WISDOM

ACROSS THE SEASONS OF LIFE

*Song of Songs • Proverbs • Ecclesiastes*

# LESSON 05

# LOVE ENDURES

*The Strength and Worth of Faithful Love*

Fall 2026

Calvary Lutheran Church (WELS)

Dallas, TX

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ACROSS THE SEASONS OF LIFE
*Song of Songs • Proverbs • Ecclesiastes*

# LESSON 05 — LOVE ENDURES

*The Strength and Worth of Faithful Love*

CORE TEXTS: Song of Songs 7:10–8:14, especially 8:5–7
SUPPORTING TEXTS: Genesis 2:24–25; Matthew 19:4–6; Ephesians 5:25–32; Romans 8:35–39
LESSON AIM: To discover the continuing delight, wise restraint, strength, and incomparable worth of faithful love - and to conclude with Christ's saving love, which even death cannot defeat.

## A. LOVE STILL DELIGHTS

In Lesson 02, love awakened. In Lesson 03, love delighted. In Lesson 04, love struggled. Now, as the Song draws toward its conclusion, we hear the lovers expressing their affection once again. The familiar language of mutual belonging returns.

➢ **READ SONG OF SONGS 7:10–13**

**LOOK CLOSELY — STILL DELIGHTING**

Compare 7:10 with 2:16 and 6:3. What familiar language returns? What is different about the woman's words this time?

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What does the woman invite her beloved to do in verses 11–13? What do her words reveal about what she enjoys and desires?

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**CONSIDER THIS — AFTER ALL THESE YEARS**

At their fiftieth wedding anniversary, a wife says, "We've changed plenty. But he's still the person I most want to spend time with." What does her answer suggest about lasting affection and the excitement of a new romance?

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What can gradually diminish delight in a marriage or friendship? What might help preserve it? Think of a longstanding friendship: what makes spending time together enjoyable after so many years?

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**FAITHFUL LOVE CONTINUES TO _____ IN THE BELOVED.**

## B. LOVE IS WORTH WAITING FOR

➢ **READ SONG OF SONGS 8:1–4; 8:8–12**

The woman wishes she could express her affection more freely. Later, we hear the concern of brothers for their younger sister and the woman's confident words about her own vineyard. These passages need not describe successive events, but both invite us to consider how precious love ought to be treated.

**LOOK CLOSELY — LOVE AND ITS PROPER TIME**

What does the woman wish for in 8:1–2? Why might she want to express her affection more openly?

What familiar warning returns in 8:4? How might that warning help us understand the concerns expressed in 8:8–12?

**CONSIDER THIS — "I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY FRIEND!"**

Two longtime friends disagree about a major decision. One expects unquestioning support. When the other expresses reservations, the first responds, "I thought you were my friend!" What is the difference between valuing friendship and demanding proof of it?

The Song's warning in 8:4 concerns romantic love. By analogy, what might it teach us about patience and respect in other relationships?

The Song celebrates desire without treating desire as permission to disregard God's will. Love is God's good gift, and wisdom teaches us to receive it as the Giver intends.

**LOVE IS TOO PRECIOUS TO BE _____.**

## C. LOVE AS STRONG AS DEATH

➢ **READ SONG OF SONGS 8:5–7**

Here we reach the Song's most powerful declaration about love. After all the expressions of attraction, longing, delight, and vulnerability, the woman speaks about love itself. Her language is extraordinary: death and the grave, blazing fire, overwhelming waters, and wealth that cannot purchase love.

**LOOK CLOSELY — THE STRENGTH OF LOVE**

What does the woman ask her beloved to do in verse 6? What might the image of a seal over the heart or on the arm suggest?

Why does the woman describe love as being "as strong as death"?

**LOOK CLOSELY — THE WORTH OF LOVE**

What is the difference between saying that love is powerful and saying that "many waters cannot quench love" (8:7)?

The Beatles sang, "Can't Buy Me Love." Why would the writer of Song of Songs agree?

**CONSIDER THIS — WHAT IS LOVE WORTH?**

Someone says, "Relationships are worth keeping as long as they make you happy." Another responds, "Real love sometimes means giving up something you want for the sake of someone else." What does each statement get right - or wrong - about love?

How might Song of Songs 8:6–7 challenge the way our culture measures the value of a relationship?

The Song celebrates love's extraordinary strength, but it does not promise that every human relationship will survive every difficulty. Sin can damage love, and death eventually separates even the most devoted husband and wife. These verses celebrate the strength and worth of the love God created; they do not guarantee that human love is invincible.

**FAITHFUL LOVE IS STRONG AS _____ AND CANNOT BE _____.**

## D. THE SONG'S LAST INVITATION

➢ **READ SONG OF SONGS 8:13–14**

The Song ends unexpectedly. There is no final wedding scene, no account of a long marriage, and no neatly completed story. Instead, we hear the lovers calling to one another once more.

**LOOK CLOSELY — THE END OF THE SONG**

What does the man ask of the woman in verse 13? How does she respond in verse 14?

Compare the Song's closing verses with its opening verses (1:2–4). What similarities do you notice? What strikes you about the way the Song ends?

**CONSIDER THIS — WHAT HAS THE LOVER TAUGHT US?**

Looking back over the Song, which passage or image has most influenced your understanding of love? Why?

How might the Song challenge both those who romanticize human love and those who have become cynical about it?

**FAITHFUL LOVE CONTINUES TO _____ THE BELOVED.**

## THE LOVER'S FINAL LESSON

We've listened to a song that celebrates the goodness of desire, the delight of mutual belonging, the vulnerability of love, and the strength of faithful commitment. Love is God's gift, and the Song teaches us to cherish it. But even the most devoted husband and wife remain sinners. Their love is imperfect, and eventually death separates them. That brings us to a greater love.

➢ **READ EPHESIANS 5:25–27; ROMANS 8:35–39**

**LOOK CLOSELY — THE LOVE THAT DOES NOT FAIL**

According to Ephesians 5:25–27, what did Christ do for his bride, the Church? What does he accomplish through his sacrifice?

What does Romans 8:35–39 tell us about the strength of Christ's love? Why can we be certain that even death cannot separate us from him?

The Song declares that love is as strong as death. But the Gospel tells us of a love that has conquered death. Jesus Christ loved his Church and gave himself up for her. He bore our sins, paid for our failures to love, and rose victorious from the grave. He has made us his own, and nothing in all creation can separate us from his love.

**HUMAN LOVE IS PRECIOUS. CHRIST'S LOVE IS OUR ETERNAL HOPE.**

## PUTTING WISDOM TO WORK

*Love Awakens. Love Delights. Love Struggles. Love Endures.*

Two couples have come to you seeking Christian counsel. CHOOSE ONE SITUATION. Before offering advice, listen carefully to their concerns, examine Scripture, and consider how both God's Law and his Gospel apply.



### OPTION A — "THIS ISN'T THE MARRIAGE WE EXPECTED"

David and Rebecca have been married for thirty-two years. They had looked forward to retirement, travel, and spending more time together. But Rebecca has developed a chronic illness that limits her mobility, and David has become her primary caregiver.

David tells you, "I love my wife, but sometimes I feel more like a nurse than a husband. I miss the way things used to be." Rebecca adds, "I know he's doing so much for me. But I feel guilty every time I need help. Sometimes I wonder whether he regrets marrying me." They both look to you for counsel.

**LOOK BACK AT THE SONG**

1. What wisdom from Song of Songs 7:10–13 and 8:6–7 might help David and Rebecca think about love during this season of life?

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2. What does their conversation reveal about the way each understands the other's experience? What might they need to hear from one another?

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**LET GOD'S LAW SPEAK**

3. As you listen to David and Rebecca, what would God's Law lead you to examine in their words, attitudes, and treatment of one another?

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4. What would be wrong with telling David simply to "try harder" or Rebecca simply to "be more grateful"? What does God's Law actually require of each?

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**LET THE GOSPEL SPEAK**

5. Read Ephesians 5:25–27 and Romans 8:35–39. What comfort does Christ's faithful love give to both David and Rebecca?

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6. How might the forgiveness and security they have in Christ help them speak honestly about their struggles and receive help from others?

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**YOUR COUNSEL: What would you say to this couple? What practical suggestions might you offer without making their Christian standing depend on how successfully they manage their difficulties?**



## OPTION B — "WE LOVE EACH OTHER, BUT WE DON'T AGREE"

Michael and Anna are both Christians and have been dating for almost two years. Michael wants to marry soon. Anna loves him but wants more time before making that commitment.

Michael tells you, "We've been together long enough. If she really loves me, why can't she make up her mind?" Anna responds, "I do love him. But the more he pushes, the less certain I feel. I'm afraid that if I say no, I'll lose him." They've come to you for advice.

**LOOK BACK AT THE SONG**

1. How might Song of Songs 8:6–7 help Michael and Anna recognize the seriousness and value of love?

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2. What does the recurring warning about not awakening love before its proper time contribute to their situation?

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**LET GOD'S LAW SPEAK**

3. What sinful attitudes or actions might be present in this relationship? What would you want to understand better before reaching conclusions?

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4. How might each person be tempted to make personal desires more important than the good of the other?

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**LET THE GOSPEL SPEAK**

5. Read Romans 5:8 and Ephesians 5:25–27. How is Christ's love different from love that must first secure something in return?

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6. How might the certainty of Christ's love and forgiveness free Michael and Anna to speak honestly and make wise decisions without manipulation or fear?

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**YOUR COUNSEL: What would you say to this couple? How would you help them distinguish genuine commitment from pressure, and patient love from indecision?**

**ONE FINAL QUESTION — FOR EITHER OPTION**

Both couples want to love faithfully, but neither can do so perfectly. Neither can guarantee that the future will unfold as hoped. What happens when we make the success of a human relationship the foundation of our hope? Where does Scripture direct us instead?

Christ's love is not uncertain. He gave himself for us while we were still sinners, and he has promised never to abandon those he has redeemed.

**WE CAN CHERISH HUMAN LOVE WITHOUT ASKING IT TO BE OUR SAVIOR.**

## DURING THE WEEK — SEVEN DAYS WITH THE SONG

Try each action once during the coming week. Check the box when completed. Some apply most directly to marriage or dating; others fit family, friendships, or congregational life. These actions do not earn God's favor. They are ways to exercise the love we have already received from him.

☐ **MONDAY — LOVE AWAKENS (Song 2:7).** Consider whether you are treating someone's affection, boundaries, or commitment with patience and respect. Make one choice that honors God's timing.

☐ **TUESDAY — LOVE DELIGHTS (Song 4:1–7).** Tell someone you cherish something specific you appreciate about them. Notice something real.

☐ **WEDNESDAY — LOVE STRUGGLES (Song 2:15).** Identify one "little fox" - a habit, attitude, or neglected responsibility - that may be harming a relationship. Take one step to address it.

☐ **THURSDAY — LOVE LISTENS (James 1:19).** Give someone your undivided attention. Put away distractions and listen without preparing your reply.

☐ **FRIDAY — LOVE FORGIVES (Ephesians 4:32).** Examine your own words and actions. Where you have sinned, acknowledge it without excuses and seek forgiveness. Remember how Christ has forgiven you.

☐ **SATURDAY — LOVE ENDURES (Song 8:6–7).** Express faithful love through an act of service that costs you time, convenience, or effort without expecting repayment.

☐ **SUNDAY — CHRIST'S LOVE SAVES (Romans 8:35–39).** Read the passage slowly. Thank Christ for the love that suffering and death cannot extinguish. Carry that assurance into worship and your relationships.

### A QUESTION TO CARRY WITH YOU

Which of these exercises was most difficult? What did it reveal about your heart? Where did you find encouragement in the Gospel?

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### YOUR TURN

Name one lesson from the Song you especially want to carry into your relationships. What specific action will help you put it into practice?

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### AT THE END OF THE WEEK

Look back at the boxes you checked. Which action was most helpful? Is there something you want to continue? Remember that your hope does not rest on your success in loving others, but on Christ's unfailing love for you.

## LOOKING AHEAD — THE TEACHER: PROVERBS

We've listened to the Lover teach us to receive God's gift of love. Next we'll listen to the Teacher, who asks how we can live wisely in God's world. The subjects will change, but the foundation remains the same:

**"THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE." — PROVERBS 1:7**