

# Physical Intimacy

## Building a Marriage--part 8

Dec. 6, 2015

### **DAY 1: Developing oneness.**

1. We finish our eight-week series on marriage by taking a look at the sexual relationship.
2. Our Western secular culture has made several gigantic mistakes regarding sex.
  - a. It has treated sex as little more than a physical appetite. When you're hungry for food you eat. When you have a sexual urge, you should have that urge met.
  - b. In the other extreme, it has trivialized sexual desire, especially the sexual desire of men as something "childish" or "selfish."
  - c. A third mistake is to make sexual intercourse something you should do **ONLY** if both of you are "in the mood" or "passionate." If you don't feel like making love, "it's not authentic or meaningful."
3. Instead, the bible puts the sexual relationship as something extremely special, pleasurable, and instrumental in deepening the marital relationship.

*Ephesians 5:31 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and **be united** to his wife, and the two shall become **one flesh**.*

4. In a legal sense, a couple becomes "united" when they are pronounced husband and wife during the marriage ceremony. They will celebrate being "united" in picture form on the first night of their honeymoon.
5. Another phrase is used to make this point even clearer: becoming "one flesh." Becoming "one flesh" is a stunningly clear picture of the wedding night. Two people don't just become one on a marriage license. They also become one in bed!
6. In another sense, being "united" and "becoming one flesh" is a lifelong process. The sexual relationship is meant to celebrate that oneness, and deepen the commitment to oneness.
7. Becoming "one flesh" covers a lot of areas of life. What the sexual relationship is supposed to demonstrate is that "I am uniting with you in every way possible--legally, financially, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. You can count on me to be committed to you in these ways, and to no one else. I have voluntarily given up that freedom to be with anyone else so as to be committed only to you. That's my commitment, and it's illustrated every time we make love."
8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## **DAY 2: Sex as an important means in deepening marital commitment.**

1. Since we have seen that God's design for sex is confined to marriage, we should not be surprised that the sexual relationship plays an important role in deepening the marital relationship.

*1 Corinthians 7:3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.*

*<sup>4</sup> The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.*

*<sup>5</sup> Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

2. These verses point to some vital principles regarding the sexual relationship in marriage!

a. To fully understand these verses, one should remember that two thousand years ago, there was no country in the world that had an egalitarian view of the sexual relationship. For much of the world, the sexual relationship was all about the male. Both the sexual/personal needs of both husband and wife are equally important.

b. Paul prohibits anyone from sexual relationships with anyone but your own spouse. This was a shocking statement to a world used to a double standard when it came to sexual relations.

c. Both husbands and wives have a right to mutually satisfying sexual relations.

d. These verses tell us that the sexual relationship is an important component in deepening commitment in marriage.

e. Minimizing the sexual relationship, or worse, trivializing as something like "icing on a cake" is a major mistake.

3. What strikes you from today's devotional?

### **DAY 3: Giving, more than getting.**

*1 Corinthians 7:3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.*

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*<sup>5</sup> Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

1. Our natural human nature, driven by the ever present "me-first" is going to look at sex as primarily for my benefit and secondarily for my spouse's benefit.

2. It seems that very often one spouse sees the sexual relationship as far more important than the other spouse.

a. The first spouse will deal with resentment if the second spouse primarily views the sexual relationship through his/her own eyes. What needs to happen is to see the sexual relationship through the eyes of your spouse! If your sex drive is not as strong as your partner's, then it is crucial to see the sexual relationship as something you give to your spouse as a gift.

b. But if you are operating from a me-first mentality, you will engage in the sexual relationship only if you are "in the mood," or "feel like it." This is a violation of these verses in Corinthians.

c. Oftentimes, a woman loses interest due to a husband underestimating how crucial emotional closeness is to a woman. It is important for men to remember this principle regarding women:

Emotional closeness precedes sexual closeness.

3. What I am about to say may not be universal, but it is common enough to warrant an observation. It seems that the sex drive in a high majority of men in their twenties and thirties is much higher than women's. It's my opinion that God's design is at work, in at least one important aspect. A higher sex drive in a husband helps "insure" that he keeps moving toward his wife relationally and emotionally. A young wife will need to not scoff or think this is childish or just write this off as "selfish." For a man, the sexual relationship also acts as a "glue" to keep his commitments to his wife. Again, if a wife writes his sex drive as "stupid" she undermines one of the pillars in God's design to help her husband stay faithful to her!

4. What strikes you from today's devotional?

#### **DAY 4: The sexual relationship driven by other-centeredness and humility.**

*Song of Songs 5:10 My lover is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand.*

<sup>11</sup> *His head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven.*

<sup>12</sup> *His eyes are like doves by the water streams, washed in milk, mounted like jewels.*

<sup>13</sup> *His cheeks are like beds of spice yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh.*

<sup>14</sup> *His arms are rods of gold set with chrysolite. His body is like polished ivory decorated with sapphires.*

<sup>15</sup> *His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as its cedars.*

<sup>16</sup> *His mouth is sweetness itself; he is altogether lovely. This is my lover, this my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*

1. Watch movies and TV shows about the sexual relationship and it is usually "dumbed down" to the physicality of it.

2. In stark contrast is the biblical book, The Song of Solomon.

3. The excerpt from Song of Solomon 5 is from the bride on her honeymoon!

4. Do you sense her other-centeredness? Encouragement? Positivity? Her desire to bless her husband, not just physically or sexually, but as a complete person?

5. The sexual relationship doesn't just happen. It takes humility for both men and women. Men must learn that the relational and emotional aspects of the marriage are huge components in building a healthy sexual relationship. If she doesn't feel loved in the kitchen or in the living room, it's foolish to think she should care more about your sexual needs.

6. Likewise ladies, if a husband doesn't feel like you care about his physical and sexual needs, it's foolish to think that he is going to care about your emotional and relational needs. In other words, God is using each of you to shape the other in equally important ways.

7. God seems to use the sexual relationship in marriage to:

a. Deepen the union and commitment of both through the years.

b. Humble us in ways that make us more other-centered than when we began.

c. Turn us from getters to givers, not just sexually, but in the marriage.

## **DAY 5: The wonder of the sexual relationship**

1. Often, the first year of marriage is the most difficult. One reason God's plan is to keep sex for marriage is to help a couple get through the first few difficult years. When sex is new and fresh, it has a powerful effect in overcoming conflict. This reality is driven home by the following law:

*Deuteronomy 24:5 If a man has recently married, he must not be sent to war or have any other duty laid on him. For one year he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married.*

2. A strong sexual relationship is something that must be built. It takes a lot of talking and understanding of how to make the relationship better.

3. Ultimately, our role is to give. The following verse contains three commands regarding sex. The word translated "May" is not the "may" of "I hope this is so." Solomon uses "May" as "this needs to happen." It is a command to follow. We are not to be driven by our emotions, but driven by what is right.

*Proverbs 5:18 May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.*

<sup>19</sup> *A loving doe, a graceful deer-- may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.*

*Song of Songs 1:1 Solomon's Song of Songs.*

<sup>2</sup> *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth-- for your love is more delightful than wine.*

<sup>3</sup> *Pleasing is the fragrance of your perfumes; your name is like perfume poured out. No wonder the maidens love you!*

<sup>4</sup> *Take me away with you--let us hurry! Let the king bring me into his chambers. Friends We rejoice and delight in you; we will praise your love more than wine. Beloved How right they are to adore you!*

4. The sexual relationship is also a metaphor for God's love for His people.

- a. His love for His people is full of passion and delight.
- b. He desires to be with His people.
- c. He desires us to enjoy His presence and our relationship with Him.

5. As we finish this week's devotions, what stands out to you?