

Introduction: Pg. ____

**“Love Satisfies”
Song of Solomon 3:1-5:1**

Dismiss kids. Encourage any other parents who want to encourage their child to attend RK. Greet new guests. Wrap up the series...

This morning we're going to talk about sex: an extremely intimate and sensitive subject, because it is arguably the most intimate and sensitive act between two people.

For much of church history, and even still today in some churches, sex was viewed as merely a tool for procreation (that is, making babies) and not something that should be discussed within the church. That only problem with that is: the Bible.

The Bible in fact, not only discusses sex in many places from cover to cover, but it devotes an entire book to help us see sex from God's perspective.

So let's move past any awkwardness from the start because the Bible teaches us that sex is a beautiful gift from God to be seen in a positive light, celebrated within marriage, and handled with extreme joy and extreme care.

As we've moved through our series over the past 3 weeks, we've seen that “love stays, love secures, love serves,” and now today... Song of Solomon 3:1-5:1 will teach us...

The Point: I am yours, and I will satisfy you.

1. Desire sex as a good gift according to God's design (3:1-11).

- In Song of Solomon, you have 3 main characters (the groom - who represents Solomon or a Solomon-like figure; the bride; and their friends who sing choruses extolling the beauty of love throughout the book).
- In chapters one and two, they have already gotten to know one another, walked through the dating season, are now betrothed (which was similar but a stronger form of our period of engagement). They are completely committed to marry one another.
- AND now chapter 3 brings us to the days before the wedding and the wedding day itself.

Read 3:1-11

- Look at verse 1: “On my bed by night I sought him whom my soul loves; I sought him, but found him not.” (1)
- This may be a dream, or perhaps she is thinking about him while laying in bed at night. Notice she calls him the one “whom [her] soul loves.”
- While her sexual desires are explicit (She goes after him. She wants to be with him!), one of the themes of these chapters is how the whole person (thoughts, desires, emotions, affection, and action) should be engaged when it comes to loving someone, and loving them in a sexual manner.

T: We need to understand that the context for Song of Solomon is Genesis 1-2, where God provides the foundation for our sexuality and explains how he made us as beings with sexual desires.

Sexual Desires: The Genesis Foundation

- In Genesis 2:18, God said: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."
- And 2:24-25 says: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."
- Here's the message underlying Song of Solomon.
 - Sex is God's idea. He created us as sexual beings. If he created it, it is inherently good.
 - Sex is immensely pleasurable because it is a gift from our loving and good God.
 - If anyone should be talking about sex without shame, it should be Christians! We should not let everyone else lead the conversation (especially with our children! Hello! Pastor Jon shared a couple of great resources with our parents this week.)
- Genesis 2 tells us one man comes together with one woman, and the two become one! But sadly and tragically, the biblical formula (leaving one's parents, becoming one in marriage, and then uniting sexually) has been flipped upside down in our culture: "hook up, shack up, break up."

Sexual desires are natural, but they are to be controlled according to God's design.

Controlled Desires

While she desires a sexual experience with him, she knows the time is not right. That's why she says in verse 5: "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, ... that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases."

- I love the picture we have here. She is ready but patient. She wants it but wants it at the right time.
- It's right and good to have sexual desire, even intense sexual desires but those desires should be matched AND EXCEEDED with an intense desire to honor God.
 - The world highlights sexual desire without honoring God.
 - The church often highlights honoring God but ignores sexual desire.
- But God says, and we are saying, it's BOTH!

So what does this mean for us?

- To the unmarried, whether currently dating or single, I want to plead with you: "Be patient!" Save sex for marriage. It may not be common or popular these days, but you will not be disappointed nor ashamed when you do. And...
- "Seek purity!" The question - "How far is too far?" is understandable, but really the wrong question. The better question is: "How much can I honor God and my future spouse?"
 - Set protective boundaries (like not being alone late at night, or alone in private, at all, if that's what's best for you! Like, I will keep my hands to myself and not place them in places that "awaken love.")
 - Treat one another as brother and sister in Christ, because until you say "I do" that is all you really are.
- Will it be hard? Of course!
 - If you have failed in this area, and I don't know many who remain perfectly pure until the day of their wedding, start today. There is forgiveness and grace at the Cross of Christ! Come to him.
 - Remember, "there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Make a fresh commitment or recommitment to God and his plan for your sexuality.
- And finally: "Get there in community!" especially when desires go unfulfilled. We not only find contentment in Christ (because he is better), we find contentment through community. This is the Power of WE. We support one another, pray for one another, maybe even match-make for our brothers and sisters in the fam.

I wouldn't have met Marsha if it weren't for a friend of mine I played ball with in seminary. (May his name, honor, and legacy forever be revered!)

T: By God's grace for most people, the wedding day will come. That's what we see in vv. 6-11.

Interlude: Wedding Day.. The time is here.

- A day of honor.
 - Solomon brings the best of his resources to honor his bride.
 - He rolls up in his Mazaratti! A litter was the couch on which servants would carry a king: made of the finest wood, silver posts, gold back, and purple seat (the color of royalty, material rarer than silver and gold)
- A day that communicates what is to come.
 - The 60 warriors communicate the protection and strength he is offering his bride: "I am yours, and I will protect you."
 - Because love secures.
- A day that is filled with gladness (v. 11)

T: And the wedding day gives way to the wedding night...

Read 4:1-5:1

2. Sex is a good gift from God to be enjoyed to his glory (4:1-5:1).

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- Now they are alone in the bridal sweet, and we see two important principles.

The joy of sex begins before sex.

- Look at verse 1. Solomon sees his bride as a beautiful person. He does not reduce her as an object to fulfill his desire. Sex is not really about sex. It's about loving a person, which increases the intimacy already enjoyed!
 - His focus is on her. Five times he calls her his bride. Five times he calls her his sister, which points us to the idea that our spouse should be our best friend!
 - And when he extols her beauty, the song is more about how he feels when he looks at her than what she actually looks like. She is his standard of beauty!
 - In our hyper-sexualized culture, I believe we put too much emphasis on physical attraction. It's not that physical attraction is unimportant. It's that it's not most important. Here's why.
 - Outer beauty fades... in 100% of us!
 - Inner beauty is more important than outer beauty.
 - Story: Dude was being picky... Finally confessed... "I'm looking for a "10". Bro, you may be looking for a 10, but you're only a 6!. HA!
 - Beauty on the inside makes a person even more beautiful on the outside. In Christ, we get more beautiful... (2 Cor 4:16-18)
 - Mark Driscoll is helpful when he writes: "God made one man and one woman. He did not ask them if they wanted someone tall or short, light or heavy, pale or dark skinned, with long or short hair. In short, He did not permit them to develop a standard of beauty. Instead, He gave them each a spouse as a standard of beauty. One of our culture's powerful lies—fueled

by pornography, sinful lust, and marketing—is that having a standard of beauty is in any way holy or helpful. God does not give us a standard of beauty—God gives us spouses. Unlike other standards of beauty, a spouse changes over time. This means if your spouse is tall, you are into tall. If your spouse is skinny, you are into skinny. If your spouse is twenty, you are into twenty. When your spouse is sixty, you are no longer into twenty, but rather into sixty. And if your spouse used to be skinny, you were into skinny, but now you are into formerly skinny. We are to pour all our passion and pursuit of sexual pleasure into our spouses alone, without comparing them to anyone else in a lustful way.” (Driscoll, Mark. *Real Marriage*)

So what about her beauty?

- Verse 1: EYES are like doves. HAIR is like Gilead = an area with rolling hills where the Jabbok River flowed into the part of the Jordan River.
- Verse 2: The obvious message here is that her teeth are white and all there :)
- Verse 3: Her mouth is attractive too. Desirable to kiss.
- Verse 4: Her neck is like the tower of David. She has stately beauty, a dignified appearance.
- It's not until verse 5 that he speaks of her breasts, now he is declaring his intention to make love to her.
- And he says in verse 6 that “being with her is like inhaling an intoxicating fragrance.”
- Verse 7 is a culminating statement (Husbands, SPEAK THESE WORDS to your wife): “You are altogether beautiful, my love; there is no flaw in you.” The height of affirmation. Romance is poetry... this is how he feels. Not to say she's perfect.

Notice throughout this whole description that he is not in a hurry... He is taking her in... And what do his words do?

- His words build security in her. They ready her for the moment.
- As J.R.R. Tolkien said: “The praise of the praiseworthy is above all reward.”
- *We have an echo of Adam in the garden when he saw Eve: Adam was overwhelmed and uttered what are the first recorded human words in all history. “Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.” Stunning beauty. Overtaken by what he saw! This was more than - Girl, you look amazing. It was: woman you move me to my core.*
- “Love finds us beautiful and love makes us beautiful.” - Tim Chester
- Men, this teaches us that sex starts with the words we speak. It starts with how we treat our wives. As one woman said: Sex starts in the kitchen. That means doing the dishes (not what you may be thinking!). Ha!

T: It's about being affirmed and honored. The joy of sex begins before sex, and then... vv. 8-5:1 show us...

The joy of sex satisfies through self-giving pleasure (4:8-5:1).

- Verses 8-10: then invite her into sexual intercourse. The Song of Solomon is focused on the pleasure of sex. Never once does it mention procreation.
 - Captivated! With one glance (c'mon!) with one jewel of your necklace (with one strand of your hair, with one syllable spoken, with one smile from your lips, with one _____, with one step in your walk – James Taylor - “something in the way she moves, it looks my way, it calls my name, it seems to leave this troubled world behind”
 - Your love is beautiful, better than wine!
 - The pleasures of love are abundant and varied! Sex does not get old (even with one person, for life! Hello. It is hard wired to be pleasurable every time.) That doesn't mean there are not physical,

emotional or spiritual challenges when it comes to sexual intimacy, but it acknowledges how God has made our bodies and hearts for intimacy

- As he gets more and more descriptive of what these moments are about to be like in verses 11 and following. Deep, long intimate kisses, moving to the joy that is found between her legs.
- The spring of water is a metaphor for sexual love.
- And let me just allow these responses to speak for themselves!
 - Verse 16 Bride's Response ***HALLELUJAH!!***
 - Verse 5:1a-b Groom's response. ***HELLO!!***
- This is the high point of the book! 111 lines before this verse. 111 lines after this verse. The book centers on this moment...
- But here's the beautiful thing: His focus has been on her. Now her focus is on him.
- Sex teaches us the pleasure of giving for the sake of another's pleasure.
 - When a husband is coming to his wife - I am yours; this is for you.
 - And a wife is coming to her husband and saying - I am yours; this is for you.
 - How do you think that experience is going to go?
- Love serves. And Love Satisfies.

So here's some application for you this morning: **Make love. Make more love. Make more love more lovingly.** Married couples should be reading this book ONCE A WEEK!!

Sexual inactivity in marriage CAN BE just as wrong as sexual activity outside of marriage.

- Every sex act is an act of unification. Therefore, it is a way of expressing, renewing and deepening your covenant commitment to one another.
- Christians should have the best, most meaningful sex in the world.

T: The joy of sex satisfies through self-giving pleasure.

Conclusion:

Sex is a gift that points us to the Giver. The Bible tells that Jesus is the living water. He is our soul's (not just our body's) ultimate satisfaction, and we are the bride of Christ.

When we find our identity and joy in sex or marriage, we will ultimately be disappointed.

When we find our identify and joy in God, we will never be disappointed.

Something so enjoyable, something so pleasurable shows us that we were made for a joy and a pleasure that will never fade!

"In your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore." (Psalm 16:11)