

The Kind Of Woman Every Man Wants

Song of Songs 7:10-8:4

Introduction:

- Biblical marriage is under attack, severe attack, in our day. As a result, many of our children run the risk of growing up confused and even wrongheaded when it comes to rightly understanding this God ordained institution. In an article entitled, “5 Truths Children Won’t Know About Marriage Unless We Teach Them,” author Linda Kardamis says, “Marriage is under attack in our culture. From the sexual revolution to the rise of divorce to the fight over same-sex marriage, this precious institution is being bombarded from all sides. And our children are right in the middle of it. Hollywood, the media, our school systems, and sometimes even fellow Christians are constantly portraying an untrue version of marriage to today’s children and teens. And it’s taking its toll. Most girls spend lots of time imagining their fairy tale wedding yet know very little about how to actually build a happily-ever-after....We are failing to give the next generation a proper perspective on marriage. A perspective they desperately need. But we can change that. We can start talking to our kids, grandkids, Sunday school class, and youth group about this important institution. They need to grow up with a firm foundation in this area. It’s not something they can just start working on after they say “I Do.”” Linda then

highlights 5 specific truths; they must be taught and that must be passed on to the next generation. Here is her list:

5 Truths We Must Teach Children About Marriage

- 1) **God designed marriage to be between a man and a woman.** We cannot be intimidated in this fight for God's design for marriage. God's Word is clear that marriage is for one man and one woman. He loves all people despite their sin, and we should do the same. But that doesn't mean we must accept all forms of ungodly behavior. Our children are being taught by the world that homosexuality is just as valid as traditional marriage. We need to teach them that it's not. God's way is always best.
- 2) **Marriage is a life-long commitment.** When we promise "for better or worse" we give our solemn vow. It's not "for better or for worse unless things get really bad" or "to love and to cherish unless I stop loving them" or even "till death do us part unless they cheat on me." Marriage is a covenant relationship that is meant to last a lifetime. Often we as Christians are scared to openly discuss this because we don't want to offend those who have been hurt by divorce. But those who have gone through a divorce would likely be the first to tell you what heartache and pain it causes. And those whose spouse walked out on them certainly wish their spouse's parents had instilled in them that divorce should not be an option.

- 3) **Marriage is worth waiting for.** Contrary to every other voice in our culture, God's Word still teaches that sex is a gift to be enjoyed exclusively within the bonds of marriage. If we aren't actively teaching this to our teens, they will quickly be persuaded otherwise. But the physical relationship isn't the only area where waiting is important. They must also be patient in waiting for the right person.
- 4) **Marriage is not about being compatible.** Much of the focus on relationships in our society is about being compatible, but the truth is that no two people are compatible 100% of the time. Marriage, while incredible, takes a lot of work, sacrifice, and adjustment. I think lots of marriages break up because no one is teaching young people this concept. So they expect that everything will be wonderful, and at the first sign of trouble they assume they married the wrong person and decide they want out.
- 5) **Marriage is about giving, not receiving.** Marriage is not about what our spouse does for us. It's about what we can do for them. It's not about feeling loved or appreciated. It's about making someone else feel loved and appreciated. The next generation needs to step into marriage ready to give, regardless of whether or not they receive. But this truth, I'm afraid, only means so much when we talk about it. This one, I fear, has to be taught by example. (Sept. 26, 2013, Patheos.com).

- There is real wisdom here, especially when it comes to her last statement, being “taught by example.” In Song of Songs 7:10-8:4 we are blessed with an awesome example of what it means to be a godly woman and a wonderful wife. Here we see a lady who is the kind of woman every smart man wants, the kind of woman Jesus Christ redeemed, and that He is sanctifying His spiritual daughters to be. The portrait that follows is quite a lady! Any man would be a lucky man to call her his wife.

I. Be aggressive when it comes to intimacy 7:10-13

- An available and aggressive wife, when it comes to intimacy, is a blessing and delight to her husband. Most men would agree with Matt Sess who said concerning his wife, “when she initiates sex, it’s definitely a turn on...It doesn’t happen a lot, but when it does, it’s a pleasant surprise” (Julie Walsh, “Who’s Lighting the Fire?” *WebMD Medical News*, 3-16-2000).

Thankfully more and more women are feeling free, especially Christian women, to be the aggressor when it comes to lovemaking. There is nothing wrong about this and everything right about. The fact is, it has biblical warrant! Watch and observe our beautiful lady Shulammitte in these verses.

1) You tell him you are his 7:10

- Shulammitte beautifully declares concerning her relationship to her husband, “I belong to my love, and his desire is for me.” The word

“desire” is an important one. It is found elsewhere only in Genesis 3:16 where it speaks of a wife’s desire for her husband and in Genesis 4:7 where it speaks of sin’s desire to control Cain. In both contexts “desire” appears to be viewed negatively. Here in our Song, the idea of desire is clearly positive. The curse is reversed and we once more find ourselves in Eden.

- It is also interesting to see how Shulammitte changed what she said from two previous statements in our Song. Note the comparison:

2:16 – “My love is mine and I am his.”

6:3 – “I am my loves and my love is mine.”

7:10 – “I belong to my love, and his desire is for me.”

Jack Deere sums up the progression so well, “...his desire is for me.

This is a more emphatic way of stating possession. How much more could a husband belong to his wife than for him to desire only her?

She had so grown in the security of his love that she could now say that his only desire was for her. She had been so taken by his love for

her, that she did not even mention her possession of him” (*BKC*,

1023).

- Shulammite’s complete and total focus is on her king. For her, it is more than enough to be his and the person he desires. “I belong to you and I know you want me.” This prepares us for the next step.

2) You make the arrangements

7:11-13

- Shulammite now takes the initiative for lovemaking and invites her husband for a weekend getaway to the country. She is spontaneous and she is enticing. She knows sex that takes place only at home in the familiar can run the risk of becoming just a routine. Vacations, weekend getaways, “one nighters” can often enhance and even rekindle the passions in marriage. She invites her man to leave the city and go with her. And, she does so repeatedly!
 - Let’s go to the field.
 - Let’s spend the night.
 - Let’s go early to the vineyards.
 - Let’s see if the vine has budded.

Again using the imagery of springtime, our lady invites her husband for some personal time away and alone where she promises, “There I will give you my love.” (v.12). Budding vines, blossoms opening, pomegranates in bloom and “mandrakes” (v. 13) were all considered

aphrodisiacs in that day. Lloyd Carr tells us that mandrakes were referred to by some as the “love apple.” (165).

- In the countryside, out of doors, under the stars and moon, amidst sweet, sensual smells, Shulammitte promises a night of romantic lovemaking. She will take care of everything. All he has to do is come! Charlotte and I have a dear friend named Barbara O’Chester. She has spoken to thousands of women about marriage, sex and romance. She points out that sometimes women struggle in the area of romance and sexual pleasure and she notes at least ten possible and common reasons:

- 1) Ignorance
- 2) Resentment
- 3) Guilt
- 4) Physical Problems (Illnesses)
- 5) Fear
- 6) Passivity
- 7) Hormonal
- 8) Overweight
- 9) Fatigue
- 10) Lack of Time

Song of Songs provides some real assistance in overcoming a number of these. Fatigued? Take a vacation. Lack of time? Get away. Do as verse 13 directs: at the door of your mate, find “every delicacy.” Lay your inhibitions aside and let your imagination run wild.

3) Be creative 7:13

Because of the way God has wired both a man and a woman, “at our door is every delicacy (emp. mine).” In other words our God has given us everything we need physically, mentally and emotionally to share a lifetime of intimacy that never grows old or stale. One key to this ongoing romance is found in the last phrase of verse 13: “new as well as old.” Indeed Shulammitte tells her husband, “I have treasured them up for you, my love.”

As we spend years together in marriage, God’s plan is that things mature and grow sweeter. As we learn how to love well our mate, we will discover some pleasures and joys that never grow old. They are so good we just keep on repeating them. And, as we move forward in life together, we will also discover new pleasures and joys as well. Now, discovering new pleasure and joys do not usually happen by accident. We have to be intentional. We have to work at it. So, here are some ideas to consider along these lines.

Twelve Ways To Keep Passion Alive In Your Marriage

1) Work At It

A lifetime of love and romance takes effort. Few things in life are as complicated as building and maintaining an intimate, passionate relationship. You need to work on it constantly to get through those trying periods that require extra work.

2) Think Team

When making important decisions, such as whether to work overtime or accept a transfer or promotion, ask yourself this question: What will the choice I am making do to the people I love? Talk with your mate and family. Make “we” decisions that will have the most positive impact on your marriage and your family.

3) Be Protective

Guard and separate your marriage and your family from the rest of the world. This might mean refusing to work on certain days or nights. You might turn down relatives and friends who want more of you than you have the time, energy or wisdom to give. You might even have to say no to your children to protect time with your spouse. The kids won't suffer if this is done occasionally and not constantly. It will actually be beneficial for everyone!

4) Accept That Good and Not Perfect is O.K. When It Comes To Your Mate

No one is perfect other than Jesus! You married a real person who will make real mistakes. However, never be content with bad.

Always aim for great, but settle for good!

5) Share Your Thoughts and Feelings

We have seen this one over and over. Unless you consistently communicate, signaling to your partner where you are and getting a recognizable message in return, you will lose each other along the way. Create or protect communication-generating rituals. No matter how busy you may be, make time for each other. For example, take a night off each week, go for a walk together on a regular basis, go out to breakfast if you can't have dinner alone, or just sit together for 30 minutes each evening simply talking, without any other distractions.

6) Manage Anger and Especially Contempt Better

Try to break the cycle in which hostile, cynical, contemptuous attitudes fuel unpleasant emotions, leading to negative behaviors that hurt each other and create more tension. Recognize that anger signals frustration of some underlying issue. Avoid igniting feelings of anger with the judgment that you are being mistreated. Watch your non-

verbal signals, such as the tone of your voice, your hand and arm gestures, facial expressions and body movements. Remain seated, don't stand or march around the room. Deal with one issue at a time. Don't let your anger about one thing lead you into showering the other with a cascade of issues. If different topics surface during your conflict, note them to address later. Try to notice subtle signs that anger or irritation is building. If you are harboring these feelings, express them before they build too much and lead to an angry outburst. Keep focused on the problem, not persons. Don't turn a fairly manageable problem into a catastrophe. Emphasize where you agree.

7) Declare Your Devotion To Each Other Again And Again

True long-range intimacy requires repeated affirmations of commitment to your partner. Remember: love is in both what you say and in how you act. Buy flowers. Do the dishes and take out the trash without being asked. Give an unsolicited back or foot rub.

Committed couples protect the boundaries around their relationship.

Share secrets with each other more than with any circle of friends and relatives.

8) Give Each Other Permission To Change

Pay attention. If you aren't learning something new about each other every week or two, you simply aren't observing closely enough. You are focusing on other things more than one another. Bored couples fail to update how they view each other. They act as though the roles they assigned and assumed early in the relationship will remain forever comfortable. Remain constantly abreast of each other's dreams, fears, goals, disappointments, hopes, regrets, wishes and fantasies. People continue to trust those people who know them best and who love and accept them.

9) Have Fun Together

Human beings usually fall in love with the ones who make them laugh, who make them feel good on the inside. They stay in love with those who make them feel safe enough to come out to play. Keep delight a priority. Put your creative energy into making yourselves joyful and producing a relationship that regularly feels like recess.

10) Make Yourself Trustworthy

People come to trust the ones who affirm them. They learn to distrust those who act as if a relationship were a continual competition over who is right and who gets their way. Always act as if each of you has thoughts, impressions and preferences that make sense, even if your

opinions or needs differ. Realize your partner's perceptions will always contain at least some truth, maybe more than yours, and validate those truths before adding your perspective to the discussion.

11) Forgive and Forget

Don't be too hard on each other. If your passion and love are to survive, you must learn how to forgive. Ephesians 4:32 must always be front and center. You and your partner regularly need to wipe the slate clean so that anger doesn't build and resentment fester. Holding on to hurts and hostility will block real intimacy. It will only assure that no matter how hard you otherwise work at it, your relationship will not grow. Do what you can to heal the wounds in a relationship, even if you did not cause them. Be compassionate about the fact that neither of you intended to hurt the other as you set out on this journey.

12) Cherish And Applaud

One of the most fundamental ingredients in the intimacy formula is cherishing each other. You need to celebrate each other's presence. If you don't give your partner admiration, applause, appreciation, acknowledgement, the benefit of the doubt, encouragement and the message that you are happy to be there with them now, where will they receive those gifts? Be generous. Be gracious. One of the most

painful mistakes a couple can make is the failure to notice their own partner's heroics. These small acts of unselfishness include taking out the trash, doing the laundry, mowing the lawn, driving the carpool, preparing the taxes, keeping track of birthdays, calling the repairman and cleaning the bathroom, as well as hundreds of other routine labors. People are amazingly resilient if they know that they are appreciated. Work hard at noticing and celebrating daily acts of heroism by your mate.

II. Be his friend as well as his lover 8:1-2

- These two verses can sound rather strange to modern, western ears, but they would have been sweet music to Solomon's. They would have let him know that the love that his wife had for him was multifaceted and multidimensional. Their relationship is more than romantic lovemaking, though it was not less than this. Theirs is a covenantal relationship that involves loyalty, sacrifice, and... friendship. A man needs a best friend and he needs that best friend to be his wife. Shulammitte evidently understood this, and so she takes the necessary steps to make it happen.

1) Public displays of love will bless him 8:1

- Shulammitte wishes that she could treat Solomon like a blood relative,

like a brother, “like one who nursed [just like she did] at my mother’s breasts.” If that were the case, “I would find you in public [not just private] and kiss you, and no one would scorn [*ESV*, “despise”] me.”

- Jack Deere again helps us unravel what we read here when he says, “In the ancient Near East public displays of affection were frowned on except in the case of certain family members.” (*BKC*, 1023). I would point out that is still true in many places. A brother would be an acceptable candidate for public affection, even kissing, and Shulammitte wishes she had the freedom anyplace and anytime to show the world her love for her man. She will not reject or cast aside accepted social behavior and expectations, but she sure would like to! No, she will not subject herself or her husband to public scorn, ridicule or contempt. She will restrain her actions, but her words speak loud and they speak clear. Yes, you are my lover, but you are also like my brother, like my friend. Wonderfully in Christ, a husband and a wife truly are brother and sister! Such is the power and goodness of the gospel!

2) Private displays of love will delight him

8:2

- It seems that Shulammitte begins to be playful with her husband in this verse (Deere, *BKC*, 1023). Assuming the role of an older sister, she

tells him, “I would lead you, I would take you to the house of my mother who taught me.” And, once she got him there what would she do? “I would give you spiced wine to drink from my pomegranate juice.” The word for “lead” in Hebrew refers to “a superior leading an inferior: a general, his army; a king, his captain; a shepherd, his sheep... She would lead her younger brother to their common home” (Glickman, 90).

Shulammitte notes it was at home that she was taught and received instruction from her mother. In the context, she must mean instruction about matters of sexual intimacy and love. This is a valuable lesson, especially for those of us who are parents. “The art of preparing for love is best learned at home,” (Carr, 167). Dads and moms must take charge at appropriate times and in appropriate ways in teaching their children about the birds and the bees. They cannot leave this vital task in the hands of others. They dare not entrust it to a locker room and girlfriend talk. Dads must instruct their sons and mothers must guide their daughters. This does not mean dads have no part in training their daughters or moms in assisting their sons, but sexual identity often will play a role in who takes the lead with whom.

Shulammite informs Solomon of some things she learned from her mother. “Spiced wine,” special wine, would be on their lover’s menu as well as the juice of her pomegranate. “An ancient Egyptian love poem identifies a wife’s breasts with the fruit of the pomegranate.” (Carr, 167). Duane Garrett points out that the reference to her “mother’s house” could easily be a euphemism for the intimate sexual parts of the woman (425). That the overtones of her words are sensual and erotic are undeniable. The joy of lovemaking they share does not wane, but grows more intensive and creative as their marriage progresses. And, much of the credit lies at the feet of Shulammite.

III. Be faithful in your devotion to him 8:3-4

- In an article entitled “Nourishing Your Love,” Marie Pierson advises women on how to touch a man’s heart. Her six suggestions:
 1. Show him admiration and appreciation. Let him know he is your hero and champion.
 2. Nurture his friendship. Work to become his best friend. He truly wants that. In fact, he needs it.
 3. Lower your expectations. You married a real person! He is a sinner just like you.
 4. Watch your priorities. (Is he #1 after Jesus?!)

5. Enhance your love life. Continue to grow as a creative, passionate and sensual lover.

6. Be forgiving. (Even as God in Christ has forgiven you. Eph. 4:32)

(Adapted, source unknown).

- It appears Shulammitte understood these suggestions quite well. She knows how to love her man in ways he will understand and appreciate. Two things, in particular, stand out in these final verses of our study.

1) Receive his advance and embrace 8:3

“His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me.”

Solomon gently and tenderly is holding and caressing his wife. Perhaps they have just finished making love and they rest in each other’s arms in

the afterglow of the moment. He does not leap out of bed and run

downstairs for a snack. She doesn’t slip out of bed to make a quick

phone call, nor does she rush out of the room to attend to unfinished

chores. They simply lie there loving each other and holding each other.

They are tender in their affections. We have been here before (2:6). By

God’s goodness and grace they will return here again and again and

again. He longed to hold and caress her. She was delighted and happy to

receive them.

2) Declare your convictions and commitment 8:4

- For the third and final time (cf. 2:7; 3:5) the importance of the proper time and the proper person for lovemaking is addressed. Obviously God believes timing is important. First, it is the right time for lovemaking only in marriage between a man and a woman. Second, within marriage, timing and sensitivity to the needs and feelings of our mate is crucial as we build and nurture affection and romance. Shulammitte declares both her convictions concerning this issue and her commitment. 8:10-12 will bear eloquent witness that she indeed lived out what she believed. She blessed her husband on their wedding night with a chaste and pure bride who would give herself to her husband passionately til separated by death.
- Some popular pundits say that modern Christian advice concerning sex dates back to 1973 and a book by Marabel Morgan entitled *The Total Woman*. Actually advice for Christians concerning sex goes all the way back to the book of Genesis when prior to the Fall, Adam and Eve “were both naked...and not ashamed” (Gen. 2:25). The climax of God’s counsel we find in the Song of Songs. Here we discover that our God says sex and romance is a good thing “in marriage.” Indeed it is an essential thing. It is encouraging to see that more and more Christians “see sex more as a gift to be enjoyed within marriage than

as an evil to be endured or avoided,” and that, “an orthodox view of romance, courtship and sexuality” may be the best road to sexual satisfaction [Taken from *Sex in America: A Definitive Study* by Robert Michael, John Gagnon, Edward Lavmann, and Gina Kolata].

Solomon worked at doing his part. In these verses we have seen Shulammite doing her part. My only regret to this discovery is this: Why hasn't it always been this way? After all, God's plan for the Christian bedroom has never changed. It is a good thing. It is a great thing. Yes, it is a God thing.

Practical Application: The love shared by our couple is this Song is a wonderful thing to behold. It truly is “new as well as old” (7:13). Below are some biblical principles to help our love to never grow stale, to always be fresh. There is some very good discussion material here.

*Yardsticks For Love*¹

(or, How to Measure Love)

1. Love responds to the total person, not just to the physical.
(Gen 2:22-24; Proverbs 31:10-31)
2. Love respects and holds in high esteem the one loved.
(Ephesians 5:28-29)
3. Love gives of itself to enrich and benefit the other person.
(Ephesians 4:15-16; Ephesians 5:25-27)

¹ Taken from *Romance* Packet by Dr. Ronald Sauer of Moody Bible Institute

4. Love is willing to assume responsibility.
(Hebrews 12:2; John 10:11)
5. Love rejoices in being together and suffers pain in separation.
 6. Love can bear separation (s).
(1 Corinthians 13:4-5)
 7. Love can forgive and forget the other person's mistakes.
(1 Corinthians 13:5, 7; Ephesians 4:32)
 8. Love patiently aids the other in correcting his/her faults.
(Ephesians 4:2; Ephesians 4:29)
9. There is in love the mutual enjoyment of each other without physical expression.
 10. Love has a protective attitude.
(John 10:11-13)
 11. Love has a sense of belonging to the other person.
(Genesis 2:23-24)
 12. Love grows and matures.
(Ephesians 4:15-16)
 13. Love is gentle and kind; it always behaves.
(1 Corinthians 13:4-6)
 14. Love feels undeserving of the other person.
15. Love waits for the proper time for physical expression and for marriage.
(Hebrews 13:4)
16. Love guards the other person's moral purity.
(1 Corinthians 13:6; Ephesians 5:25-27; Hebrews 10:24)
17. Love bears the wounds and pains inflicted by the other person.
(1 Corinthians 13:5, 7; Ephesians 4:32)

18. Love seeks to assist the other person in becoming even more special.
(all of the above)

How does this text point to Christ? I Want To Go Home With My King!

- There are two ideas in this passage that naturally lead us to meditate on that we have in Messiah Jesus. One we see directly and the other by contrast.
- First, Shulammite says she wishes she could treat her Shepherd-King like her brother, like a very close intimate friend. Well, the good news of the gospel is our Shepherd King Jesus can not only be treated like a brother, He is our brother! In Hebrews 2:11 we are told that those who have been saved and call God their Father have a Savior who also, “is not ashamed to call them brothers” (also 2:12, 17). What a wonderful truth! The One who is my Savior, Lord, Master and King is also my brother. I have a brother who is a King! My King. What Shulammite wishes for in Solomon we have in Jesus.
- Second, Shulammite informs Solomon she would be delighted if she could take him home, “to the house of my mother” (8:2). Here is a bride taking the bridegroom to her home. Well, for those who are in Christ, just the opposite will someday take place. The Bridegroom will take his bride to His home, to an eternal home He has prepared just for her. In John 14:1-3, the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, “Your heart must not be troubled. Believe

in God; believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. You know the way to where I am going." What amazing grace! I truly do "belong to my love, and his desire is for me" (7:10). He has redeemed me and some day He will take me to His house, "His Father's house," where we will live together for ever and ever. With "His left hand under my head and His right arm embracing me" (8:3), I am safe and secure. He will never let me go. This is our brother. This is our lover. This is the Great Shepherd King who has a love for us that "mighty waters cannot extinguish" (8:7). This bride in our text is remarkable indeed. She is what she is because her king loves her the way that He does. One question remains: do you want to go home and live forever with King Jesus? He is preparing a home for all who do, and someday He will take us there.