

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.

WHAT IS BEST: BEAUTY OR CHARACTER?

The world values beauty above character

Song of Songs 1:5-6 (NLT) *“I am dark and beautiful, O women of Jerusalem, tanned as the dark tents of Kedar. Yes, even as the tents of Solomon! Don’t look down on me, you fair city girls, just because my complexion is so dark. The sun has burned my skin. My brothers were angry with me and sent me out to tend the vineyards in the hot sun. Now see what it has done to me.”*

The woman of the Song of Songs 1:5-6 speaks of her skin that has been darkened by the sun. Dark tanned skin was associated with lower social status. Only women who were raised in poor homes had to go and work in the fields.

The American society has placed a high value on the super model image. Like the fair ladies of the courts, many incorrectly value a certain type of physical look. Ladies are to be 5’ 8’’ with long legs, curved hips, a 36 bust, and pouting lips. Men are to have broad shoulders, narrowed waist, a washboard stomach, sky blue eyes, and wavy blond hair. Many men and women spend a great deal of time and money trying to look like society says they should look. When we fail to meet society’s standard, we think less of ourselves. We become frustrated and our self-esteem sinks.

Character will outlast beauty

It is true that this woman was darkened by hard work in the sun, yet she still sees herself as beautiful; deep down inside she knows she has worth that society cannot see. In fact she compares herself to the beauty of expensive tents of Kedar. Kedar was a tribe of northern Arabia. This wandering tribe made tents from valuable black goat’s hair. When the sun would strike these tents, the tents would shine with striking beauty. They were so valued and so beautiful that Solomon used the goat hair for curtains in his palace.^[i]

What this woman lacked in physical beauty due to the long hours in the sun, she made up for in personal character which was formed from those long hours. Physical beauty will never make up for an ugly heart.

God values character

Song of Songs 1:3 (NLT) *“How fragrant your cologne, and how pleasing your name! No wonder all the young women love you!”*

Last month’s SOS article dealt with the man giving his best to the woman. But the second half of verse 3 introduces the concept of character.

The woman says in 1:3, *“how pleasing is your name.”* The man has a name or a reputation that is good. *Name* in verse 3 is the character of a person. This man is loved because he is solid and dependable. He has an edging on his soul that will not change. Before the woman ever describes the physical appearance of her man, she praises his character. It is critical for people to choose a mate by character, not appearance.

^[i] Joseph C. Dillow, [Solomon On Sex](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishing’s, 1977), 14.