

## **Solomon on Sex - Kill 'Em With Compliments**

Sign Title: Solomon on Sex - Kill 'em with Compliments

January 15, 2012

Good morning Faith family. We are in the third week of studying the Song of Solomon. I hope the husbands went home last week and enjoyed an extra kiss before nightfall.

Before we return to our romantic couple in the Song of Solomon, I want to mention a few resources I found helpful for this series. These resources, and a number of others, are also found on the [www.solomononsex.com](http://www.solomononsex.com) website.

**God, Marriage and Family by Andreas Kostenberger** - I read this one cover to cover. It addresses culture, marriage, parenting, singleness, divorce and remarriage. It is an excellent work done by a scholar that is readable. That is a rare combination.

**The Purity Principle by Randy Alcorn** - This little book is a gem. Randy understands the struggles of pornography. If you are struggling in this area, this book will be a great help. If you are a father, this is a great book to read with your son to give him the tools he needs to steer away from sexual temptations.

**A Promise Kept by Robert McQuilken** - For mid-life marriages or for struggling marriages, this is pure gold. It is the true story of seminary president Robert McQuilken leaving his job to care for his wife who suffered with early Alzheimer's. It is the best living picture of the commitment of marriage I have seen. Read it with a box of tissues. You will read it in one night but your marriage will be changed for a lifetime.

**Real Marriage by Mark Driscoll** - This just came out two weeks ago. It has already rocketed to the top of the New York Times Best Sellers list. I am heavily indebted to Mark for the first two messages of this series. I borrowed a lot of his material for those messages. The good news is that much of that material he put into this book and he expanded on it. He even has a chapter titled “Sex is god, sex is gross and sex is a gift” where he expands upon the issues we talked about in the first message. I highly recommend this resource and have special thanks to Mark for the work he did in this area.

This week we return to Solomon and his wife, the Shulamite, and we find them really excited to be together. They just can’t stop telling each other how thrilled they are about their relationship. Complimenting your spouse is a very important skill. This morning, we are going to study the importance of complimenting your spouse and learn some ways to do it without words. We will close by Cindy coming up to join me in answering a few more of your questions.

### **How should a husband compliment his wife?**

Last week we learned how his wife, the Shulamite, felt about herself. She was struggling with her body image. She is dark-skinned; the other beauties are fair-skinned. They are soft; she is a hard-working farm girl. How does Solomon handle this? He compliments her and tells her what she needs to hear.

#### **Tell her she is beautiful.**

If you do not know, O most beautiful among women, follow in the tracks of the flock, and pasture your young goats beside the shepherds’ tents. Song of Solomon 1:8 (ESV)

He tells her she is beautiful three other times in this book.<sup>1</sup> In fact he says she is *most* beautiful. Solomon is not just trying to make her feel better by lying to her. Have you heard of the phrase, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder?” He is telling her *he* sees her as the most beautiful among woman. She is his standard of beauty. He isn’t looking at her wishing she looked like somebody else. She is beautiful to him.

Guys, does your wife need to hear you say she is beautiful? After spending 30 minutes in the mirror is probably the most natural time to say it but your wife needs to know she is beautiful when she doesn’t feel she is beautiful, like when she gets up in the morning and has bed head. When she has no makeup on, tell her she is beautiful.

**The homework assignment.** Tell your wife she is beautiful when she least expects it but when you honestly mean it. I try to tell Cindy she is beautiful when she doesn’t see it is coming. Then it really means something.

**Give her a pet name that builds her up.**

I compare you, my love,... Song of Solomon 1:9 (ESV)

Everybody gets nicknames. Growing up, I can still remember the nicknames given to me. I can especially remember the insulting ones. Can any of you remember the ones kids gave you?

Do you have a negative one for your spouse like, “the whiner” or “the complainer” or “Mr. Grumpy Pants?” Some of you guys may have nicknames for your wife you won’t say in church. I would suggest you get rid of them. Those

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<sup>1</sup> 1:8; 5:9; 6:1

little insulting names stick. One website I referenced on nicknames says men usually give women nicknames that reflect a physical or emotional trait.<sup>2</sup> Those nicknames can hurt. Women know this. It is easy to go the wrong way on this guys and give your wife a negative nickname. Guys, get rid of them.

Here we are introduced to the pet name he gives to her and it is a positive one. It is “my love.” In fact, he calls her “my love” 10 times in the book.<sup>3</sup> Those kind of names create positive traction. Guys, nicknames are a chance to make a big mistake with your wife, lose them. Pet names are a chance to score some points in her book.

I want to encourage you to give your wife a pet name and make it really creative and exciting. If you are really creative, you can come up with one only she knows what it means. For example, one of the names I call Cindy is *the WEB woman*. Everybody thinks that means she is Internet savvy. Not true! That stands for my Wild, Exotic, Beauty. I can call her the WEB woman in public and people are clueless, but she gets bright red. She knows I am floating over a spicy comment. Incidentally, if you call Cindy the WEB woman, I will have to break one of your fingers. That is a name that only I can use.

**Guys, your homework assignment** is to get rid of the negative nicknames and give your wife a spicy pet name. She will appreciate it.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://praetorianheart.multiply.com/reviews/item/38?&show\\_interstitial=1&u=%2Freviews%2Fitem](http://praetorianheart.multiply.com/reviews/item/38?&show_interstitial=1&u=%2Freviews%2Fitem)

<sup>3</sup> 1:9; 1:15; 2:2; 2:10; 2:13; 4:1; 4:7; 5:2; 6:4; 7:12

## Craft a creative comparisons that make her blush.

I compare you, my love, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots. Song of Solomon 1:9 (ESV)

Guys, you are thinking that if you tried calling your wife a horse; it probably wouldn't go well. You are right. I tried it for the fun of it and it didn't go well.

Researching for this series I learned the humor found in how some of the Bible scholars handle these tough passages is funnier than Saturday Night Live. This is one of those passages. One guy said Solomon called her a horse because he was complimenting her wide hips. Somehow, I don't think that was it.

Let me explain what this means. In the Bible it tells us Solomon had 12,000 Egyptian horses and 1,400 chariots. He had quite a fleet. In that day, chariots horses were male horses. Solomon acquired Egyptian war horses for his chariots. They were known for being very aggressive. These horses were feisty and acted like they had testosterone on their breakfast cereal instead of milk. There is historical evidence that Egypt's enemies tried to use this feisty male quality of Egypt's horses against them. When the Egyptians were attacking the city of Qadesh, the city let loose a mare in heat. The stallions pulling the chariots went wild. It was only after the mare was killed that the attack on the city could be resumed.<sup>4</sup> When Solomon says she is like a mare among Pharaoh's chariots, it is a creative way of saying she drives all the men wild. That is quite a compliment. You can almost picture her blushing.

Guys, this week I have a writing assignment for you. You will need to think about this one. Go home and write a note for your wife. You will leave it for her

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<sup>4</sup> Longman, Tremper III, *Song of Songs*, Grand Rapids, pg. 103.

on her pillow. You will read it together before you go to bed. I will tell you how it starts but you have to do the rest of the work. Begin it with, “My wife is like...” then you fill in the rest. Men, this is your chance to lay on the compliments. It is the time to say things you normally wouldn’t. You will have to think about this. It is good for you. As guys we are not normally verbal on this stuff. You will thank me next week for this one.

I want you to notice there is a difference between what she sees in the mirror and what he sees when he looks at her. Guys, you need to let your wife know that the glasses God gave you to see her are not the same ones she has on when she looks in the mirror. She sees imperfections. You think that you are so fortunate and blessed to have such a wonderful and beautiful wife.

Some of you guys say, “That’s not my wife.” She doesn’t drive anyone wild. My recommendation is to start complimenting her and telling her she does. She will start growing in the way you are encouraging her. Nurture her and bless her with compliments.

**Tell her she looks great when she dresses up.**

Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with strings of jewels. We will make for you ornaments of gold, studded with silver. Song of Solomon 1:10–11 (ESV)

This is a reflection of their wedding day. The Shulamite is dressed her best. What we have is Solomon complimenting her when she gets dressed up. He says, “You look great.” Every woman who works for 30 minutes in the mirror hopes she looks great. It is her husband’s job to tell her all her work was worth it. Guys, when your wife is wearing a nice dress, when her hair is fixed just the way

you like, tell her that. Compliment her. When she knows you appreciate her looking nice, she will try and look nice for you frequently. As guys, that is something we enjoy.

One important thing I noticed is that he doesn't tell her *her clothes look nice*, he tells her *she looks nice*. He tells her that her cheeks look lovely and her neck looks lovely. This is a small but very important thing. Don't tell your wife her clothes, shoes and accessories are what gives her beauty she doesn't have. Tell her they compliment the beauty she does have. This is subtle but important. When your wife puts on a nice necklace, don't tell her the necklace looks nice. Tell her the necklace makes her look nice. If you get this wrong, your wife will turn into a shop-a-holic. In her desperate search to look pretty, she will be addicted to clothing and fashion because you are sending the message that she needs them to look beautiful, rather than she is beautiful.

### **Take her shopping at the mall.**

The next thing to notice is that he plans to take her shopping at the mall. Guys, shopping with our wives is not something we like to do. Leave us in the auto sports store or the Cabela's or even the GNC. They have more testosterone. This guy promises to take her shopping.

**We will make for you ornaments of gold, studded with silver. Song of Solomon 1:11 (ESV)**

The ESV sets this off as part from the chorus girls. Other translations think it is connected to the last verse. I think it is connected. Together they are going to get her more jewelry.

**Guys, here is another homework assignment.** Go shopping with your wife. If you are like me, you can bring your iPad and read a book or check Facebook on your phone while she is in the dressing room, but be supportive of her. Tell her what you think she looks good in. Let her know that you enjoy helping her look her best.

### **How should a wife compliment her husband?**

**Tell him he is special through his nose.**

**While the king was on his couch, my nard gave forth its fragrance. Song of Solomon 1:12 (ESV)**

What we have is Solomon is on his couch. Maybe he just came home from a hard day at the office. Maybe this is the ancient version of a La-Z-Boy. What his wife does is she puts on her perfume. He is engrossed in the evening news program, and he gets a whiff of her perfume. Guys, you know how this works. Everyone is in a room and all of a sudden you smell a woman. Every guys head is on a swivel trying to find the lady in the room. Perfume gets a guy's attention.

When I was a kid, my family would stay at my grandmother's house. She loved to go out to eat. In the evening, when she would dress up for a restaurant she always put this perfume on called "Red Door." My bedroom was in the room across from hers and when she put it on I could smell it across the hall. "Red Door" was my grandmother's perfume.

A few years ago Cindy put on some perfume, and I recognized it right away. Which one do you think it was? It was Red Door. The smell instantly transported me back to my grandmother's house and those memories. I love it

when Cindy wears “Red Door.” That perfume brings back good memories of my grandmother and new memories of my wife. Smell is powerful. Don’t believe it? Use a public restroom before it is cleaned.

Ladies, one way to compliment your husband without saying a word is to have a special perfume and to wear it.

Last week, one of your **homework assignments** was for guys to go with their wives and buy some cologne that she liked you to wear. This week, head back to the same store but this time, wives, buy a perfume your husband likes. Then wear it.

When he comes home and smells that perfume, he will remember buying it with you. It will bring back good memories. It is one way you compliment him. You may not agree with me here but think about it.

Ladies, why do you wear perfume? To mask body odor? No, that is deodorant. You wear perfume to attract attention. It works. You attract male attention. When you put on perfume around your husband, it is one way of telling him you he is special and you would like him to know you are interested in him.

**Hold your husband close all night long.**

Here is the part we kicked the kids out for. We are going to have fun with this one.

**My beloved is to me a sachet of myrrh that lies between my breasts. Song of Solomon 1:13 (ESV)**

First, let me give you the historical background. Myrrh is an aromatic gum which comes from the bark of a tree that grows in Arabia, Abyssinia, and India.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Pope, *Song of Songs*, Pg. 350.

As a liquid, it was carried in small bottles like perfume. It was also mixed with a bit of fat to take on a solid form and it was worn in a little pouch as a necklace. The heat from the body would slowly melt it, releasing its sweet fragrance.<sup>6</sup> When it was worn, it left a sweet smell on a woman's chest.

She says her husband is like a pleasing fragrance hanging just under her neck. Another piece of Hebrew trivia is important. The word *lies* can also be translated *lodges*. Another way of saying it is *spend the night*.<sup>7</sup> One of the ways she compliments him is snuggling with him all night long. Remember, this is just for married people. She wants to bless him by holding him close and in a very intimate way. I warned you that this woman has desires and as a married woman, she is not afraid to express them.

Ladies, letting your husband know you want to bless him by snuggling close to him all night long. Tell him it is like Linus in the Peanuts cartoon. Your husband is your blanket.

In our marriage, I have a bum shoulder. It is my left shoulder. When I go to the gym and use the bench press, I go through some real pain in this shoulder. The reason my shoulder hurts is because Cindy sleeps on this side. One of the great blessings in our marriage is laying in bed after a hard day and having my wife snuggled real close. I have my arm around her. We talk, we cuddle and fall asleep together. By morning I wake up and I am in pain because her body

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<sup>6</sup> David Jeremiah, *What the Bible Says About Love, Marriage and Sex: The Song of Solomon*, Turning Point, pg. 49.

<sup>7</sup>Tom Gledhill, *The Message of the Song of Songs*, Intervarsity Press, pg. 116.

weight has stretched the shoulder out of joint. I praise God for the pain. I was blessed with a wife that wants to bless me by being close.

Ladies, I realize not every one of you for physical reasons can bless your husbands in this exact way. The principle remains. One way a wife compliments her husband and blesses him is wanting to hold him close and not let him go. This is homework I will not check up on. Guys, you can tell her how special and loved it makes you feel when she holds you close.

I told you we were going to have some fun with this. Last week I told you this book is interpreted in a variety of ways. One of the methods I introduced you to last week is called the allegorical method. I thought you would like to know how some people of those people have translated this verse.

Cyril of Alexandria said this had nothing to do with a woman giving her body to her husband, rather the breast represented the Old and the New Testaments. The sachet of myrrh was Christ that lies between them.<sup>8</sup>

Another example would be some Jewish rabbi's who argued the song was about Jehovah's love for Israel. They claimed the sachet of myrrh was the Shekinah glory that appeared between the two cherubim over the cover of the ark.<sup>9</sup>

All that to say, I think these guys are just being too squeamish. This is a wife who really want to let her husband by telling him she loves to hold him intimately close all night long.

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<sup>8</sup> Tremper Longman, *Song of Songs*, Eerdmans, pg. 106.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Dillow, *Solomon on Sex*, Thomas Nelson, pg. 9. (as quoted from H.H. Rowley, "The Interpretation of the Song of Songs," *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays*, London: Lutterworth, 1952.)

## **Tell your husband he is your oasis in a desert world.**

**My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi.  
Song of Solomon 1:14 (ESV)**

To understand what is going on, we need to understand what the Engedi is. The Engedi is on the western bank of the Dead Sea, just north of Masada. The surrounding landscape is desolate but the Engedi is beautiful. It contains waterfalls, streams, lush vegetation, birds and animals of all kinds. It is a spot of paradise in the midst of a barren desert.<sup>10</sup> In that area, henna springs up across the hillsides. Henna has a blue-black berry and a white flower with a sweet, fragrance that lingers in the air.<sup>11</sup>

She sees her husband as a refreshing oasis in a desert of unremarkable men. At the end of the day, she tells him she is refreshed in his presence. He turns her gray world into color.

Ladies, when was the last time you told your husband you are refreshed in his presence? Many times, guys come home and they are hit lists. The kids were fighting. You sent them to their rooms and they were warned they would be in serious trouble when their father came home.

The guys had a writing assignment earlier. Ladies, here is your homework assignment. Write a note to your husband telling him how he refreshes you and brings life to you.

Ladies, your husbands need to know that being with him is a source of refreshment in your life. He lights you up. A husband loves to know how good

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<sup>10</sup> Tremper Longman, *Song of Songs*, Eerdmans, pg. 106.

<sup>11</sup> "Henna" [http://www.tigerflag.com/madini\\_henna.html](http://www.tigerflag.com/madini_henna.html) (accessed 13 November, 2008).

he makes his wife feel, not just when he is gone, but when he is home. Here is another homework assignment. Tell your husband how special he is to you and how he lifts you up like no one else can.

### **What is the best way to give your compliments?**

Behold, you are beautiful, my love; behold, you are beautiful; your eyes are doves. Song of Solomon 1:15 (ESV)

He goes back to his favorite pet name for her, *my love* and as usual, he calls her beautiful. He describes her eyes like doves. The scholars have a number of ideas why he describes her eyes like doves. I don't know if I agree with any of them. One thing I did notice is that when he is speaking these words to her, where is he looking? He was looking her in the eye. If he wasn't he wouldn't be able to talk about her eyes.

Guys, there is a real benefit to looking your wife in the eyes when you compliment her. Some of the latest research tells us that when people are looking you in the eye when they speak to you, you find them more attractive.<sup>12</sup> So if you want to have your wife find you more attractive, give you her full attention. Look her in the eye, especially when complimenting her.

### **Guys, bless your wife with a home she loves.**

Behold, you are beautiful, my beloved, truly delightful. Our couch is green; the beams of our house are cedar; our rafters are pine. Song of Solomon 1:16–17 (ESV)

Now the Shulamite is describing her new home. The couch is green; the beams are cedar; the rafters are pine. This house reminds me of one of those

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/the-science-of-love-look-into-the-eyes-399290.html>

rustic wood cabins where everything is natural wood. I don't know for sure, but I think this house was unique to the city of Jerusalem. Remember we have a country girl marrying a city boy. Solomon, the city boy has taken the time to set up a house that is meaningful for his country girl.

First lesson here for the guys, give your wife a home she is comfortable with. She will love you for it. A few years ago, we lived in a parsonage. It was a house with many blessings but it also had some frustrations. The burner on the stove wouldn't sit right. A pot wouldn't sit straight. The people who lived in the house before us were an elderly couple. The home had a small refrigerator. With three kids, we needed a big one. Thankfully it worked out to purchase an additional refrigerator and it made mom much happier when she came home with the groceries. Husbands, one great way to love your wife is buy giving her a house that fits her and that she is comfortable in.

Now I know not everyone is in a position to bless your wife with the home she would like. We all have items on our home list that we haven't accomplished. Right now, the top of my list is to get curtain and drapes for our home. That is what my wife needs to make the home comfortable. I am not there yet. Guys, focus on making it comfortable for her. If she wants a certain color that looks a little more feminine than you would normally choose, go for it. Make her comfortable in the home.

Ladies, thank your husband when he does. That is one way that he tries to love and appreciate you.

## Why are compliments important to a healthy marriage?

Compliments are like deposits in a marital savings account that can be drawn upon in times of marital tension. If the deposits have not been made and are not kept current, there is no currency to fall back on in times of marital distress.

What we are saying is nothing new. We are just applying what Paul says in Ephesians 4:29 to the particular relationship of marriage.

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.  
Ephesians 4:29 (ESV)

## Questions and Answers

It is time for us to get to the Q&A portion of the message so I am going to invite my wife up.



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