

THE RESPONSIVENESS OF LOVE (4:16-5:1)

Ecclesiastes 9:9 "Enjoy life with the wife whom you love"

John Wesley once said of the Song of Solomon, *"The most excellent of all songs. And so this might well be called, whether you consider the authority of it ...; or the subject of it ...; or the matter of it, which is most lofty, containing in it the noblest of all the mysteries contained in either the Old or the New Testament;... useful to all that read it with serious and Christian eyes."*

...Chapter 4 is essentially summed up as follows:

- 4:1-7 Solomon praises his bride and offers his concern for the emotional state of his wife.
- 4:8 They get frisky and he promises her a honeymoon in the mountains of Lebanon.
- 4:9-11 They continue to caress, snuggle, and his heart beats faster and faster.
- 4:12-15 He caresses her garden and stimulates her passion.
- 4:16 She invites him to enter her.
- 5:1 They consummate their love.

In the last section of 5:1, the Lord of all creation pronounces approval on everything that has taken place.

In chapter four, Solomon praises his bride, he likes everything.

- Eyes - Like Doves
- Hair - Long and Black
- Teeth - white and smooth
- Lips - Red and lovely
- Cheeks - Red
- Neck - Erect
- Breasts - full and youthful

His bride didn't see herself this way, as shown in previous verses, but Solomon did. Solomon sums up his bride with the words: 4:7 *"You are altogether beautiful, my love; there is no flaw in you."* This is how men should view their wives.

Song of Solomon teaches that Romance has AT LEAST four ingredients

1) An element of the unexpected. In 1:16-17 Solomon makes a bedroom of cedars from Lebanon to surprise his bride. In chapter four, he surprises her with a vacation to the north mountains.

2) It includes dating. In 2:8-17, he takes his bride on date (before the wedding). In 7:11-8:14, he still takes her out on dates.

3) It includes the impractical. Cedars from Lebanon were not practical for bedroom construction. Flying to Paris and Italy was not practical. PRACTICAL is a killer of ROMANCE.

4) It includes creativity. Solomon was creative. He speaks in poetry; he buys her trinkets; all the while offering her dignity.

It has been said that the difference between a rut and a grave is only how deep it is.

We are constantly shown throughout scripture that a marriage is representation of a relationship with God in Himself, and Jesus and His bride (the church). As a believer's relationship with Christ is illustrated by a husband's relationship to his wife, so a vital relationship with Christ is vital to the health of a marriage.

God is creator and creative, and when we are spending time with Him we will grow in our creativity, our spontaneity, and our LOVE for each other. Our love for each other comes because He first loved us...so our first priority is LOVING Him.