

Small Group Guide

Week of January 14th, 2024

Speaker: Mark Delaney

Song of Solomon 1:2-7, 2:1-7



Icebreaker



- What's your favorite rom-com movie? Tell us a little about the plot and why you like it.
- Have you ever written a love letter? What made it meaningful?



Discussion



- Tell about someone who really encouraged you recently. How did that make you feel? How can we get better at building each other up?
- Do you ever struggle to grasp how much God values you? Tell about a time you recently felt unimportant or insecure. How does remembering your identity in Christ help in those moments?
- Before pursuing love, we've got to nurture our relationship with Jesus. Tell about one way you want to grow closer to Christ this year. How will deepening that connection transform all your other relationships?
- The Shulamite woman expressed desire for her beloved while still maintaining her dignity. How can we balance healthy desire with purity? How do we steer clear of objectification?
- Pastor Mark challenged us to not let our past poison our present when it comes to relationships. How have you seen past hurts or failed relationships impact your current relationships? What practical steps can you take to find healing?



Thought for the Group



One of the primary points we need to grasp from Sunday's message is that cultivating intimacy with Christ must be our top priority.

Everything else flows out of that vital relationship with Him.

Consider this, have other relationships distracted you and displaced Jesus from the throne of your heart?

Another significant theme was guarding ourselves from temptation.

Are you being careful to protect your heart and mind? Take a moment to think through any habits or patterns that may be diverting your attention.

Additionally, we were reminded to use our words to build others up, rather than competing or comparing. When jealousy creeps in, we start acting like thorns ourselves – sticking, pricking, hurting. Let's challenge each other to uplift and cheer each other on. Celebrate one another's victories.

As we wrap up, consider: what resonated most with you from Sunday? How can you take those truths and put them into practice this week? Let's leave today with a renewed desire to love Jesus first and foremost. Stay focused on cultivating your relationship with Him through prayer and scripture. Then, let His love shine through you to impact others.



Next Steps



- Open up to a trusted friend or counselor about a past relational hurt you haven't fully healed from. Ask them to pray with you and help you walk through biblical forgiveness. Don't let past wounds infect present relationships.
- Carve out 10 minutes each morning this week to sit in quiet devotion to Jesus. Read a Psalm, express gratitude, and ask Him to transform you and show you how to love others well. Nurture intimacy with Him first.