



Small Group Notes: Sept 7 2025
Sermon Series: Songs of Songs
Holy Longing 1:1-6

Two books recommended in this talk: The Song of Songs by Charlie Cleverly and Thirsting by Strahan Coleman.

Why do you think we don't get the full story behind the Song of Songs?

The Old Testament has wisdom literature, some of which have been called wisdom beyond wisdom regarding how profound they are. Song of Songs is such a book. Why do you think this is?

Why do you think it is especially difficult to explore romantic poetry in a church setting?

Saadia, the medieval Jewish commentator, said that understanding Song of Songs is like a lock for which the key has been lost. Pope counters this comment saying that there is no key because the door is open to all who are willing to enter. Do you think this book is simple or profound?

Why has this book been so valuable to Jews and Christians throughout the centuries when it doesn't mention God?

People in various places in life may find this book difficult or painful. What might you say to someone that feels this way?

Throughout most of history this book has been read as allegory. Why is this especially difficult to modern readers?

How is this similar to problems we find with reading Revelation?

Read Songs 1:5-6

Why is the woman ashamed?

Why, do you think, is the reader invited to connect with her shame so early in the book?

What does it mean for her to be dark? What does it mean for her to neglect her vineyards?

How is brokenness a feature of our human condition? Where do you see our brokenness in regard to topics like place, relationships, and God?

Our condition can result in a 'deep longing' that we often misdirect. How can we better identify these needs within ourselves and direct them in ways that are healthy and holy?

Read Songs 1:1-4

Why, do you think, people find the first half of verse 2 so powerful?

What is the significance of referring to his fragrance, name, and desirability?

Why is this book important for holding to the idea that intimacy within marriage is a gift of God to be enjoyed?

What does it mean for us to have intimacy with God? How is this like or unlike that found between a husband and wife?

Throughout scripture the longing we experience and understand is used to stir our hearts with love for God.

As the deers pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you my God. — Psalm 42:1

Isaiah 55:1 – “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

How do you think we should understand human longing? Is it simply something to be ignored and tamed, or should it be kindled and directed? When might either of these responses be wrong or right?

This is the quote that was used to close the sermon. What do you think of it? Does the author go too far? What do you find helpful or unhelpful?

“The whole gospel is simply an invitation to respond “Yes” with all our being. We are, you are, being pursued. In movements and language unfamiliar to your life-worn senses, Divine Love wants you, is after you in your deepest places. This pursuit is so much more than an existential exchange, it’s a deep calling to deep longing for the mingling of your being with He who created you. It’s what you were made for.” – Strahan Coleman

Shawn Swinney