



## SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Song of Songs, Part 5: The Garden Unlocked - Song of Songs 4:1-5:1 - May 24, 2026

### SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - insane beauty industry numbers, marketing when “sex sells”, all this influencing our perception and pursuit of beauty and the admiration of others.

#### A. Admiration (Song of Songs 4:1-7)

- Bookended by declarations of beauty (v. 1 & 7), “no flaw in you”
- The groom admires SEVEN body parts in v. 1-5, symbolic of perfection or completion
- METAPHOR: these descriptions are about quality, not accuracy
- v. 6 is a call back to 2:17, when the bride originally rebuffed his sexual pursuit of her
- “Behind your veil” (v. 1, 3) - perhaps hints to a wedding veil, this is a honeymoon night

Application: We have come along way from the poetry and purity of moments like this. Almost no one goes into their honeymoon with this type of exhilaration and anticipation anymore. Pornography and the exchange of images has rendered the surprise of these kind of moments almost obsolete.

What would it take for us to be able to admire our lovers like this again in 2026?

1. We must *repent* of the things we do and see that obscure the beauty of our spouses.
2. We must *take effort* to find & praise what is attractive & valuable in our spouses

Illustration: Oak Trees in the sunshine (or not)

#### B. Invitation (Song of Songs 4:8-15)

- He invites her out of the dangerous wilderness, and to “come with me” (v. 8)
- Essentially, he is saying that she “drives him crazy” (v. 9)
- “My bride” - 6x times in this section
- This type of *infatuation and invitation* within a marriage presents a biblical sexual ethic that is robustly *positive* - a good alternative to a lot of the *negative* framing of this type of teaching within the recent history of the church.
- The “Garden” in 4:12-5:1 - a metaphor for the sexual expression of the woman. This metaphor encapsulates all the intimacy of sexual intercourse the man is anticipating.
- This garden/fountain/spring is “locked” and “sealed” (v. 12) and the man is requesting entrance
  - Note his patience and respect - he doesn’t break in or jump over the wall! There is no blind expectation or begrudging concession.

#### C. Consummation & Celebration (4:16-5:1)

- The “she” heading is likely misplaced - the bride begins speaking at the beginning of v. 16
- Her responses of “awakening” calls back to 2:7 & 3:5, where she warned the daughters of Jerusalem to not “awaken” love until the appropriate time.
  - She is saying “it is now the appropriate time”!
- Notice: the pronouns connected to “the garden” in these two verse.
  - She goes from “my garden” to “his garden” in v. 16
  - He calls her “my garden” in v. 1
  - This is not about *possession*, but *unity*
  - This is an explicit picture of Gen. 2:24 - the two become one flesh. Sex is holistic and holy.
- Celebration: the daughters promote and extol the connection between husband and wife.

Gospel: Christ makes us the “flawless” bride of 4:7 through the “washing of water with the word” (Eph. 5:26)

Result: We have unity with Christ. This holy marriage is exemplified in Paul’s extensive use of language such as “In Christ”, “Christ in us”, etc.

Physical Markers of Union: The sacraments! *Baptism* and *Lord’s Supper*!



## **SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. How has marketing changed the way we appreciate beauty in general? How has it changed the way we appreciate beauty in our spouses?
2. What is going on with all the strange beauty metaphors in v. 1-5?
3. What are some good reasons from this text to believe that this is a union between two people who have waited until their honeymoon to initiate their sexual relationship?
4. How well do you compliment the ways your spouse is attractive to you? What are the hindrances to that?
5. If you are single, what steps can you take to fully appreciate beauty and value in the opposite sex?
6. How does this text give us a “positive” framing of the biblical sexual ethic?
7. What do the possessive pronouns connected to “garden” teach us about marital unity?