

Song of Songs

Material for RS2 and WORD, October 22nd

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

1. To introduce the young people to the major themes of Song of Songs.
 - a. The idea of Seeking and Finding
 - b. The Characters taking Joy in one Another
 - c. **The Power of Love**
2. To explore the nature of Love in the text, and to understand that it is a powerful and beautiful thing.

MATERIALS

1. Pens, paper.
2. Bibles.

INTRODUCTION

This is about giving a bit of context - fitting the book into the other wisdom texts, understanding that it is a book of Love poetry, and giving a couple interpretations of it. Should be around 5-10 minutes maximum.

The Bible Project video gives some decent background, but playing it won't necessarily communicate the main points of the session.

1. Ask about the other wisdom books we've looked at and why they're useful. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes.
2. The phrase "Song of Songs" is an idiom. Where else have we heard this Jewish idiom style? King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Holy of Holies, Name above all Names etc. It means the Best of the Best. This poem is the best song ever. What are some great songs about relationships/love to you? Why are they the greatest?
3. The main ways of looking at Song of Songs.
 - a. It's a book about love and sex! It follows a couple on their journey from

dating to married. *(If you want to talk about sex with the youth, do it! Spend a bit of time prepping them, getting comfortable about it and getting past the awkwardness. Obviously be discerning about how we talk about sex)*

- b. Is it a metaphor for God and God's people
 - c. Is it legitimately just about two Jewish people in a relationship (recent scholarship has shown this to be a more valid interpretation).
 - d. We can learn from both perspectives about the nature of Love itself.
4. The main character is a poor Shulamite Woman. Her love is a man of a higher wealth/status than her. Their friends and King Solomon also feature. (Disclaimer: may not have been written by Solomon)

SEEKING AND FINDING

The point of this section is to highlight the idea of pursuit and discovery in the text. You could:

1. Read SOS 2:8-9, 2:14, 3:1-4, 8:14. Talk about what's going on in the passages. Why do they want to see each other so much? What kind of relationship do they have? How strongly do they feel?
2. Print and hide these verses, so they have to search for them!

JOY IN EACH OTHER

This section is about the joy of their relationship! They are attentive to one another, they praise one another, they clearly want to be together. This love is a good and enjoyable thing!

1. Look through the descriptions they give for each other. Sos 1,2,4,6 and 7 all have aspects. Maybe print the descriptions off? Talk about how the descriptions are high praise. What are they metaphors for? Lots of allusions to high status, grandeur, great worth etc that they see in one another.
2. Draw the main characters based on the descriptions. What does love look like in this poetry?
3. Discuss the fact that there is a lot of Garden language - garden, tree, fruit, honey, wine etc. Where else do we see a couple in a garden? Why are those comparisons being made? The idea of sinlessness and intimacy - the poetry is hopeful and aspirational.

THE POWER OF LOVE

This part is for thinking about the intensity of love and what that means for us.

1. Look at SOS 8:6-7. Talk about the intensity of love in the first half. Love is as strong as death! As final, as all consuming! It's powerful - is that good? Is that bad? How can we be responsible and steward love - steward another person's heart - well?
 - a. - maybe look at some song lyrics about love to explore how powerful it is?
2. Look at sos 2:7, 3:5, 8:4. Why does this woman tell her friends to wait with love? Does love require maturity? Why? Why is this in the wisdom literature?
3. If this book is about a couple, what can we learn from it? If this book is about God and his people, what can we learn from it? Do those things relate to each other? (If it's about God and his people, what's with all the sexual language?)
4. The book taps into the deep human longing to know and be known by someone else. It shows love as this soaring, beautiful, transcendent, mysterious Gift from God.
5. Love and Intimacy have a high value to God, and a high value to this couple.
6. Maybe do some hot seating? Answer questions, share relevant testimony?

Pray to close.