



SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Song of Songs, Part 4: Love in Springtime - Song of Songs 2:3-17 - May 17, 2026

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - *Purity Culture* within 90s evangelicalism - the programs, purpose, and pitfalls.

How can we promote *the same ethic* without the *same guilt/shame* dynamic in the fallout??

Song of Songs does not denigrate *desire, passion, or sexual fervor*.

But, it does include a pursuit of those coupled with *dignity, patience, and wisdom*.

A. Sick with Love (v. 3-6)

- Instead of over-sexualizing these verses, we can see them as the bride-to-be's longing for her beloved in a way that is not yet met.
- To be "sick with love" (v. 5) signifies an unfulfilled desire.
- These desires are natural, and thus, from God.
 - This does not mean that God is out to get us whenever we succumb to desire.
 - Rather, our desires showcase that God has a design that will lead to our flourishing

B. Signal of Waiting (v. 7)

- This verse shows up 3x in the book, and is always a warning from the bride to the virgins.
 - It is *a clear call towards sexual abstinence* until the appropriate time.
- "To adjure" calls for a **vow** to be made!
 - "The gazelles or does of the field" is a Hebrew homophone of "*Lord of Hosts Almighty*"
- "Until it pleases", not "until you please" - love takes it's own time, and we shouldn't force it.
- The goal is not to be in a relationship or even to get married, but to have a healthy marriage!
- God can sanctify any of us in whatever relational stage we are currently in.

C. Springtime Proposal (v. 8-14)

- Illustration: "*Ain't no mountain high enough...*" - Gaye, Terrell
- The beloved is stopping at nothing to get to his future bride. He comes to her house, and begins to make his proposal to her to come away with him.
 - The proposal centers on the *springtime*, when new life emerges.
 - This smaller poem is incredibly beautiful and a picture of what true love and romance can look like when it is done right.
- The Bride is interested, of course, but she doesn't agree right away. There are still a few things to clear up.

D. Shadows & Foxes (v. 15-17)

- We should not doubt her interest - "*My beloved is mine, and I am his*" (v. 16) is one of the calling card verses of this entire book.
- Carr says of v. 15 - "This is a very difficult verse." We are not entirely sure who is speaking, or what the foxes themselves represent.
 - What is clear - the foxes pose a threat to the vineyard, ie., the love of our two characters.
 - What are potential modern "foxes" - faith, family, work, money, sex, etc...
- We shouldn't enter into these commitments until "*the day breathes and the shadows flee*" - it isn't wise to commit to sex or marriage until there is joint clarity about how to handle obstacles with wisdom.

We want to encourage (1) **WISDOM** with **LOVE'S POWER** and (2) **PATIENCE** with its **TIMING**.

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life. - Proverbs 13:12

To maximize joy/pleasure & minimize regret - we should do things according to God's design.

Luke 7 - Jesus shows grace to the sexual sinner

Revelation 21 - Jesus the better gazelle, shows up to be with us, and us with him.



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Do you remember the purity culture of the 90s? What was the purpose? How did it succeed? How did it fail?
2. How can we better promote a biblical sexual ethic along the lines of design/wisdom instead of guilt/shame?
3. Why would God design us so that we would be “sick with love”? How do these strong passions serve us?
4. How does this text clearly promote sexual purity?
5. How does this text speak to those who are already in relationships or further along in life?
6. What are the foxes and shadows the bride is referring to in v. 15-17?
7. What is God’s design for sex & marriage, and how does that actually benefit us if we stick to it?