activity. Forty percent of the women surveyed admitted to hooking up with men, and one in ten disclosed they'd done so at least six times. Elizabeth Marquardt, co-author of the report, says, "[The women] wish they could really get to know a guy without necessarily having a sexual relationship."

- Our church culture has bought into an ungodly system of dating:

- We're letting our children date too young

- We must set standards and boundaries for our kids

- Our culture pushes protection (teenage pregnancy hasn't decreased) when the only safe sex is not sex before marriage

The Purpose of dating is simply to gain knowledge about the character and convictions of the person you are with. To get to know them better.

A. For those who are entering a new relationship  
 3 Questions: Does the person have a relationship with Christ? Involved in Church? Pursuing the same type of spiritual life and growth?

B. For married couples  
 - Setting aside time outside of your same old, same old environment to talk about the things in your marriage.

1 Corinthians 7:32-34

3) Respect - how you treat the person and how you are treated  
 - MY first Blind Date (disaster city)  
 - What you see in your date now will be there in a marriage...marriage will not change them!!

1 Timothy 5:2, "Treat older women as you would your mother, and treat younger women with all purity as you would your own sisters."

## **II. 3 Things to expect from dating:**

1) Growth in Communication

- Remember Dating is a great way to keep in touch with interest and needs  
 - Husbands and wives: Try not to use this time to argue or fight!! There will be other times to deal with conflict and Tim will address that in a few weeks, conflict is not part of the purpose of dating.

2) Growth in Feeling of Endearment or Love

- You'll miss them  
 - You'll not want the date to end (careful for those unmarried)

3) Growth in Passion

A. For those who are entering a new relationship:

- Restraint (Song of Solomon 2:7)  
 - Notice I haven't talked about physicality regarding your date, it should be limited, you are not buying a car!!

B. For married couples - well, you know where to direct that passion

Conclusion:

- Dating for those seeking - it's okay to bail, the time invested is to find out if things would work out...if they are not working out, release.  
 - Dating for the married - you chose a time ago to run the same path, perhaps dating can be a tool to get to a great space in your marriage!