

Sermon Series: Song of Us – Week 7

“Better than you imagined. Exactly what you were made for.”



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Introduction

As we continue in the Song of Solomon, we arrive at an important reality of relationships and marriage: conflict. Many people enter relationships believing love should eliminate disagreements, but Scripture paints a more honest picture. God is not surprised that you fight with the person you love the most. Conflict is not evidence of failure—it is evidence that two imperfect people are learning to love, grow, and live together.

The question is not whether conflict will happen, but how we manage it. Healthy relationships are not built by avoiding conflict, but by learning how to navigate it in a God-honoring way.

Key Scriptures

Song of Solomon 5:2–16

Song of Solomon 6:4, 8–9, 13

Ephesians 4:26–32

Ephesians 6:12

Proverbs 13:12a

James 1:2–4

James 1:19–20

The Reality of Relationship Phases

Most relationships naturally move through phases:

Honeymoon → Reality → Commitment

The honeymoon phase is marked by excitement, chemistry, and idealism. But eventually reality sets in. Differences emerge, expectations collide, and frustrations surface. Many relationships struggle here because reality does not match expectations.

Healthy couples move beyond idealism into commitment—a love built not merely on feelings, but on faithfulness, grace, growth, and covenant.

Five Keys to Managing Healthy Conflict

1. Manage Expectations

Many conflicts begin with unrealistic or unspoken expectations. Often, we place expectations on our spouse that only God was meant to fulfill.

Proverbs 13:12 says, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick.” Expectations left unmanaged can quickly become disappointments.

Healthy relationships require clear communication, realistic expectations, and grace for one another’s imperfections.

2. Respond, Don’t React

Ephesians 4:26–27 reminds us: “Be angry and do not sin.” Anger itself is not sin, but how we handle anger matters greatly.

James 1:19–20 teaches believers to be “quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” Healthy conflict begins with listening.

Avoid being either a HOT or COLD reactor. HOT reactors explode, escalate, or overpower. COLD reactors withdraw, avoid, or emotionally disconnect. Both often reflect personal pride and self-protection.

Responding means slowing down, listening well, and choosing humility over defensiveness.

3. Let God Work

Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that our struggle is not ultimately against flesh and blood. Sometimes what looks like a relational battle has spiritual roots.

Comparison kills what God is trying to do. Comparing your marriage or relationship to others, social media, or unrealistic standards creates unnecessary frustration.

James 1:2–4 teaches that trials develop perseverance and maturity. God may use conflict not to destroy your relationship, but to strengthen it.

4. Forgive Early and Often

Ephesians 4:31–32 calls us to remove bitterness, wrath, anger, slander, and malice while choosing kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.

Forgiveness does not minimize hurt, but it refuses to allow hurt to grow into resentment.

The strongest marriages are not those where there are no fights, but those where there is timely reconciliation.

5. Come Out Stronger

Conflict handled well can deepen trust, improve communication, and strengthen intimacy.

God's goal is not simply survival through conflict, but transformation through conflict. Every disagreement becomes an opportunity to grow in patience, humility, and grace.

Application

- Evaluate your expectations—are they realistic, communicated, and grace-filled?
- Slow down before reacting; choose to respond with wisdom and humility.
- Resist comparison—it undermines what God is building in your relationship.
- Practice forgiveness early and often.
- View conflict as an opportunity for growth instead of defeat.

Conclusion

God is not surprised that conflict exists in marriage or relationships. The issue is not whether conflict happens, but whether we allow it to divide us or develop us.

The strongest marriages are not perfect marriages—they are marriages where people fight fairly, forgive quickly, and choose commitment over convenience.

Healthy conflict handled God's way does not weaken love—it strengthens it.