

Song of Solomon 5 — “Troubles & Growth in Your Marriage Relationship!”

"Marriage is, after all, the union between two sinners, and not two angels!" — JC Ryle

The "fundamental cause of conflict NOT is NOT circumstances, misunderstanding or competing ideas, but the Bible places it squarely in the DESIRES, cravings, and passions of our own hearts (James 4)."—Gary Riccuci

"Whenever discord arises between husbands and wives, the remedy is straightforward. It begins with the recognition that every rift can be traced to a single cause: The failure to express self-giving love. In one or both partners selflessness has been gobbled up by selfishness." —Tim Savage.

Brief Summary of Song of Songs 5 (overview/big picture):

Now that the couple is married, marital conflict/trouble creeps in. The man is gone late one day into the late hours of the night & he returns home & is longing for lovemaking. She's tired, in bed & not interested in making love. She hesitates & makes a few excuses. In love, he gently and tenderly persists again but at her hesitation, the moment is lost. Then she finally opens up to him and he has gone away. They don't come together. She then goes into the streets looking for her husband but to no avail. She, tragically, is found by watchmen & she is seized, struck, wounded & shamed (abused!). She is earnestly seeking her lover & wants him! She tells her friends to keep her eye out for him. When they ask why, she provides a very poetic account of his appearance & his handsomeness & his personality. She is totally committed to & dazzled by his sweetness & overwhelming delights!

THESIS — After the honeymoon & in the marriage, the marriage must mature! **We'll see this process in 2 ways from Song of Songs 5...**

I. CONFLICT IN THE MARRIAGE (2-8)

It appears that this is all a *dream* -- but nevertheless a pained experience.

As conflict begins to emerge in marriage, "you must ask yourself: "What Do I really WANT..." (James 4.1-3). What am I really 'longing for'?

Remember: "Love is about seeking what is best for the OTHER, NOT about getting what you want"

1. The pursuit (2)

2. The excuse (3)

In an article titled: "*What your wife really wants*" Bob Turnbull writes that wives can dry up and wither on the inside if 4 things are MISSING in the marriage (MEN TAKE NOTE):

1. **TIME** – the currency of the relationship; clear space in the calendar: **MAKE THE TIME!** It says: You are valuable to me
2. **TALK** – this is how the woman connects with you.
3. **TENDERNESS** – it feeds her soul when she is nourished and knows she is cherished (verbally tell her this!)
4. **TOUCH** – non sexual, affectionate touches of love

Paul Tripp: "Laziness -- is rooted in self love...Laziness is always self focused and self excusing"

"FEW SINS are more lethal in marriage than the sin of selfishness...it is a form of heart-idolatry."

HE disappointed his wife [arriving late!]- but she responds wrongly. His sins NEVER justify HER sinful & selfish response. THE SINS of one spouse NEVER validates or permits a sin on the other spouse's part in return (never!).

3. The conflict (4-7)

Song of Solomon 5 — "Troubles & Growth in Your Marriage Relationship!"**10 helpful directions for dealing with relational conflict:**

1. **Confront problems** — as soon as possible after they arise. DON'T ALLOE them to fester & cause bitterness.
2. **Master the art of LISTENING** — show the spouse respect by hearing her or him out. Ask for clarification. Don't interrupt or finish the sentence/thought. Listen, Be quiet, and be patient.
3. Limit the discussion of the conflict to the **present issue** — don't drag out or bring in yesterday (or last year's!) bad /sinful issues. Don't keep a record of wrongs
4. Use "I" messages — make your point & express your emotions. Acknowledge, confess, repent, seek forgiveness, grant forgiveness. Don't shift the blame & make excuses by re-directing the focus to *another* like saying: "YOU always...", "but YOU...", "but YOU responded..." Remember: own up to your sins, "I have..."
5. **Avoid exaggerations** — such as always, never, etc. Such statements are seldom true and overloaded with emotional volcanoes that are quick to erupt.
6. **Avoid character assassination** (name calling, put downs, comparisons). Point out character flaws or demeaning others will do nothing but stir up greater disharmony and anger.
7. Use **appropriate words and actions** — not all arguments are worthy fighting at peak/high volume. The fact is, no argument is worth getting angry, yelling, and fuming over. Be calm, peaceful, humble, biblical, Christlike in all your conduct, conversation & dealings with others.
8. Don't be concerned about "**winning or losing**" — it's better if both parties can be more concerned about resolving the conflict. Don't be selfish & try to have things YOUR way. To try to 'win' and have 'your way' is crowning self king & self-worship & leads to disaster. Be humble & gracious & others-centered.
9. Determine **limits** — comments that are hurtful or damaging must be avoided. Speak to your spouse the way you want to be treated.
10. **Choose to forgive** — and do it immediately, fully, lavishly (as Christ forgave **you**) — ALL people sin (even you). Complete forgiveness **MUST always** be granted

Remember: *RESOLVING* conflict is not only possible — it is *COMMANDED* (Eph 4.3)!

4. The change (8)

This verse is probably viewed to be BLOWS OF REPENTANCE given to her by the Lord that lead her to repentance, restoration & reconciliation with her husband.

Gospel

But there is a PERFECT KING // A HEAVENLY KING -- a Shepherd-king who stands at the door knocking, asking his bride to let him enter that they may enjoy sweet communion & intimacy. *Where do we find such a King?*

This has a tremendous application for "SLEEPY [lazy/excuse-laden] CHRISTIANS" who are neglecting close covenant communion with the Savior, the Lord Jesus. It is the Sweet Savior, the Loving Bridegroom, who stands at the door and knocks (to believers, cold, drowsy, distracted, unfaithful) --- but isn't given admittance (Gary Brady).

What do we learn about our most pursuing & faithful Bridegroom who knocks?

- ✓ He LOVES us
- ✓ He PURSUES us [he initiates meeting with us]
- ✓ He CARES for us [he desires us]
- ✓ He LONGS for us [he is thinking of her! Wanting her!]
- ✓ He is TENDER toward us [so tender, compassionate, full of affections, gentle]
- ✓ He is FAITHFUL toward us

The LORD comes near to us with winning words and wooing actions -- but sometimes we are cold and uninterested & make excuses [and neglect opportunities of sweet communion with our Bridegroom!]:

- HOW slow we are to pray. To read. To memorize. To evangelize. How unwilling we are to sit under the preached Word to hear from Christ's voice.

Song of Solomon 5 — “Troubles & Growth in Your Marriage Relationship!”

•We forget that drawing near to Christ is in our best interest; we forget our calling. There is too much worldliness, distraction, corruption and even too great a willingness to justify ourselves and to make the laziness of others an excuse for our own inactivity.

II. GROWTH IN THE MARRIAGE (9-16)

*This is the **wife's** part: what she does & says. (the husband's part, next week in ch.6)*

Verses 9-16 --- what the woman (wife) can do to cultivate love/friendship with the husband...

- ▶v.9, when friends ask about why he's so special, this gives the wife an opportunity to lavishly 'praise her husband'...
- ▶in recounting his character, personality, handsomeness, this REKINDLES HER FORMER FEELINGS OF LOVE...
- ▶This is "extravagant Praise" (Tom Gledhill, 182)
- ▶vv.10-16 is a most remarkable section. It's one of the FEW poems in the Ancient Near East that we have in which the FEMALE gives an inventory of the MALE's features.
- ▶Mark the structure of vv.10-16 - 'chiasm'/inverse structure [*emphasis on middle elements*]...

v.10 - My Beloved

→ **Dazzling, outstanding (v.10)**
Wholly Desirable, full of sweetness (v.16)

v.16 - My Beloved

She sings extravagant praise for him for...

1. His outstanding nature (v.10)

2. His noble character (v.11)

3. His tenderness (v.12)

4. His richness & profuseness (v.13)

5. His fragrant words (v.13)

6. His gracious works (v.14)

7. His strength (v.14)

8. His splendid appearance (v.15)

9. His sweetness (v.16)

10. His loveliness (v.16)

➔ **NOW, IF** this is true of a man (*Solomon!*) -- **HOW MUCH MORE** for the greater Son of David!

- The BRIDE's praise of her husband in chap 5 reminds us & points us to another revelation of a greater HUSBAND/KING—Revelation 1!

Song of Solomon 5 — “Troubles & Growth in Your Marriage Relationship!”

SONG of SONGS 5	REVELATION I
HEAD	Head white like wool
HAIR	Hair white like wool like snow
EYES	Eyes like a flame of fire
CHEEKS	Face like the sun shining in its strength
LIPS	Voice like the sound of many waters
HANDS	Right hand held seven stars
ABS/FORM/STOMACH	Girded across his chest w/ golden sash
LEGS	Feet like burnished bronze
MOUTH/SPEECH	Out of mouth came a sharp sword

•**Since Christ IS altogether lovely & wholly desirable...**

- let us rest upon his obedience & righteousness for your soul
- let us labor to be IN Him in purity, holiness, joy & praise
- let us remember to set our heart upon him frequently
- let us keep examining ourselves to make sure Christ is our foremost/first love

•**Heart examining questions for personal growth with Christ our Bridegroom:**

- how do you value Christ?
- are you ready to suffer for him?
- does it show in the way you speak/talk about him?
- do you speak of his redeeming love to others?
- does he occupy your conversation in the home? (spouse?)
- do you know the holy discontent which is inevitable to every believer living on this earth (longing to be with him in glory)
- labor to make your sins bitter/hateful so that Christ may become sweeter to you.

Conclusion:

V.16 — the wife calls her man “my beloved and my friend.”

▶v.16- the word "FRIEND" is the masculine counterpart of his regular designation of her. She calls him friend as He has called her my "Friend" (1:9, 15; 2:2, 10; 4:1, 7; 5:2)

▶the Hebrew word "friend" includes: **COMPANIONSHIP + DELIGHT [+ COMMITMENT]!**

▶This word demonstrates: 'PARTNERSHIP'!

▶Lloyd Carr: "Happy is the husband or wife whose spouse is also a "FRIEND"!"

Song of Solomon 5 gives some clues as to how the WIFE can bless her husband...

[Chapter 6 provides the husband with some helps!]

1. give him admiration & respect (Eph 5.33)
2. provide sexual fulfillment to him (Prov 5.15-19; Song 4.9-5:1; 1 Cor 7.1-5)
3. cultivate home support by working hard in the home (Prov 9.13; 19.13; 21.9, 19; 25.24)

Song of Solomon 5 — “Troubles & Growth in Your Marriage Relationship!”

4. strive to be an attractive wife (inner & outer beauty) (Song 1.8-10; 6.13-7.9; 1 Pet 3.1-5)
5. become his best friend (develop mutual interests; enjoy them together) (Song 8.1-2, 6)
6. speak well about him to *others* (not negative critiques, but positive affirmations) (Song 5 & Eph 5.33)

For every believer, remember this encouragement regarding your Heavenly Husband:

“He is the absorbing center of our affections; His company is the desire and delight of our heart!” (George Burrowes)

*Disagreements become conflicts because we *CRAVE* something so much that we will go to war to get it, or will fight to keep someone else from getting what they crave. It is incredibly simple ... and extremely serious.*

The pattern... [take careful note & see the importance of the heart/root/beginnings...]

1. **Desire** – I want something...
2. **Disagreement** – the desire has begun to reveal a craving, lust, or sinful passion.
3. **Deserving** – it now leads to something that you feel that you 'deserve' that you're not getting. We believe our desire is deserved when emotion stirring in our hearts influences the tone or content of what we say...
4. **Demanding** – when we feel that we deserve something, we're justified (so we think) to demand it. In our own defense we may turn in our own personal wrongly interpreted verse of the Bible for support
5. **Dependence** – underneath this escalating war, the heart is exposed as depending on the thing desires. It's not a want or need, now it's I MUST HAVE... I NEED this... [**note carefully the heart, ruling, dominating desires!]
6. **Deification** – Now all this means that I have deified / worshiped my self and my desire. It's MY KINGDOM. We bow to the idol of SELF and SELF's desires. I must have this because, after all, I've now become my own god & my kingdom must rule over all! I rule as Sovereign King & MUST have this.
7. **Destruction** – this ultimately leads to destroyed relationships (and, of course, us as well!). Apart from repentance, this idol worship can fuel a war that can become a way of life.

So what must we do when we even begin this pattern? (Note, even if you have sinful, dominating desires, quickly repent!)

1. recognize sin [call it what it is; don't make excuses, and don't call it a 'slip up' or 'mistake'. Call it what it is...SIN!]
2. confess your sin (to God)
3. ask forgiveness (to God & to others)
4. complete forgiveness of sin (when conflict arises)

"In marriage, conflict resolution draws us closer to each other, resulting in deeper levels of understanding, humility, and intimacy. Each conflict biblically, thoroughly, and happily concluded deepens our marriage union" (Gary Ricucci).

"Whenever discord arises between husbands and wives, the remedy is straightforward. It begins with the recognition that every rift can be traced to a single cause: The failure to express self-giving love. In one or both partners selflessness has been gobbled up by selfishness" (Tim Savage).

A final word from Paul Tripp to *all married couples*:

"YOU SEE, Patience in marriage is vital, because the goal of marriage is GREATER THAN MARRIAGE. The goal of marriage, from God's perspective, is NOT that you would reach some mutually agreed-upon plateau of romantic and interpersonal happiness. No, God's goals are MUCH WIDER AND MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THAT. God's goal is that your marriage would be a major tool in HIS wise and loving hands to rescue you from claustrophobic self-worship and form you into a person who lives for nothing SMALLER than HIS kingdom, HIS righteousness, and HIS glory. God's goal is to transform you at the casual core of your personhood --- YOUR HEART. He is working so that everything you think, desire, say, and do is done in loyal and joyful service to Him. God's goal is not to deliver to you your well-thought-through dream of personal happiness. No, his goal is nothing less than holiness; or as Peter says, 'that you may become partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet 1.4)." [in his book: *What Did You Expect?*, p.244].

Song of Solomon 5 — “Troubles & Growth in Your Marriage Relationship!”**I STAND AMAZED IN THE PRESENCE OF JESUS THE NAZARENE!**

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

**How marvelous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful!
Is my Savior’s love for me!**

For me it was in the garden
He prayed: “Not My will, but Thine.”
He had no tears for His own griefs,
But sweat drops of blood for mine.

In pity angels beheld Him,
And came from the world of light
To comfort Him in the sorrows
He bore for my soul that night.

He took my sins and my sorrows,
He made them His very own;
He bore the burden to Calvary,
And suffered and died alone.

When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
’Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me.

FAIREST LORD JESUS

Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God and man the Son,
Thee will I cherish, Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul’s glory, joy and crown.

All fairest beauty, heavenly and earthly,
Wondrously, Jesus, is found in Thee;

None can be nearer, fairer or dearer,
Than Thou, my Savior, art to me.

Beautiful Savior! Lord of all the nations!
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
Now and forever more be Thine.

HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY! [Song of Songs 5:16]

To the tune of: *IN CHRIST ALONE*

If gazing strangers want to know
what makes me sing of Jesus so!
I love his name, tis very dear
And would His loveliness declare!
His head abounds in wisdom deep
No secret can his notice slip,
And sweet instruction he conveys
To mend my heart and guide my ways!

No sinful taint his bosom knows
But with amazing kindness glows.
He wrought a righteousness divine
And bids me take and call it mine!
His eyes are full of melting love,

More soft and sparkling than the dove!
A single smile, from Jesus given
Will lift a drooping soul to heaven!

His open arms like rainbows stand
And circle round a guilty land.
And in his side is dug a cave,
Where all my guilt my find a grave!
His mercies like himself endure
And like his love are ever sure.
And when your eye His worth can view
Your heart, like mine, will love Him too!
— John Berridge

CHIEFEST AMONG 10,000 [Song of Songs 5:16] to the tune of *Amazing Grace*

Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest
Lord,
Is to be one with thee.

The sense of thy expiring love,
Into my soul convey;
Thyself bestow, for thee alone,
My All in all, I pray.

Less than thyself will not suffice
My comfort to restore;

More than thyself I cannot crave,
And thou canst give no more.

Loved of my God, for him again
With love intense I’d burn;
Chosen of thee ere time began,
I choose thee in return.

Whate’er consists not with thy love,
O teach me to resign;
I’m rich to all the intents of bliss,
If thou, O God, art mine.

—Augustus Toplady