



SOUTHLAND CHURCH

THE SONG OF
SONGS

10 Day Devotional



foundations
daily devotional

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Versions of scripture quotations are noted.

DAY 1**INTRODUCTION**

Song of Solomon, otherwise known as Song of Songs, is a very unique book in the Bible. Solomon was a man known for his wisdom, but also for struggling to be consistent in applying it to his life. The queen of Sheba saw all of his wisdom, food, the officials of his house, his servants, etc. (1 Kings 10:4-5). He was definitely a blessed man! However, his insatiable appetite for women and for material goods would lead to many troubles. For example, he collected much gold each year to sustain his lavish living (1 Kings 10:14). Truly, he was a king that knew about living large.

When we look at Song of Songs we see that he was a passionate man. He gave himself completely to whatever he pursued, including his lover. With so many women in his life, Solomon could easily write of the passions and abundances in marriage. He does so with a flare that reflects his lifestyle.

But as we dig deeper, we can also see a picture of God's love for US as His bride the church. He is calling us in so many ways – to seek Him, walk with Him, to purify us, to suffer with Him, to be in wonder. The church through history has recognized that He longs for our invitation to journey with Him as we read Song of Songs.

In this Foundations, we'll look at both marriage and the picture of God's love for us. May He speak to each of us about both aspects.

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Solomon had so much to be thankful for. Apart from his material wealth, God had blessed him with wisdom that went beyond human comprehension. Take time today to list things you are thankful for outside of the material things He provides you with. Spend time rejoicing in how God has blessed you!
2. Song of Songs can be a book in the Bible that may seem to only apply to one group of people – those that are married. But as we will discover, it is also about God desiring a relationship with us. Ask the Holy Spirit if there is anywhere in your life where you are “tunnel visioned” - places where you can only see one aspect of a situation. Ask Him for a fresh vision in that place.
3. Song of Songs is also a book of Jesus' *longing* for His bride. He desires for us to be united forever! Ask Him to give you a picture of what that looks like. Marvel at His abounding love for us!

DAY 2

READ: Song of Songs 1

Specific focus: 1:8 *If you do not know, o most beautiful among women, follow in the tracks of the flock, and pasture your young goats beside the shepherd's tents.*

We so often live our lives in quiet (and some not so quiet!) desperation. We feel that we are an island unto ourselves and have been fed the lie from the enemy that nobody could possibly understand what we are dealing with.

Sarah (Abraham's wife) understood this way of thinking. Although she knew about the promise God made to Abraham about having an heir, she could not see how it was to come about. And so she took matters into her own hands, giving her servant to her husband in

order to have a child. The result for herself, her servant, the child and her husband were far less than happy.

Sarah reacted in a way that showed she did not trust God. If only she had learned early on the idea in today's verse – that God is calling us to know Him. He's telling us we are of value, we have worth. In Song of Solomon 1:8 He is saying "if you do not know, look for me. I'll give you direction to where I am." He promises to everyone that seeks Him that they will find Him, if they seek Him with all their heart (Jeremiah 29:13).

Not only does God say "seek Me," He also gives directions to how to find Him. "Follow the tracks of the flock." And once we walk toward these guided directions He lays specific groundwork to what to do – "pasture your young goats beside the shepherd's tents."



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. God is calling out to us. He's asking us to step outside what we see to get His vision on situations in our lives. Is there a situation where we feel tempted to run ahead of God, mostly because we aren't seeking Him for wisdom? Confess as necessary.
2. Ask for direction in how to follow Him in your circumstances. Specifically, ask for 1-2 things you can do that would help you to move in the right direction.
3. One of the lies of the enemy is to say we are alone in our situations. That nobody could possibly understand what we are going through. As you listen in prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind one trusted person that you could talk with as you press ahead.

DAY 3



READ: Song of Songs 2: 1-8

Specific focus: 2:8 *The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.*

Sounds. They inhabit so much of our lives! There are sounds of music, of laughter, of media, of work. So often sound overwhelms us. Yet when we get rid of all sound, we are lost in the silence. We have lost the ability to sit in quiet - to allow God to speak to us without us saying anything at all.

Recently a group of students were asked to try an exercise of sitting for 5 minutes allowing God to move in them in whatever way He chose – a thought, a picture, a word, a verse. This became a hard exercise! Sitting without *doing* or *distracting* is not our cultural norm. Although it is wonderful to do what God is asking of us, we first need to be able to *listen* to what He wants us to do.

In Song of Solomon 2:8 we get a picture of a bride who can hear the voice of her beloved even before she sees him coming. She is not distracted by the "sounds" around her. She waits to hear him. What a wonderful picture of us as the Bride of Christ! Also, what a powerful picture of a husband or wife being committed to their spouse – ready to hear them at any moment!



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. If you find yourself in a place of constant noise, try the discipline of silence. Find a place that is shut out of noise and distraction (for some it could be as easy as shutting yourself in the bathroom!) for 5 minutes and allow God to speak to you. Try to not have any preconceived ideas as to what you would like Him to address.

2. Reflect on the passage in 1 Kings 19:12 *'After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.'* Going along with the key verse for today, ask the Lord to show you if you are missing recognising His presence or His voice in a situation in your life right now. Ask the Holy Spirit for clarity to *know* Him in this place.
3. Thank God for His voice! Whether He reveals Himself through the Word, while listening, through creation or even people, thank Him that He is gentle. He does not yell in an overpowering way, but whispers into our heart. These whispers are so much louder to our spirit than yelling!
4. Spend some time reflecting on this question – if married, does your spouse know that you anticipate their voice? Do they know that you're interested in what they have to say? Repent of where your heart has grown cold or hardened to their words. Ask God – how can I better listen to their heart?

DAY 4

 **READ:** Song of Songs 2: 9-17

Specific focus: 2: 10-11 *My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away, for behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone."*

If we look in the media we see so much heartache. We hear the results of war, the ravages of many forms of abuse and we see the destruction of terrorists. There are people who are dealing with disease, parents lost in the heartbreak of family and the list could go on. We also see in our society many marriages that have grown dry, even dead. It's as if a time of "endless" winter has settled in, either through neglect or constant distractions.

How do we feel when winter ends? What is our response after the pounding rain of a storm passes? Great joy! In Song of Songs, we see the joy of a difficult season or storm ending. Not everything is easy in life or in marriage. However, Jesus keeps calling. He is a God who brings restoration!

In marriage, we have to be prepared to step away from difficult times as well. This too God will help us in. We must not think that difficulties are without end. As the apostle Paul says, ". . . love never fails." (1 Cor. 13:8).



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Think about living with a difficult season. Take time to reflect on 1-2 major challenges you have *faced in life*. Ask God to show you how He brought you through this time. If you're facing a challenge right now, ask Him – "what are You saying Lord?"
2. Take a look at your marriage. What kind of season are you in now? Is there joy in the marriage? Ask God to speak to you about your current responsibilities in this season.
3. Thank God that as you work with Him on marriage and difficult seasons. Also thank Him that one day a COMPLETE newness will come with the return of Jesus.

DAY 5**READ:** Song of Songs 3

Specific focus: 3:1-2 *On my bed by night I sought him whom my soul loves; I sought him, but found him not. 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.*

There are days when we feel that God is silent. We want answers to life's difficult questions and feel like we just can't get them. We want to sense His pleasure and His presence and we feel nothing. We desire to be with Him again, but it feels like He's left.

In marriage as well, one spouse may become disinterested or disengaged with the relationship. To the one "left behind", things can seem very difficult.

What do we do in these times? We keep seeking! Eventually, the lover finds her beloved. Whether in our relationship with God, or with our spouse, continuing to seek is always our duty. We can be assured that when we "come near to God" He will not remain hidden for long. It is His heart to respond with His presence and voice. In marriage, we need God's strategies to again "woo" our spouses!

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Sometimes not finding God is as simple (or as hard!) as not looking in the right places. We turn to books or teachers or friends whom we think will be the channel to bringing the Lord closer in our life. While all these avenues are good, they cannot replace seeking God Himself. One of the best ways to find God is in His Word! Read slowly through Song of Songs chapter 3 *again*.
2. Note in verse 4 that once the bride finds her beloved, she does not let him go. Do you have that desire for both your spouse and for God? Ask the Holy Spirit for the *desire* to seek Him and to desire your spouse in the same way.
3. For verses 6-11, try to visualize what this situation would look like. How extravagant it would be! Allow God to build excitement in your heart today. Write out a prayer of thanksgiving to God.

DAY 6**READ:** Song of Songs 4

Specific focus: 4:7 *You are altogether beautiful, my darling, my bride; there is no flaw in you.*

We all struggle with the reality that there are very obvious flaws in our lives. We hear the beloved tell his lover, ". . . there is no flaw in you" and we feel that we fall SO very short of this perfection. Our relationship with God and our relationship with our spouse can magnify our flaws. We feel the weight of this . . .

However, what if God looks at us differently than how we look at ourselves? What if, through the blood of Christ, He sees no flaw? How would this adjust your relationship with Him? What kind of passion and love would this spark?

And in marriage, what if you began look at the strengths and positive characteristics of your spouse? What if you saw them the way that Jesus sees you? Or as Romans 15:7 says, "accept one another then just as Christ accepted you in order to bring praise to God."



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

God wants to move us beyond what we often think about ourselves. Today we are going to look at specific words in the above passage. As you go through them, ask the Holy Spirit to really bring to light what these words mean to YOU. Journal what the Lord shows you and thank Him for His unfailing love!

1. Altogether:
 - a. Dictionary: wholly; entirely; completely; quite, with all or everything included
 - b. Bible dictionary: with one accord have broken the yoke
2. Darling:
 - a. Dictionary: a person very dear to another; one dearly loved. a person or thing in great favor; a favorite:
 - b. Bible dictionary: "only one"
3. No flaw:
 - a. Dictionary: no defect, no fault, no crack, no break, no breach
 - b. Bible versions (others words used): no blemish, no spot

DAY 7



READ: Song of Songs 5

Specific focus: 5:16b *This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*

Yesterday we worked through the process that God loves us. Today our focus will be on the fact that not only does He love us, He *likes* us. He doesn't see us as just someone to put up with, He sees us as people with whom He wants to spend time. "God likes me" is a notion that gets much closer to the real meaning of the phrase "God loves me, for me." Maybe He loves us, but we're not so sure that He loves us enough to like us.

There is a wonderful painting that that portrays Jesus laughing. It is a great reminder that as a friend, He wants to laugh with us, He wants to like us. As we take time today, let's enjoy the company of our Savior.

And what is a great marriage? It is one where husband and wife are the best of friends! A marriage based on friendship is one that can handle the ebbs and flows, twists and turns of life. Friends stand by each other in times of difficulty, pray for each other and cheer each other on. Friends also are ready to provide a word of encouragement and challenge when necessary, but the challenge is always based on faithful love. Finally, friends look out for each other. Is this what your marriage looks like? Can you call your spouse, your friend?



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Spend a few moments reflecting back on a time where you were joyful and laughter was a big part of the event. Journal the situation.
2. Ask Jesus where He was in that place. Close your eyes and see where He was, what He was doing. Ask Him what He likes about you.
3. Take delight that Jesus is part of our everyday life. Not only the sorrows, but the joys as well! Praise Him for what he revealed to you today!
4. Ask God what friendship with your spouse can look like. Ask Him where your friendship can be strengthened and where it's already strong.

DAY 8**READ:** Song of Songs 6

Specific focus: 6:4 *You are beautiful, my darling, as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, majestic as troops with banners.*

Solomon wrote these words with the idea of a husband describing his bride. And he doesn't mince words – they are clearly drawing a picture of the loveliest of women in the eyes of her beholder. Both Jerusalem and a powerful army invoked passion in many Israelites, especially Solomon. He speaks of his lover in these terms, showing that the passion he has for his bride is immeasurable.

Passion! Do we feel that God is passionate about us? Do our spouses feel that we're passionate about them? Do others feel loved when we around them, with the overflow of love that God has placed in our hearts?

Many people have a hard time feeling that they are passionately loved. God wants us to see ourselves with this reality – that we are passionately loved. At times He also uses *us* to be the ones who help others to capture the amazing picture of who they are in Jesus.

**JOURNALING AND PRAYER**

1. Jesus not only sees us for who we are now, but He delights in seeing us for who we are becoming. He already sees how we will look to him when we stand face-to-face. This is not only His bride as a whole. It is YOU, individually. Spend some time thanking Him for seeing you in this way.
2. Seek God for guidance on how you can show your spouse passionate love today. Specifically, what can you do to show your spouse that they are special, that you are jealous for them, that they are worth your investment.
3. Spend some time asking God on how to treat others in a special manner in the near future. How can you value others in – your workplace, your extended family, your neighborhood, your areas of service in church, your cell group?

DAY 9**READ:** Song of Songs 7

Specific focus: 7:6, 7 *How beautiful you are and how pleasing, O love, with your delights! Your stature is like that of the palm, and your breasts like clusters of fruit.*

Love within marriage has many forms of intimacy – sexual intimacy being one of them. Such intimacy does not start and end only with the physical act of sex. Rather, it includes expressing one's desire for such intimacy. It involves showing interest in each other's bodies.

Sexual intimacy in marriage is a reflection of the desire to be close and one with each other. In marriage, we need to move sex from an act of lust to an expression of love. In singleness, we need to trust God *by His grace* to fill that part of us that longs for closeness.

The Bible teaches that there will no marriage in heaven. For singles, this declares that God's eternal gifts (i.e. food, work) can be enough for our enjoyment. For marrieds, it's a reminder that even the act of sex itself is partially a foreshadowing of the fulfillment of our deeper longings in a more permanent way.



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. For singles – spend some time reflecting on moments that you’ve had with God which leave you deeply satisfied, where you feel, “better is one day in his courts than a thousand elsewhere.” Thank Him for His sufficiency and greatness.
2. For singles and marrieds – ask God about your schedule. Is there enough time to simply enjoy Him, to have Him fill us with His Spirit, dreams and heart?
3. For marrieds – ask God – is sex with your spouse about lust or love? Ask God to change your heart, where necessary. Also commit to expressing your love in a physical & verbal manner. Do you encourage your spouse? Do you express what you love about them physically? Do you make time for physical intimacy?
4. For marrieds – if physical intimacy has been an ongoing challenge in your marriage, please seek help. There is no shame in this, as many couples struggle. Seek counsel, inner healing and wholeness for yourself, for your spouse and for God’s Glory.

DAY 10



READ: Song of Songs 8

Specific focus: 8:6 *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.*

A seal for the Israelite people would have had different forms. Looking back to Genesis 38, a seal was a signet made of metal or stone and worn on a necklace over the heart or on an arm band. It also could have been an engraved cylinder pierced from one end to another and worn on a cord round the neck. Either way it was something that was intentionally put on. It was set there.

We can choose to set God and our spouse as a seal upon our hearts. It is a *daily* choice of placing God and our spouse in their rightful places in our lives. God desires our love and is jealous for us – so much so that He depicts it as a flash of fire, a flame of the Lord. In our marriage vows, we also made a huge commitment to our spouse – to belong to each other.

A lack of intentionality causes us to “lose” passion in our relationship with God and with our spouse. We need to *every day* do whatever is necessary to keep the fire burning.



JOURNALING AND PRAYER

1. Ask the Holy Spirit if there is any area that we are neglecting to set God in His rightful place. Confess as necessary.
2. Ask God to show you one area that He is pleased with how you have purposed to set Him upon your heart.
3. As you go about your day today, set a reminder (whatever that looks like to you) to choose to set God above all else. At the end of the day, reflect on how that went.
4. Ask God to show you how you can keep your commitment to your spouse. Set aside some time in the next week or so to sit down with your spouse and review your vows. Tell them that you are re-committing to the very words you spoke years ago.



The Song of Songs

Song of Songs is a very unique book in our Bible. It is a book filled with passionate love between a man and woman. It highlights the longing and pursuit that can be reflected in marriage. Also throughout history the church has recognized this book as a picture of God's love for His people, Israel, and His bride, the Church. This Foundations will be useful to both those who are married and those who are not.

Song of Songs 2:16a (NLT)

"My lover is mine and I am his..."