

- I) V1 INTRO: By night on my bed I sought the one I love; I sought him but I did not find him
 - a) We closed last time by noting that there was a *trust* in and *commitment* to one person (V16)
 - 1) Obviously this is the key to long-term relationships

- II) MAINTAIN: What attracted you to one another in the first place and build on that foundation
 - a) PRACTICAL: Build on friendship because friends support and encourage one another
 - 1) Friends share the same beliefs and values, and friends show respect for one another
 - 2) Their friendship is tested over time, and lasts: they are grounded in loyalty, love, honesty

- III) AS FRIENDS: We will challenge one another to continue growing in the Lord
 - a) We will encourage one another to both be and do good to others
 - b) We will closely watch over our relationship and not let the fire go out, rekindling when needed
 - c) We will show one another respect, and listen to one another closely hearing hearts, not just words

- IV) 2:15 NOTICE: It is *the little foxes* that spoil the vines
 - a) IN RELATIONSHIPS: It is usually the small things that add up to big problems
 - 1) Make a habit of dealing with problems as quickly as possible, or they become ingrained
 - 2) Not all differences are necessary to deal with, but some things need to be dealt with
 - 3) Remember: You don't grow out of bad habits: they are broken by decisions made

- V) FOR EXAMPLE: Your girl/guy might be insecure and jealous, and you think it is a minor problem
 - a) This is not a little fox: it is a grizzly bear! It needs to be turned from
 - 1) Pr 27:4 Wrath *is* cruel and anger a torrent, But who *is* able to stand before jealousy?

- VI) OR: They may like spending money, or hate working, or be arrogant, controlling, or opinionated
 - a) They may be indecisive, sloppy, always late, like to talk over people, or get quiet when upset
 - 1) They may be dependent on others, or slow to make a commitment: think this through

- VII) LITTLE FOXES: In a relationship are often personality habits that you won't see change
 - a) Like to stay up visiting, likes to correct others, always complains, doesn't keep car clean
 - 1) Talk about these things while you are dating!

- VIII) MARIE: Is very relational, and enjoys having friends around
 - a) When we were beginning to date, she invited her friends to join us on our date
 - 1) We had a talk about that: at that time I wasn't open, but obviously, now it is just fine with me

- IX) 2:17 UNTIL: The day breaks and the shadows flee away turn my beloved and be like a gazelle or
 - a) This is an invitation to him that she extends because she desires him

- X) ONCE AGAIN: The bible does not frown on sexual intimacy
 - a) After all, it was God's idea in the first place
 - 1) Within the borders of love and marriage, it is best enjoyed
 - 2) Pr 5:18-19 Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times, and always be enraptured with her love
 - 3) The Journal of Marriage and Family, vol. 62, November of 2000 reported: The highest levels of sexual satisfaction were reported by individuals who were in married, monogamous relationships, while those who were single or cohabiting reported lower levels of sexual satisfaction

- I) V1-5 BY NIGHT: On my bed I sought the one I love; I sought him but I did not find him

- a) THE SHULAMITE: Is letting Solomon know that she has desire for him
 - 1) She desires him, and wants him to be intimate with her

- II) SHE BEGINS: To reveal a dream that she has had in which she desired him to be with her
 - a) Night after night she dreamt of him, longing for him and finally finding him
 - 1) V4 When she found him, she brought him home hoping mom would hasten her wedding day

- III) V5 I CHARGE YOU: O daughters of Jerusalem by the gazelles or by the does of the field Do not stir up
 - a) Once again it is made clear that *sexual love* is not to be experienced *outside of marriage*
 - 1) 1 Th 4:3-5 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God
 - 2) Heb 13:4 Marriage *is* honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.
 - 3) Passion grows in your relationship, but it is to be tempered by restraint

- IV) NOTICE: Do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases
 - a) Instead of having sex, falling in love, getting engaged, and marrying the order is to be reversed
 - 1) You fall in love, get engaged, marry, and then engage in physical intimacy
 - 2) Long dating period, short engagement, and marriage seems to be a good pattern

- V) BRIEFLY: Break up with anybody who pressures you to have any form of sexual intimacy
 - a) Anybody who tells you that having sex does not make you different is a liar, or shallow
 - 1) You change forever, and see yourself differently and are seen differently
 - 2) IF YOU HAVE FALLEN: Repent and return to the Lord, and start over

- VI) FACT: I read something that is very interesting
 - a) 80% of people living together eventually separate
 - b) 60% married in a civil ceremony end up divorcing
 - c) 40% getting married in a church eventually divorce
 - d) Those who read their bibles together daily divorce at a rate of 1 out of 1,050

- VII) OBVIOUSLY: The heart of any good relationship that leads to marriage is spiritual
 - a) Intimacy flows out of that bond, and is the cement that keeps you together
 - 1) This is why when we have weddings we center it on Jesus and vows made *to Him*
 - 2) It is because He is the One who brought you to that point, and He should be the center
 - 3) Eccl 4:12 Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

- VIII) V6-11 WHO IS THIS: Coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke perfumed with myrrh
 - a) HERE: We have a view of their Wedding Day, and how she sees him as he approaches her
 - 1) Who is this coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke perfumed with myrrh and

- IX) KEY: Israel was led through its wilderness wandering by a pillar of fire and smoke
 - a) This reveals that God is the One who brought Solomon to her
 - 1) This was the moment she was born for, when God brought her husband to her

- I) TO BE HONEST: This is how it should be when you finally marry
 - a) You should not be up there saying *where is the exit!* It should be joy filled and exciting

- 1) It is not just a legal ceremony, or an excuse for a party, or a "let's see if it works" occasion
 - 2) It should be a monumental occasion that is filled with joy and celebration
- II) V6 NOTICE: Solomon approaches her perfumed
- a) This is a picture of celebration and everything pleasant because it is centered on God
 - 1) Solomon has prepared himself for his bride, and this is a deeply spiritual moment
 - 2) Smoke, myrrh, and frankincense are all associated with worship and sacrifice
 - 3) Marriage is a deeply spiritual union, with God's leading, sacrifice, and worship at its core
- III) V7-8 BEHOLD: It is Solomon's couch with *sixty valiant men* around it of the valiant of Israel
- a) Solomon has 60 *valiant men* as his groomsmen securing her from disturbance
 - 1) I have performed weddings that had groomsmen who were uncouth and rude
- IV) KEY: This is a picture of a man who is determined to protect and keep his bride from all harm
- a) He is making it clear that her safety is now in his hands, and he will protect her
 - 1) The husband becomes the protector, and that is kind of scary when you hear noises at night
- V) HAVE YOU BEEN: To a wedding where you thought, I sure hope she knows what she is doing
- a) I'm not sure about this one!
 - 1) This is not a real good feeling to have: mom and dad are crying for the wrong reason
- VI) V9-10 OF THE WOOD OF LEBANON: Solomon the King made himself a palanquin
- a) Palanquin: a portable, enclosed chair, like a small carriage for him and her
 - 1) This is a picture of a man who is caring for the woman in every way
 - 2) He is treating her as if she has tremendous value, though she is poor
 - 3) He is offering her material comforts and security from financial fears
- VII) MY WIFE: Did not marry me because she thought I would be a rich man someday
- a) I was a student when we met, and didn't really have a clue where we would finally end up
 - 1) Marie just signed on and trusted me to provide for her the best that I could, and I have
 - 2) KEY: She knew that she was marrying a man who would do everything he could to care for her
- VIII) SOLOMON: Was the kind of man that she could safely trust in
- a) At work, he would be creative, industrious, tireless, ambitious, and a leader
 - 1) My wife expects me to be the same way at home!
- IX) SOME TODAY: Seem to think that it just ends up being good all by itself
- a) A good marriage is something you work tirelessly on
- X) V11 GO FORTH: O daughters of Zion and see King Solomon with the crown with which his mother
- a) During the time of Solomon, the groom would wear a crown
 - 1) It is a picture of independence, as he is establishing his own family and home
 - 2) The mother crowned him, revealing her approval of his marriage, saying she would love his wife
- I) CROWNS: Have been part of wedding ceremonies for centuries, in one form or another
- a) Women have their veil, sometimes held in place by a cap or crown of flowers
 - 1) At this time, the groom received a garland placed on his head by his mother

- II) **OBVIOUS FACT: The whole family is involved**
 - a) Dad gives away the bride, mom lights a candle and quietly weeps
 - 1) But it is all good when it is in the Lord

- III) **WHEN THE HUSBAND OR WIFE: Knows that the family does not support the marriage, it is painful**
 - a) Anger, resentment, and bitterness can arise and make everybody uncomfortable
 - 1) This should be worked out before the wedding takes place, or you will suffer for it

- IV) **SOLOMON'S WEDDING DAY: Was a day of joy and beauty**
 - a) It was a day of holiness before the Lord, when all was well with them before man and God
 - 1) It is the day of his wedding, the day of the gladness of his heart
 - 2) It will be a joyful time for the church, too when Jesus comes for us!