

Beginning Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>!

## *Marriage Builders*

*"Helping Couples Build A Loving Relationship The Way God Intended!"*

- **Now is the time to invest in your marriage.**
- **Develop Bible based skills which build strong marriages.**
- **Understand what God wants for your marriage.**
- **Get to know other couples.**
- **Build lasting friendships with other couples.**
- **Twice-a-month, Fridays 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM.**
- **Meet in homes of 4-6 couples.**
- **Sign-ups begin in August.**
- **Marriage Builders will begin Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**
- **Childcare will be provided!**
- **Only \$11.00 for the "Keeping Your Covenant" workbook.**
- **For more information, contact or call:**
  - **Greg & Annette Foo ~ 562/420-9318**
  - **Randy & Nancy Hovey ~ 562/596-1951**



# Love For A Lifetime

Long Beach Alliance Church • September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**PUT ME LIKE A SEAL OVER YOUR HEART,  
LIKE A SEAL ON YOUR ARM.**

**FOR LOVE IS AS STRONG AS DEATH,  
JEALOUSY IS AS SEVERE AS SHEOL;  
ITS FLASHES ARE FLASHES OF FIRE,  
THE VERY FLAME OF THE LORD.  
MANY WATERS CANNOT QUENCH LOVE,  
NOR WILL RIVERS OVERFLOW IT;  
IF A MAN WERE TO GIVE ALL THE  
RICHES OF HIS HOUSE FOR LOVE,  
IT WOULD BE UTTERLY DESPISED."**

**~SONG OF SONGS 8:6-7 (NASB)**

### 1) God Is The Author Of Relationships

- A) Looking back on their relationship, Solomon recognizes that God chose his relationship with his Shulammite bride from her birth (Song of Songs 8:5).
- B) He calls out to his bride to place a "seal" (like a wedding ring) over her heart because their love (since it is from God), is comparable in its intensity to God's love (8:6).
- C) Since their relationship is from God, and since their love is like God's love, nothing should ever end their love -- it is unquenchable -- until "death do us part" (8:7).

- D) Abraham trusted God for Isaac's bride (Genesis 24) from their homeland. Abraham's instructions to his servant reveal total trust in God's guiding hand in providing Rebekah.
- E) Jesus, when being asked about divorce, expressed that it was God who brings people together, "what therefore God has joined together, let no man separate" (Matthew 19:4-6).
- F) Trusting God for who He will provide (one commentator calls it "knowing the silhouette of who you will marry"), is a direct response to God's divine sovereignty over our lives!
- G) Having faith in God means seeking what He has chosen for you in a mate -- and remaining faithful to the calling! In this sense, when we are "in the Lord," we can, as the Apostle Paul said, 'marry who you wish' (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7; cf. Numbers 36:6, the daughters of Zelophehad).

## 2) Investing In "What God Has Joined Together..."

- A) **PRAY DAILY FOR ONE ANOTHER** (Ephesians 6:18-20, James 5:16-18). Prayer is not optional for ANY Christian relationship -- especially a marriage! Pray constantly!
- B) **PLAN A WEEKLY DATE NIGHT.** Even a raging fire will extinguish without fuel. Planning a date night with your spouse in mind is "romance fuel" which resists quenching! Keep the fires burning hot!
- C) **PLAN A MONTHLY THINK DAY.** In a day & age when there are so many potential conflicts with time and marriage, take one 4-hour time and "do" schedule. Review the past

month and schedule the next two months. Stay connected!

- D) **ATTEND A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE RETREAT ONCE A YEAR.** This is a weekend to "deconstruct and reconstruct" your marriage. Evaluate where you've been, where you are, and where you want to be a year from now. Dream together!
- E) **STUDY GOD'S WORD TOGETHER REGULARLY.** One of the great weaknesses of Christian marriages is the lack of mutual interaction about God's Word. Find a study you can do together, preferably with other couples. Submit mutually!

## 3) You Will Look Back & See God's Mighty Hand

- A) Do you recall the Shulammitte girl's anger and frustration with her brothers for making her work in the vineyard (Song of Songs 1:5-7)? She could not see what God was doing in her life, but was faithful and submissive anyway.
- B) Later in her life, after her marriage to Solomon, her brothers "fess up" to an old plan (SOS 8:8-9). The Shulammitte wife reports that she was faithful, which Solomon observed (8:10).
- C) In one of the great ironic twists of the book, we find that Solomon could observe the Shulammitte girl because he was the owner of the very vineyard in which her family was made caretakers (8:11)! She is deeply appreciative for Solomon and for her brothers (8:12).
- D) The great Song of Songs ends with the Shulammitte wife calling to Solomon to come and enjoy their romance (8:13-14). The book closes as a testimony to God's goodness and providence for those who trust Him and walk with Him!