

## Next Generations Program Overview

- Discipleship Ministry Bridging the Gap between the Pregnancy Center to the Church
- Eight-week lesson plan for single, pregnant or single new mothers, with one held in the Fall, and one in the Spring.
- Two baby showers/year hosted by the church, one in Spring and one in Fall for those who complete a minimum of 7 of the 8 weeks.
- Two Outing Days per year, one in Spring (Zoo) and one in Fall (Christmas Light tour?)
- Training for volunteers by Care Net's "Making Life Disciples" program, online or in-person before fall semester begins.
- Bible curriculum based on learning who God is. KJV Scriptures.
- Ideally, each young woman would also be "adopted" by a family in the church who checks in on her, who she can sit with during main services, and who will act as a "mentor family."
- Next Step after completing New Generations would be a Basic Bible Doctrines Discipleship.

### **Lesson 1**

The Love of Jesus—Solomon's Bride, Song of Solomon

### **Lesson 2**

God Sees Me—Hagar, Genesis 16

### **Lesson 3**

God Created Me—David, Psalm 139

### **Lesson 4**

God is With Me—Emmanuel, Matthew 2

### **Lesson 5**

God Knows My Name—Mary Magdalene, Luke 8:1-3

### **Lesson 6**

God Gives Purpose—John the Baptist, Luke 1:5-25, 39-45

### **Lesson 7**

God Hears—The Desperate Mother, Matthew 7:24-30

### **Lesson 8**

Jesus Offers Abundant Life—The Woman at the Well, John 4

## God Loves Me

### Lesson 1—Solomon's Bride—Song of Solomon Song of Solomon 1

LOVE—a four-letter word that affects our lives in big ways. Do we not hear it thrown about all over the place? You deserve to be loved; love yourself more; or find the love you have always wanted by joining this dating website. It is in music, movies, and ads.

My daughter informed me that by the time she was in eighth grade many of her friends were already confusing physical intimacy with love. Yet doesn't love feel elusive? Just when you think you might have some kind of grasp of what it is, a break-up happens, or a parent lets you down or a friend turns on you. The Bible does not shy away from tackling even the most difficult subjects and LOVE is a major theme throughout the whole Book. We are going to look at a book of poetry set during the time of the Kings in Israel several thousand years ago. It may have been a long time ago, but some things stay the same because we are all human.

#### Overview of Solomon:

Solomon was the wisest King that ever lived according to the Bible. He built the first Temple in Jerusalem. When Solomon became king, he asked God for wisdom to rule well. Because he asked for wisdom instead of a selfish request, God gave him riches, wealth, and honor. 2 Chronicles 1:12. Even though Solomon was wise and had spoken to God, later in his life he married many wives and turned to idol worship. Before that time, however, Solomon and his bride penned this beautiful book of poetry that is tucked into the middle of the Old Testament. If we understood the Hebrew, we might be embarrassed to read it, and most Jewish men do not read it until they are in their 30s. But it does give us a good idea of what God created love to be.

#### 1:1-6—Rejected by her family.

The book switches back and forth between the bride and Solomon speaking, and it begins with the bride talking. Interestingly, in verse six she describes the rejection she has experienced from her family. Those who should have loved her and taken care of her needs used her and abused her. But the King took notice of her and found her beautiful.

#### 2:4—Loved by the King

The King noticed her, delighted in her, and made a feast in her honor. He wanted everyone to know of His love. It says his banner over her was love—everyone could see how the King loved this peasant woman.

#### 2:10-13—Called to Come Away with Him.

Jewish weddings are a bit different than in our Western world. A contract is signed while the couple is still young. The groom will go and prepare a place and make ready for the bride. When the groom comes back to get her, the wedding takes place. Here, the groom is calling for the bride to come with him.

### 5:2-3,6-7—The Enemy Tries to Come Between Them

It does not say why the groom had to leave, but the bride went looking for him. As she looked, the guards beat her and sent her away. The story ends with the King coming for this woman he loved and vowing His faithfulness. Read 8:6-7. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.

It's a beautiful love story, but why am I telling you about it? No king has ever pursued you, delighted in you, given you a home with him, and loved you like that. Yet, He has. This Book is the picture of a King named Jesus who literally loved you to death. Jesus is the Son of God. We celebrate His birth at Christmas when He was born to a virgin named Mary. Because of His unique birth, He was born into the world without a sin nature like the rest of mankind. Jesus is perfect and holy. Even though He healed and only did good, He was crucified on a cross for one reason. He died to atone or cover your sin and my sin.

**Sin, anything we do, say, or think that breaks God's Law separates us from God, the King who created everything.** God sent Jesus to pay for the sin that we do out of His amazing love for each of us individually. Jesus did not stay in the tomb that they sealed Him in. Three days later, He rose again and that tomb remains empty. Because He lives, He offers us the opportunity to live with Him forever in Heaven too.

It does not matter who has rejected, disappointed, or hated you on this planet, because Jesus, the King, has set His love upon you. He offers you a place at His table and He is not ashamed to call you His beloved.

Though sin has separated you from Him, He has already paid sin's price. So He invites you to come to Him.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matt. 11:28-29

But there is a very real enemy that does not want you to know that kind of love. Jesus called him a thief--The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10 The Bible names him Satan and he is a liar. He twists the beautiful love God gives and makes love selfish and greedy. His goal is to keep as many people from experiencing the love God gives as he can.

Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jesus wants to spend the rest of eternity with you. If you were the only person in the world, He would have died for only you.

But a love that is forced is not love. He will not make anyone come to Him and accept His gift of forgiveness and relationship. He offers, but you must respond. He wants to set His seal upon you and call you His.

The Bible says, But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Even though you and I did not look for Him or seek Him out, He loved us anyway. Our sin is no deterrent to His love. We cannot do anything to make us worthy of that kind of love. We cannot earn it. We cannot do anything to clean ourselves up enough to make Him love us more. He already loves you. But you get to choose what you will do with His love.

1. He calls you to come to Him.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matt. 11:28-29

2. He asks you to believe that His death on the cross, and His resurrection was done for you personally to cover your sin.

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Romans 10:9-10,13

3. He says you only have to ask Him to forgive your sin and come into your life and you are His forever. That is all it takes to experience the most amazing love you will ever know.

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13-14 (He gives us His Spirit that seals us as His forever.)

Once you make that decision to trust Jesus, you enter into the most beautiful love story this world has to offer. I hope if you haven't yet made that decision, that you will today.

Break up into discussion groups.

### Discussion Questions

1. What have you heard about Jesus before today?
2. Does this description of the love Jesus offers change what you think about God?
3. How could this kind of love change a person's life?
4. Is there anything that would stop you from accepting Jesus' invitation to come to Him?
5. If you could spend forever with Jesus, starting today, would you want to know how?
6. How can we pray for you?

