

2023



TEMPTATION

“LOVE STORY” SERIES

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

In the movie “Temptation” by Tyler Perry, we meet Judith and Bryce - a married, Christian couple. Judith is a therapist at a dating service and is unsatisfied with her life, while her husband is a pharmacist. Judith decided to answer a tempter’s knock at her door that ultimately altered her life.

In this life, you will have to discern the knocks at your door and which ones to open. There’s a *love story* in Song of Songs that illustrates when love is tested and how not to respond to the ultimate knock.

THIS WILL BE A RECORD BREAKING YEAR.

POPULAR SCRIPTURES IN SONG OF SOLOMON

- *Song of Solomon 1:15 KJV - Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes.*
- *Song of Solomon 2:1 KJV - I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.*
- *Song of Solomon 4:1 KJV - Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.*
- *Song of Solomon 7:10 KJV - I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.*

WHEN LOVE IS TESTED

Song of Songs 5:2-7 NIV - [2] I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! My beloved is knocking: “Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night.” [3] I have taken off my robe---must I put it on again? I have washed my feet---must I soil them again? [4] My beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him. [5] I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. [6] I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had left; he was gone. My heart sank at his departure. I looked for him but did not find him. I called him but he did not answer. [7] The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. They beat me, they bruised me; they took away my cloak, those watchmen of the walls!

THE LORD IS AT THE DOOR OF YOUR LIFE.

THE KNOCK

*Song of Songs 5:2 NIV - I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! **My beloved is knocking:** “Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night.”*

- God is knocking at the door of your heart and is waiting for you to respond. Open the door when you hear the knock.
- Be careful not to answer the knock of the world.

What do you do when something comes knocking on the outside of the door when you feel you should be getting it inside?

THE KNOCK IS ALWAYS ON THE OUTSIDE. THE OPENING IS FROM THE INSIDE.

THE RESPONSE TO THE KNOCK

*Song of Songs 5:3-4 NIV - [3] **I** have taken off my robe---must **I** put it on again? **I** have washed my feet---must **I** soil them again? [4] My beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him.*

- Love cannot be self-centered - everything cannot be about you.
- Not responding to the knock causes the one knocking to leave.
- You will miss someone God sends by ignoring the knock.

Why haven't you answered the knock at your heart? What have you placed higher than answering the knock at the door from God? Why?

THE RESULTS OF NOT ANSWERING THE KNOCK

Song of Songs 5:6 NIV - I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had left; he was gone. My heart sank at his departure. I looked for him but did not find him. I called him but he did not answer.

- When you refuse the knock of the Lord, you open yourself to the knock of the world. It leaves you open to the attacks of the enemy.

What area of your life has the enemy attacked and controlled as a result of you ignoring the Lord? What happened?

WHY DO YOU KEEP ON IGNORING THOSE THAT LOVE YOU?

THE ABUSE

*Song of Songs 5:7 NIV - The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. They **beat me**, they **bruised me**; they **took away my cloak**, those watchmen of the walls!*

- The world can abuse you if you have no covering. The Lord is your protector. *If you let the outside in, what will it cost you? What has it already cost you?*

THREE KNOCKS

1 John 2:16 NIV - For everything in the world---the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life---comes not from the Father but from the world.

- The world will offer you what you think you want. We are in this world, but we are not supposed to be of the world.
- The Lord will always give you what you need.

What is knocking at the door of your heart? How have you responded?

KNOCK #1 - LUST OF THE FLESH

1 John 2:16a NIV - the lust of the flesh,

- The enemy knows what you like.
- Your flesh will cause you to become entangled in things that were never meant for you.

EVERYTHING THAT LOOKS GOOD TO YOU IS NOT GOOD FOR YOU.

Galatians 5:16-17 NIV - [16] So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. [17] For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

- There is a constant war in your flesh that doesn't cease when you get saved. Every day is a fight.
- Once you open that door to please your flesh, it's hard to close it.

Have you ever found yourself staying in a situation longer than you intended to? How did you escape? How long did it take?

KNOCK #2 - LUST OF THE EYES

1 John 2:16b NIV - the lust of the eyes,

- Lust of the eyes will show you what the flesh desires - nothing is enough and comparison rules. It will prevent you from praising God for what you already have.
- Be careful not to desire what you see others with because you have no idea what it cost for them to get it.

Recall a time when you lusted after what someone else had. What was it? Did you pursue the lust of the eyes?

KNOCK #3 - PRIDE OF LIFE

1 John 2:16c NIV - and the pride of life

- Pride sneaks in and God cannot operate in a heart full of pride.
- Pride comes before destruction (*Proverbs 16:18*).
- Be careful not to take credit for what God has done for you. Do not look down on others as if they are beneath you.

If God does not give you what you want, will you still praise Him? How do you find contentment with what you already have?

CHECK WHO IS KNOCKING AT YOUR DOOR.

RESULTS OF THE THREE KNOCKS

1 John 2:16d NIV- comes not from the Father but from the world.

- Your life will be full of knocks. You must have discernment to respond correctly.

Have there been times when you allowed 1 of these 3 knocks to take over? What was the result? How did God get you out of it?

DON'T OPEN THE DOOR TO YOUR PAST, BECAUSE YOUR FUTURE IS AROUND THE CORNER.

Revelation 3:20 NIV

[20] Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

- The Lord wants to be in a relationship with you and for you to be whole.

Will you open the door for the Lord? Will you allow Him to be the head of your life? If not, why?

QUESTION

Who or what is knocking and how will you respond?

DECLARATION

How I respond to knocks at my door matter. I refuse to open the door to any kind of temptation. I will answer God's knock, and I will allow Him to be the head of my life.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for knocking on the door of my heart. Thank You for wanting a relationship with me. You have protected me from the desires of my flesh, You have blocked my eye gates where the spirit of covetousness cannot dwell, and You have protected my heart from pride. I thank You for the blessings You have given me. I am grateful for Your love and concern for me. You have been good to me and I thank You. In Jesus' name, Amen!