

Romance & Intimacy from the Song of Songs, Part 2 and Q&A;

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 May 2019

Preacher: Walt Alexander

[0 : 00] The fourth point that we have here is self-giving joyful love is satisfying. The second point that we have here is self-giving joy.

Notice how love and sexual intimacy were supposed to be as God designed it. Long before sin interrupted that garden and they were naked and unashamed, you know, in Genesis 2.25.

But after sin came in, they hid, you know, and made coverings because of their sense of shame. And so this is kind of trying to take us back to the garden.

It's taking us back to what love looks like very intentionally and pointing us to how self-giving joyful love continually satisfies us.

Because it receives love as God's design and as his gift. You know, marriage was not man's creation. That's one of the biggest problems with the marriage amendment that's gone about is marriage was an institution created by God for all creation.

[1 : 55] Not just for those who confess Christ. And so self-giving joyful love continually satisfies us because it takes us back to the garden where we feast and delight from the God who's designed all this and given all this.

He just gives it all. And he's so amazing and so kind. And one of the things the song points out is that the song speaks to how satisfying self-giving joyful love is by pointing us to five senses.

So it's very sensual to use the actual meaning of that word. It's just filled with the senses. They're all alive. You know, all throughout you hear of the beloved speaking and the beloved hearing, you know, and there's this, the words are sense.

The hearing is engaged and the smell is engaged. You probably saw that when we were reading through the anointing oils. And my beloved is a sachet of myrrh. That's just a perfume.

He compares his love to the sweet, refreshing smell of myrrh, the fragrance of oils. You know, many of us don't mess around with these oils like this.

[3 : 07] But there's a sense in which sexual love enlivens these senses, the sense of sight. We see that, you know, he declares your beautiful touch when he kisses her, holds her head.

The taste, he says, your love is better than wine. You know, as an apple tree among the trees of the forest, your fruit is sweet to my taste. The idea is that it's satisfying to me.

He says, your lips drip nectar, my bride. Honey and milk are under your tongue. It's sweet to me. You know, the chorus, in fact, if you flip back to chapter 5, verse 1.

Your finger was probably close to there. You know, after he says, I came to my garden, my sister, my bride. I gathered my myrrh with my spice. Ate my honeycomb with my honey. I drank my wine with my milk.

He says, eat, friends. This is all the community saying, eat, friends. Drink and be drunk with love. You know, there's a good drunkenness he's commanded. Drink your fill.

[4 : 15] The idea is that God in the garden, when he created sexual intimacy in marriage, he's saying, fill your life up with it. Drink it to the excess. There's no restraint. There's restraint outside of marriage.

It is dangerous to mess with sexual intimacy outside of marriage. It's costly. It scars you. It hurts. But inside marriage, he's saying, it's completely unlocked.

Drink and enjoy. Drink. Eat, my friends. Drink and be drunk with love. It reminds us of Proverbs 5 that says, drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own wells.

Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets, let them be for yourself alone and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed and rejoice with the wife of your youth, a lovely dear, a graceful doe.

Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight. Be intoxicated always with her love. Again, drunk with love. Self-giving joyful love is radically satisfying.

[5 : 18] It's totally different. It's completely counterintuitive to the way our culture teaches us to pursue love. And yet it is the satisfying love of giving yourself.

You find that you receive yourself. You know, in losing your life in marriage, in the marriage bed, you find that you gain it. Therefore, Hebrews is right, says let the marriage bed be held in honor among all.

Because it's a wonderful picture of the way this precious relationship was meant to always work.

Finally, in conclusion, sexual joyful love points to the gospel. In the mystery of God, self-giving joyful romance and intimacy lies at the center of why God created the world.

Ray Ortlund likes to say romance is at the center of everything. The same joy, comfort, fulfillment, and satisfaction we experience in marriage, the main reason it's there, the main reason that language fills our Bible is designed to help us see the wonders of God's great love for us in Jesus Christ.

[6 : 42] And this is where the Bible just goes berserk. The wonder is whispered through the scriptures. You know, in Hosea, when God calls a prophet to love a loveless woman, a whore, he's saying, that's the way I am with my people.

In Isaiah 62, you know, he's using this metaphor. He's saying, as a young man marries his young woman, and so shall your sons marry you. And as the bridegroom rejoices of the bride, so your God rejoices over you.

This is when the Bible gets crazy. Zephaniah, maybe take it even further than that. Your Lord, your God, is in your midst, a mighty one who will save. He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will quiet you with his love.

He will exalt over you with loud singing. Sexual intimacy is not an end in itself. At the end of the day, it's just a pointer to something else. To a more breathtaking, more amazing, more all-consuming, more enrapturous love.

The love that God has for us. And Jesus Christ in Ephesians 5 gets very clear when Paul says that all this mystery is about Christ.

[7 : 50] Christ love for the church. God does not relate to us merely as his creatures, as his sheep, as his servants, even as his children, but as those whom he deeply loves as his bride.

So self-giving, joyful love, not just the heart of this book. It's the heart of reality.

It's the heart of who God is. God, who is completely happy in and of himself, chose to create a universe where he might display his self-giving nature, his doing good to those who don't deserve it forever and ever, so that eternity, as Ephesians says, might show us the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness towards us in Jesus Christ.

That's why we fight for this marriage. That's the reason above them all. We want to hold on to the gospel and keep pointing our marriage to Jesus.

And for this and a thousand other reasons, you can be confident. God is for your marriage.

[9 : 22] He is so pumped about your marriage. You know, you never introduce your wife and someone says, holy camoly, you're married. But God does.

Because he planned it for eternity. So he was for you long before today. He'll be for you long into the future.

And to help you in any way he can. So. Any questions, you know, and I know these are always hard to jump out.

Yes, Taylor is breaking the ice, baby. Come on. No, this is it. I'm not going to do anything crazy. Don't sing to us, you know. No, you, yeah, it's better than you win the first.

I was curious about, you made the comment a long, long time ago in the first session about. A long time ago. A long time ago. A really long time ago. Yeah. Ages ago. You relax together, but you don't relate together.

[10 : 27] What do you mean by that? Like, what does that look like? Yeah, I think, like I said, that's a category that's been helpful for us. And I think. I think it's just trying to get at the category of.

Pushing through our self-focusedness. Even in the way we rest. So I think there can be. Like we're content and happy.

Relaxing together. And one of the things Kim and I. Kim and I love to relax together. We love to have a. Have a show going. And y'all might not do this. But have a little show going.

And, you know, Netflix or something. A show binge. I think. Life's gotten a little crazy lately. So we don't have a show that we're. Kind of watching. Because it does create some nice little banner back and forth.

But just being aware of the temptation. That's a very easy thing to relax together. And I can speak for myself here. It's much harder for me to. Brew a cup of tea.

[11 : 37] Sit down. And say. How you doing? What's on your heart? Drawn or out? Relating. And I think. I think the reason we can fall into relaxing together more than relating.

Is because relaxing together feels like we're relating. But we're not. We're not completely. Does that make sense? So I think you've got to kind of have both. You can't be like this.

Constant communication. I have an aunt. That's always ready to have a four hour conversation. And you kind of avoid her at family gatherings. You know. So you don't want that. In the marriage. Like honey.

I better not ask you a question. Because I'll be here all night. You know. But. That. You know. But. That's definitely not the worst problem to have in your marriage. But. There's just this idea that.

I think there's something of both. You know. Relaxing together. But. You know. I have a friend. That did this. I'm not great at this. But. He had. Tea. And talk. That he said on his calendar.

[12 : 35] Every Wednesday night. At 8 p.m. And it was tea and tea. Is what he said. And they just. Tea and talk. And they just made it in the calendar.

And they just did it. They just related. And then. And you know. In some ways man. If you're pursuing each other like that. Do whatever you want. The rest of the weeks. I mean. Relax together.

You know. But there's just. There's an intentional. Tensionality. To. To pursuing that. You know. I think for Kim and I. We went on a date the other night. And. It helps me to get. Out of.

Athens even. It helps me to get out of my rhythm. Or else. I'm just. So in my world. It can be so hard for me to. Relate. Honestly. And so. Moments like that.

Even for like an hour and a half. It's just. It's priceless for me. Because I just. And she can feel it too. We. I have the ability to talk about things. That aren't right before us.

[13 : 31] I have the ability to talk to her. In ways that. I think are. Deeper. And more important. And things like that. You know. Does that make sense? I did have. For the first two people.

To ask questions. This is actually one of my favorite books. On. Intimacy. And it's all about. Talking. I think it's fabulous. So. Next.

T. And. T. You can use that. All right. Any other questions? Jump out there. People are afraid.

We already shamed them. With the most. Unromantic couples. I mean. Yeah. Sorry. So. Do you have any tips on. When you are in labor.

Whether it's a day or night. Or. About. Not talking about. Kids. Like. It's super hard. Not. To do. And I. I really. Did you say.

[14 : 28] What you said. As far as. That's what. And toward them. You know. To cultivate. The marriage. And focus there. But. It's hard. Yeah. Yeah. Do you. Do you. Tip.

I think. I mean. What I had a burden for. In prep. Was just like. The kids. Can become.

Unintentionally. The center. Of the home. And. That. Is not going to. Bode well. For us. You know. Now. They may be.

A large. Percentage. Of. The conversation. Because they have to be. You know. These little guys. Are so important. We want to be faithful to them. But. They can't.

The biggest burden. I'd have. Is they can't take our hearts. You know. So it's like. You know. We can be. I can be all in. To being. A husband. I mean. A father.

[15 : 24] In demanding ways. Throughout the week. But I want to feel. Like a husband. And I want. Kim. To feel like a wife. I know that doesn't help you. As much.

But. So that's. That's my overarching burden. Is I. I want. Kim to feel like a. A wife. And so I think that. That has to do with. Like this. Constant.

Communication. Where I'm just. Repeatedly. Underlining that for her. Like your wife. Yes. Your mom. This is a great side gig. You know. Eventually. They're going to leave us.

And not really care about us anymore. But I'll still be here. So let's. Let's work on this. You know. There's just. There can be this sense in which. You know. You know. I mean in many ways.

People say. They. They tell what you're. What you're all about. Not by what you talk about. But what you're passionate about. You know. And so. Sometimes I think that's where the kids are.

[16 : 20] And they shouldn't be. And so I think date nights. Would be. Uh. Uh. If I can just speak from experience. Getting out of town. Or. At least out of the rhythm.

And then. Getting away with some sort of regularity. For me. Are huge. I don't even think about those guys. For three days. I'm like. What are their names?

You know. Uh. And so. You know. I'm just. I just. And transported. And that really. Serves me. But I think.

On date nights. I would say. You know. Okay. We've done this. All right. We're driving. We have 20 minutes to get there. Let's talk logistics. Kids too.

And it's over. You know. No more. And I think. For us. That's work. Just kind of saying. All right. This is hard and fast. You know. And sometimes you find out. We don't have a lot to talk about.

[17 : 17] Because we're not talking about the kids. And that's why you want to cultivate it. So this little book. That I'm going to give you now. Is terrific. At just. Asking questions.

And starting to talk. You take five of these questions. And you got several hours. I'm not going to throw it. Y'all pass it back. Be honest. All right. Any other questions?

Any other questions? We got one. Yeah. Yeah. As a married couple with kids. Is there anything. You wish you would have done. Put into practice. Or learned.

Prior to having kids. As a married couple. With kids. Anything you wish you had done. Prior to having kids.

Probably taking more trips. Or something. Because the ball and chain. That's him brother. Same. Yeah.

[18 : 15] Stow it away. Quick. They're coming. The consumers are here. No. I'm trying to think.

What would you say? Anything you'd say? What? Traveling more. I think to some degree. Traveling more can be. Maybe habits.

That you wish you would have started prior. Washing dishes. Washing dishes. Yeah. Save money. Yeah. Wash dishes. Save money. I don't know that.

I don't know that a lot. I think the biggest thing I'd say. I was 20. I was 30 when the Rev was born. Right? Yeah. We'd had a miscarriage.

So we were like totally ready. I don't feel like the adjustment to having kids. Beyond the fact that you don't sleep. Was that hard. You know. Because we were just so eager.

[19 : 13] And so broken hearted. And stuff like that. A lot of couples really struggle with. We can't go anywhere. Like.

And that. So I do think. If you're used to like the freedom. Of life. I think they're. You know. Kids bring a massive commitment. That is very good.

But it. Definitely adjusts your rhythm. So I think in different ways. That you can get used to that. You know. Probably the only thing I'd say. Sorry. That's not a very good answer. But. It's just not a huge.

It wasn't a huge category for us. I'm sure some of these other guys in the room. Would be huge. To ask that question to. You know. Uh. Uh. I. One thing I would say is.

Beef up your theology on kids. Can always help. Now you have to restudy it once those little boogers come. But. Uh. Because just like marriage. Like Joy said. You can read all the books on marriage.

[20 : 08] And. But. I do think. You know. I have a big theology for it. You know. Whether it's. Ted Tripp's book. Or. Shepherding a Child's Heart. Or. Uh. A Family Vocation.

Uh. Gene Veith is very good. Um. Father's Role. There's Doug Wilson's book. It's pretty good.

He's a little crazy though sometimes. Uh. I could send you other titles. If you sent me an email. Any other questions? We got like. Just two more minutes. Well.

Thank you for your time. I do think. And your work's not done. Uh. I would encourage you. To plan a T&T.; Plan a. T.

Or if you don't drink tea. Drink whatever you want to drink. And talk. And just say. All right. What's one thing. We can take away. It doesn't.

[21 : 07] It might not be. Much. I do. It might not be. Something that immediately comes to you. But something that you talk. Talk together as a spouse. I just would encourage you to do that. I just think. You know.

We want to be hearers of the word. But also doers. There's also power. In a little night like tonight. Where we give attention. To this marriage. This. This relationship. That we. We live in every day.

And yet we don't think. Carefully about every day. And just think. All right. What's one takeaway. What's one thing we can do. What's one thing. We want to look at from the song. And grow in.

And then. Enjoy. Feast. I think that's what Solomon would say. To all of us tonight. This is your gift. Enjoy it. It's not promised.

You didn't deserve it. God's just so kind. He wanted to give it to you. All right. Thanks for being here. God bless you. Eat a cookie. Or three. On your way out. All right.