

Welcome to the **SOS – Help for Marriages** page of First Baptist Church Claremore’s website. The purpose of these articles is to use biblical concepts from the Song of Songs (Solomon) to increase intimacy among married couples. Consider this month’s lesson.

## **DOING MY BEST AT WORK AND AT HOME**

Obviously, it's critical to give our best to the marriage relationship. This article will discuss giving your best at work and home. Work can make or break a marriage. Our occupation takes up more of our waking time than any other activity. Marriage is not always about staring at each other, composing poetry for each other, or passionate lovemaking. Our jobs are also a real part of our marriage. Marriage is about long hours at work, tired nights, laundry, screaming kids, and dirty diapers. All this is complicated even more when both the husband and the wife work. How we express our love for our spouse even when the job and the routines of life are consuming much of our time is critical to the well-being of the marriage. Making your spouse feel he/she is a part of our life, even in our occupation is a key esteem builder.

**Read Song of Songs 1:7-8 (NIV) below**

**Tell me, you whom I love, where you graze your flock  
and where you rest your sheep at midday.  
Why should I be like a veiled woman  
beside the flocks of your friends?**

**If you do not know, most beautiful of women,  
follow the tracks of the sheep  
and graze your young goats  
by the tents of the shepherds.**

*Song of Songs 1:7* begins by saying: **“Tell me, you whom I love . . .”** This phrase is a strong expression of love in the Hebrew language. It means to love with your entire soul, and your entire being. It includes loving with all the appetites and desires of both the physical body and the spiritual being.<sup>i</sup> It is deep personal involvement, and includes all a person is: hopes, dreams, fears, and aspirations.<sup>ii</sup>

Love in marriage should never become one dimensional. A couple needs to strive to share with each other on a spiritual, emotional, and social level, as well as a physical level. You should participate in conversations and activities that promote intimacy in all marriage areas.

*Song of Songs 1:7* reads: **“Tell me . . . where you graze your flock, and where you rest your sheep at midday?”** It is apparent from this verse that the man is a shepherd by occupation. It appears the woman wants to know where her beloved is working so that she can see him. The woman desires a noon time rendezvous. This may tell us several things about this relationship. It may tell us that she was curious about his work. She wants to be a part of his whole life.<sup>iii</sup> Her desire to see her man at noon time might also tell us something about the time demands placed on the relationship.<sup>iv</sup> Maybe the man is so busy with his work that she is hungry to see him.

There are times when our occupation makes even greater demands on our time. This time usually translates into time away from family. In such times, one must go the extra mile to communicate the value of the marriage and of the spouse. This may be done with a brief phone call, with a note left where you know your spouse will find it, with a delivery of flowers to the house or work place, or with a brief luncheon together. Remember, there are times we must be at work longer

than we would prefer, but we can still let our spouse know that they are number one in our lives and that they are valued much more than the job. When a job continues to demand more and more of your energy and you see no end in sight, it might be time to begin praying and seeking God's will concerning your occupation.

*Song of Songs 1:8* reads “. . . *Why should I be like a veiled woman beside the flocks of your friends?*”

The woman wants to see her man, and now she doesn't want to slip around and hide to find her lover at noon time. She wants to know where he works so that she will not have to go searching for him and seem to be a loose woman. For a woman to veil herself in ancient culture was a sign of prostitution.<sup>v</sup> It would be inappropriate for a woman alone to go from flock to flock looking for a man. Other shepherds might perceive her presence as an invitation. Such action would damage the woman's reputation and also would not speak too highly of her man.

In Song of Songs 1:4 that the woman calls the man king because he treats her like a queen. A king would sure not want his queen roaming around like a prostitute. You should never put each other in a situation that will likely be embarrassing. We need to treat each other with dignity, especially in public. Treating your spouse with dignity would also including valuing your marriage relationship and each other more than you value your job, or your friends, or your hobbies.

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<sup>i</sup>Pope, 328.

<sup>ii</sup>Kinlaw, 1218.

<sup>iii</sup>Dillow, 15.

<sup>iv</sup>Murphy, 134.

<sup>v</sup>Dillow, 15.