

The Master Bedroom: Components of Marital Intimacy

Proverbs 5:15-21

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September 16, 2018

PATH

Being intimate with your spouse involves more than just sex (though it certainly includes that). Intimacy is a sense of caring and affection in which one can be totally vulnerable with someone without the fear of being hurt or misunderstood. The physical/sexual factor should only enhance that. Intimacy is essential if a marriage is going to thrive. Pastor Skip taught four ways to recover components of marital intimacy:

I. Intimacy Begins with *Commitment* (v. 18)

II. Intimacy Grows with *Enjoyment* (v. 18)

III. Intimacy Includes *Allurement* (vv. 15, 19-20)

IV. Intimacy Is Part of *Covenant* (v. 21)

POINTS

Intimacy Begins with *Commitment*

- It may surprise you that the Bible has a lot to say about physical intimacy. Proverbs 5 contains the words of a father who is giving his son *the talk*. Solomon got explicit, sharing the disastrous results of sexual promiscuity and the dangers of immorality.
- In verses 15-21, Solomon shared the delightful results of marital intimacy. The delight abounds: sex is rich, like dark soil, a garden of beauty. It's like a fire, warm and satisfying.
- A smart home will have the master bedroom that's a sanctuary, a place of refuge. The master bedroom has firm boundaries that protect it as the place where a couple reconnects, recalibrates, and gets refreshment.
- Intimacy begins with a commitment, a wife of *youth*. This is a commitment forged as a young adult.
- Research shows that people who enter marriage with the permanence of commitment will be more successful.

Intimacy Grows with *Enjoyment*

- The word *rejoice* is *samach* in Hebrew, which means *to brighten up* or *to cheer up*. Sadly, many marriages are routinely bland, with little joy. But Solomon's point in this verse is that joy should abound in intimacy, because two people are together, and they should enjoy each other.
- A successful marriage is one where a couple continues to bond: leave, cleave, and then weave together as companions, cultivating and maintaining a friendship. A good marriage is one that is worked on. Like a manicured lawn, a marriage must be cultivated.

- Two of the most common tendencies of marriage are men neglecting their wives and women nagging their husbands.
- Often, sexual problems are indicators of deeper issues. If you want to have a good sex life, try tenderness the other twenty-three hours of the day. Patience is also key. Think of this comparison: men are like microwaves (easily aroused and stimulated by sight), and women are like crock pots (needing tenderness).

Intimacy Includes *Allurement*

- Sex was invented by a loving God. As C.S. Lewis said, "Pleasure is God's invention, not the devil's." When God created man and women, he made them naked and not ashamed.
- Note the words *cistern*, *well*, *fountains*, and *streams*. They all deal with water, places of refreshment, symbols of delight and satisfaction. In the Song of Solomon, the husband describes his beloved like this: "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams" (4:15).
- Proverbs 5:19 describes a husband as always being *enraptured* with his wife's love. This is an intoxicating and saturated love: the cup is full, and he drinks deeply.
- Marriage is to be honored and the bed undefiled, enjoyed within its proper boundaries.
- God made every part of the body; we are designed to be sexually stimulated. So what is the purpose of sex?
 - Babies (reproduction: Genesis 1:28 says, "Be fruitful and multiply")
 - Bonding (a bonding of emotions, intellect, and will as the couple gets to know each other)

- Bliss (pleasure; the sexual impulse is God-given, and it must be God-guided)

Intimacy Is Part of *Covenant*

- Note the phrases "be blessed" (v. 18) and "eyes of the LORD" (v. 21). Couples need to bring each other into God's covenant. Bring God into the marriage and keep Him there. You'll have a better marriage, intimacy will be greater, and pleasure will be higher.
- Researchers at Family Life found that Christians generally experience more sexual enjoyment than non-Christians.
- A report found that "sexual satisfaction is related significantly to religious belief. With notable consistency, the greater intensity of a woman's religious convictions, the likelier she is to be highly satisfied with the sexual pleasure of the marriage."ⁱ
- Don't leave God out of the marriage; it's His marriage, too.
- Skip's tips:
 - Leave technology out of the bedroom. A recent study reported cell phone use can undermine romantic relationships.ⁱⁱ
 - Go to bed at the same time. The *Wall Street Journal* reports, "Researchers found spouses who go to bed at different times report significantly less relationship satisfaction than those on the same schedule. They have more conflict, spend less time in shared activities and serious conversation, and have sex less frequently than couples with similar sleeping schedules."ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Give a blessing. The last thing a spouse should hear before going to sleep is a blessing: praise, prayer, or a simple "I love you."

PRACTICE

Connect Up: How can intimacy reflect our relationship with the Lord? For example, various emotions in an intimate relationship correspond to those Christians have with the Lord. Discuss the following: love, care, knowing, trust, honesty, real communication, actively present with each other, and being oneself—open and sincere.

Connect In: Though uncomfortable at times (and considered taboo within some denominations), how can a church help teach and cultivate more intimacy between a husband and wife? One way is, as Pastor Skip demonstrated, teach it from the pulpit. What are other avenues that can strengthen and encourage marriage relationships within the church?

Connect Out: In a day and age where sex is promoted in ungodly ways in our society, how can Christians help people overcome a nonbiblical view of sex, helping people find the Lord and help for sexual addictions?^{iv} What are some of the more prominent sexual addictions (e.g. porn)? Discuss biblical remedies (see 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 7:24-25).^v

ⁱ P.S. Williams, "Christianity & Sex," 1998, http://www.leaderu.com/theology/williams_csex.html, accessed 9/16/18.

ⁱⁱ Baylor Media Communications, "Baylor Study: Cellphones Can Damage Romantic Relationships, Lead to Depression," September 29, 2015, <https://www.baylor.edu/mediacommunications/news.php?action=story&story=161554>, accessed 9/16/18.

ⁱⁱⁱ The *Wall Street Journal*, "Couples on Different Sleep Schedules Can Expect Conflict—and Adapt," September 9, 2014, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/couples-on-different-sleep-schedules-can-expect-conflict-and-adapt-1410217854>, accessed 9/16/18.

^{iv} According to [Medicine.net](http://www.medicinenet.com), "Sexual addiction is a condition that involves the sufferer becoming excessively preoccupied with thoughts or behaviors that give a desired sexual effect."

^v Some suggestions by Ed Young: <https://www.crosswalk.com/family/marriage/overcoming-sexual-addiction-1328796.html>