Love Worth Fighting For

Song of Solomon 5

Pray

Todays message is one of the most helpful ones to help our marriages go the distance.

- We will see these two lovebirds get into the ring, and get into a fight & have conflict.

And the truth is at some point in your relationship, you will get into a fight. Whats another word for fight Shawna?

- conflict is a natural & normal part of marriage b/c u have 2 sinners get married
- And the question is How do we fight fair, healthy & work through these conflicts?
  - how do you deal with them when they arise?
- we're going to talk about conflict resolution today.

Conflict can lead to a process that either can develop oneness or separation & isolation.

- You and your spouse have to choose how you will act when those conflicts occur.

The truth is, all couples are going to fight. Healthy couples, though, will fight clean.

- Unhealthy couples will fight dirty. Healthy couples will work toward resolution.
- Unhealthy couples fight for victory – I want to win. The problem is, if one of us wins,
  - then, both of us lose. We have to both learn to win together.

Whenever me and Shawna get into a disagreement & some conflict

- I always remind myself no matter what I feel,
  - God is going to work this out for our good & he will strengthen us
    - And make us better as we work it out & get us on the same page

From this moment forward in this book

- we will see a variety of issues as it pertains to being married
  - it talks about the joys of marriage
    - as well as the problems that come along with marriage

every marriage will hit bumps in the road

- there's ups and downs & problems you will encounter
  - but as we turn to God for help & instruction
    - he will get us over every single bump in the road

Psalm 46:1 says God is A very present help in trouble.

Psalm 36:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 said two are better than one b/c they have a good reward for their labor. If one falls down, that companion can help the other one up.

- But woe to him who is alone when he falls, he has no one to help him.

The first part of that verse, two are better than one,

- is something that every couple who comes to the altar to be married agrees with.
  - It's why they're there. Two are better than one.

But they will also have to agree that two are harder than one.

- Because **now you have two opinions**.

- You have her opinion and you have his opinion.

You have two ways of doing things. His way of doing things,

- and her way of doing things. You have two ways of disciplining children.
  - You have two ways of handling money. There's two ways of driving.

You have different strengths, different weaknesses.

- And you add to that some bad habits, throw in a bunch of expectation,
  - turn up the heat a little bit with trials.
- two are better than one. But two-- it's harder, and there's conflict.

When I was single, life was pretty easy for me I could do what I wanted to do

- when I wanted to do it. I could just get up and decide,
  - I didn't have to confer with anybody. Life was very, very simple.

When you get married, it gets complicated and you have to be ready for the conflict

- that will come when two become one.
  - The two, becoming one is a blessing, but it's also a challenge.

And most people enter into marriage-- with not the best conflict resolution skills.

- marriage is a place where you get really good at conflict resolution, or really bad.

We all have to learn how to Fight for our marriages

- because we have an enemy who wants to cause division and destroy it

The devil wants to get you kissing, making out & fall into sexual sin before you're married

- and then to keep you from kissing and making out & having sex once you're married.

some couples stay in long wars with their spouse,

- because they've never learned how to properly resolve conflicts.

And I believe much of the conflicts that we have are due to ineffective communication.

- Someone pointed out that 20% of the Song of Solomon has to do with conflict.

Becoming one is easy. But Staying one is hard work.

- And that's what the real work of marriage is all about.

When we last left this lovely couple in chapter four,

- they were enjoying a delightful experience on their honeymoon.

And it continues in vs. 1

1 I have come to my garden, my sister, my spouse;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice;
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk.
(To His Friends)
Eat, O friends!
Drink, yes, drink deeply,
O beloved ones!

He refers to his marriage as a garden, a delightful paradise to enjoy.

- I loved every second of our honeymoon! We had such a great time!

the second part of verse one, is to his friends to enjoy the rest of the wedding feast,

- I'm taking my bride to my honeymoon.

By verse 2, the honeymoon is over. And there is a conflict,

2 I sleep, but my heart is awake;
It is the voice of my beloved!
He knocks, saying,
"Open for me, my sister, [a]my love,
My dove, my perfect one;
For my head is covered with dew,
My [b]locks with the drops of the night."

It is late at night and she's restless because he's not home.

- She's kind of sleeping, but she's not all the way sleeping.

he's coming in, and he wants a little bit of romance,

- he decides to butter her up with some words of his love.

It seems like he wants a little something-something. And she's not in the mood.

- She's tired and too worn out.

Here we see unmet expectations,

- She is expecting him to come home, probably, earlier. He's not home.
    - She's kind of awake. She can't sleep. He comes home,
        - he wants something, but she doesn't, as shes tired

Both of them are only thinking about their own needs.

- Neither one of them are thinking about the other person.
    - So here We have a problem – self-centeredness.

we have, two different people looking at the same situation

- from a different perspective.

After being married for a while, you realize that you and your spouse see things differently

- and you do things differently.

Girls have pink sunglasses
Guys have blue sunglasses

3 I have taken off my robe;
How can I put it on again?
I have washed my feet;
How can I [c]defile them?

The bride is saying, I've already got my pajamas on. I'm half asleep and my feet are washed.

As husbands and wives, we need to be willing to be inconvenienced.

- I would say expect to be inconvenienced and then you won't be bothered when u are
    - It's going to happen.

And rather than see it as something to get upset about,

- see it as an opportunity to serve the Lord and to serve your spouse.
    - Be one another's personal assistant.
        - We're to serve one another.

The king knocked at the door. The bride, she thought it was inconvenient. She was too tired.

- **Many today respond to Jesus in that way when he comes knocking.**

The Bible tells us in Revelation 3:20, "that Jesus stands at the door and knocks. And if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, Jesus said, I will come in and dine with him and he with me." King Jesus, like the groom in the story,

- stands at the door of people's hearts and he knocks and he calls to them.
    - He reveals to them through his word His desire & plan 4 for them.
        - He knocks at the door. He doesn't kick it in.
            - He doesn't huff and puff and blow the house down.
- He's a gentleman. He knocks. He'll never force his way into anyone's life.

For the non-believer, they won't open the door of their heart for fear of what he will see

- when he comes in, although he already knows what's behind closed doors
    - because Nothing is hidden from his sight

The Bible says all things are naked and open before the Lord. He knows all about it already.

For others, they won't let him in because they don't want to be told what to do

- They're very comfortable with the sin in their life
    - they bolt their door down because they don't want to change.

And then sometimes The king comes, knocks at the door,

- and our response might be, I'd love to spend time with you
    - and hear what you have to say in your word, but I don't have time"
- Others would say, "I'm too tired to get up to be with you, Lord.
    - It's inconvenient. And we end up missing the moment.

Paul said in Philippians 2:3 let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit but in lowliness of mind let us esteem others more highly than ourselves let us look out not only for our own interest but for the interest of others and let this mind be in you which is in Christ Jesus our Lord

- that's the heart & mind of Christ putting others first

Its one of the 4 points I share at weddings to make your love flourish in marriage
#1. Listen with all your heart
#2. Forgive with all your heart
#3. Be a Humble Servant with all your heart
#4. Love God with all your heart.

We need to learn to go from selfish to servant. We go from me to we.

- you want to be great in marriage? Serve your spouce.
    - The greater you are is determined by the degree to which you serve.

A good question to ask your spouse is how can I best serve & bless you?

4 My beloved put his hand
By the [d]latch of the door,
And my heart yearned for him.

5 I arose to open for my beloved,
And my hands dripped with myrrh,
My fingers with liquid myrrh,
On the handles of the lock.

6 I opened for my beloved,
But my beloved had turned away and was gone.
My [e]heart leaped up when he spoke.
I sought him, but I could not find him;
I called him, but he gave me no answer.

Solomon, steps away from the situation to gather his thoughts.
- And within that timeframe, her heart is changed & she goes to open the door
- And he is gone so she is going to go seek him out.

if we neglect our spouses it can drive them away from us
it's important that we are attentive to the needs of our spouse

Jesus alone can change the heart if we allow him to.
- Like the bride, we as believers, we may realize we missed the moment with the Lord
  - He knocked, we didn't answer but she is going to get back in fellowship w/ him

When you are seeking to resolve conflicts in relationships, It takes work.
- There are challenges that you will have to work through, but it's worth it.
  - There's a lot of romantic love going on in this book,
    - but two chapters are devoted to conflict resolution.

John Gottman, a leading marriage researcher, said 69% of relationship conflict
- never fully goes away. The difference between couples who thrive
  - and those who split comes down to how they navigate those moments.

its not the absence of conflict, but the ability to manage the conflict.
- It's about developing your skill set. on the job training becoming better not bitter

marriage takes constant adjustment by both parties.

7 The watchmen who went about the city found me.
They struck me, they wounded me;
The keepers of the walls
Took my veil away from me.

She's looking for him, And she gets to the night watchman guarding Jerusalem.

- And she's like, "Guys, have you seen my husband?"
    - Same thing that happens in the dream before the marriage.

But this time they're not helpful.

- The keepers of the walls took my veil away from me.
    - going to guess this is a dream or they would all be executed the next morning,
        - When Solomon finds out how they treated his wife.

The Shulamite bride is now determined to work through the misunderstandings

- and disagreement. God has worked in her heart
        - And so she searches for him.

it's not always easy to work through difficulties.

- You have to do what is the opposite of what your flesh wants to do.
    - You have to be filled with the Holy Spirit
        - because the flesh does not want to admit wrong.

but what is the cure for the flesh? Death to the flesh,

- Isn't it interesting how you read through Old Testament and the Lord says,
    - "I love the smell of burning flesh. It's like a barbecue
        - just ascending into my presence."
            - He loved the smell of flesh just burning, just being consumed.

When we decide to stop acting out in the flesh & to walk in the Spirit

- it's pleasing to the Lord and God can begin to work.
    - It's not easy. Sometimes it's painful, but it's worth it.
        - And you have to be teachable.

the Lord will actually use your spouse in your life to help you grow.

- And sometimes there is growing pains.

Another thing to consider as it relates to resolving conflicts within relationships,

- never under any circumstance touch your wife or husband physically
    - in anger or violence.

85% of domestic violence takes place with women. 15% happens to men.

- the truth of the matter is, there is absolutely no place whatsoever
    - for physical violence, It's a serious thing.

that's breaking the law. There's no place for domestic violence at all.

- Call the police if it is happening to you

There's way too much of it going on. And the children see it, and you know what happens?

- They repeat the cycle. It ought not to be so. There's no place for it.

Never yell at your spouse

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath. A gentle tongue breaks a bone

- the Bible encourages us to be gentle, quiet, meek,
    - you know that Jesus was meek? Strength under control

Matt 11:29," Come and learn me. I am meek and lowly in heart. "

- pray for God to help us with our words to be careful what we say,

- how we say it in the volume that you use.

Another, don't withhold intimacy from your spouse to manipulate them,

- That leads to many more problems.

[8] I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
If you find my beloved,
That you tell him I am lovesick!

You see here that her heart has changed. She's ready to work through these things.

- Let's just talk it out.

Life's too precious, too fragile to allow those things to linger.

You can see she is over the conflict that that drew them apart.

- She just wants to be back in fellowship with him

She wants to talk, and not walk away

Paul said in Ephesians 4:26- 27: " In your anger do not sin': Do not let the sun go down while [you're] still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold."

- That word, foothold, can be translated as guest room.
  - Don't let the devil in your house. Don't let him in your relationship.

Its good to not go to bed with unresolved conflict.

- Divorce is not even – a word that is used in our household.

[9] What is your beloved
More than another beloved,
O fairest among women?
What is your beloved
More than another beloved,
That you so charge us?
they basically ask, so tell us about your husband.

in verses 10-16 she tells the daughters of Jerusalem why he is so special

- and worthy of being chased after

[10] My beloved is white and ruddy,
[g]Chief among ten thousand.

Now white doesn't mean Caucasian. It's actually a Hebrew word, which means glowing.

- He's radiant. He's shining. He's a bright light,

I think of Jesus in his ministry he took his disciples up to the Mount of Transfiguration

- and He revealed a glimpse of His glory and it says his clothes became
  - as white as lightning. it was this brilliant flash of His glory.

Jesus said concerning Himself, I am the light of the world.

The Bible tells us that in glory, there's no need of the sun for the glory of the Lord is so intense and so bright that it illuminates everything

She says," he's chief among 10,000. " he's the groom of all grooms.

- That's saying there's no one else like him anywhere.
    - You could search the world over and you would never find a groom like mine,
        - And the same is true concerning Jesus.

You could look through all the false religious systems you want.

- You could compare Jesus to everyone and he stands alone supremely.

The Bible says he is the king of kings and the Lord of Lords.

- None compares to him in all of the earth. There is no God like our God.

There are many people who have come in their own name

- claiming to be some kind of Messiah, but they're all dead and buried.
    - Jesus is set apart through the resurrection from the dead.

You'll never find anybody like Jesus.

When was the last time, you looked at your spouce

- and told them all the things that you appreciate about them?

husbands need to know, that you love him, you respect him,

- Remind him of that. Tell him that.

A man needs his wife to be his cheerleader.

- encouraging words have the power to make them feel like they can do anything

There is a story of the president and first lady stopping at a gas station during a drive, and she recognizes the attendant or owner as a high-school boyfriend.
As they drive away, he remarks that if she had married the man, she would be married to a gas station worker. but she fires back: "No, if I'd married him, he'd be President."

she builds him up & we need to build each other up not tear down

- compliments are deposits and the criticisms are withdrawals.

Paul said in Ephesians 4:29 let no corrupt word proceed from your mouth but only what is good for necessary edification that we may impart grace to the hears

11 His head is like the finest gold;
His locks are wavy,
And black as a raven.

She says he is super good-looking

- and he doesn't have one gray hair on his head
    - she's reminded about all the things that she loves about him.

In the midst of the conflict, we often forget what we have.

12 His eyes are like doves

By the rivers of waters,
Washed with milk,
And [h]fitly set.

She speaks of his eyes. She says his eyes are like doves. Remember he said that about her.

- She is saying he is peaceful.
    - There's commitment in those eyes.

The Bible has much to say about the eyes of the Lord.

- It says 2 chronicles 16:9 that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth and he's seeking those who he might show himself strong on their behalf whose hearts are loyal toward him, the eyes of the Lord.

You think about the eyes of the Lord in the ministry of Jesus.

- when Jesus looked at the multitudes Matt 9:36 He looked at them with compassion
    - because he saw them that they were weary and scattered like sheep without a shepherd. He had eyes of compassion.

He looked at the woman caught in the act of adultery, had compassion on her,

- looked at the rich young ruler with all of the wealth that he had
    - and how empty it was. And and he loved him.

He looks at the world and he looked at Jerusalem as they were getting ready to crucify him

- and he weeps over them b/c they were missing their opportunity of their Messiah.

The eyes of Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus.

when the Lord looks at you, He looks at us with eyes of love.

[13] His cheeks are like a bed of spices,
Banks of scented herbs.
His lips are lilies,
Dripping liquid myrrh.

She says, "My man knows how to talk to me to get the juices flowing."

- When you think of the lips, you think of the speech of a person. It was pleasant.
    - It was refreshing. It was a blessing.

life and death is in the power of the tongue. And the way that he spoke has edified her.

- Has built her up.

When Jesus spoke, "No man ever spoke like this man."

- People loved when he talked

You recall that when Jesus would speak, storms would stop.

- When Jesus would speak, demons would flee.
- When Jesus spoke, dead people would rise again.
    - there is power in the words of Jesus. And she comments on the king's lips.

everything that comes out of his mouth is precious

- his words are those of kindness and gentleness and edification

14 His hands are rods of gold
Set with beryl.
His body is carved ivory
Inlaid with sapphires.
15 His legs are pillars of marble
Set on bases of fine gold.
His countenance is like Lebanon,
Excellent as the cedars.

She says her man works out at Gold Gym & does not skip leg day.

He is stable. His hands are going to hold her up.

- They're going to support her.

she's saying his hands, are strong.

And this is exactly what the Lord is like to us. He holds us up with his hands.

- Jesus said, no one can snatch us out of his hand. He's got us. We're his.

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I *am* with you; Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God.
I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'
You think about the hands of Jesus nailed to the cross, hands of love, hands of compassion,

- able to lift us up when we fall, able to comfort us when we need it,

16 His mouth is most sweet,
Yes, he is altogether lovely.
This is my beloved,
And this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem!

he is my lover. He is my friend.

- This is the HEBREW phrase a great marriage is friends with benefits.

I love how she calls her husband her friend

- that is one reason why a lot of marriages crash and burn
  - because they're not friends
- your spouse Needs to be your best friend.
  - A key to marriage is friendship.
- Friendship fuels the flames of romance

Malachi 2 says Your wife is your companion."

- The word "companion" means someone united with another
  - In thoughts, goals, plans, and efforts
- Marriage means being there alongside each other no matter what!
  - YOU ARE TO BE EACH OTHER'S BEST FRIEND.

It reminds me of that song as it relates to Jesus. What a friend we have in Jesus.

in John 15, Jesus said," Greater love has no man than this than he laid down one's life for his friends. And you are my friends, "he said. "If you do, whatever I command you,

Perhaps you are in a conflict today. You want it to stop & change. Where do I begin?

- You begin at the cross.
    - the key to marriage is Jesus.

And today we have the privilege of partaking of communion,

- which reminds us of what Jesus has done for us

Best marriage advice is to make sure that you love the Lord and you're friends with Jesus

- and you love each other, you're friends with each other.

Pray & take communion