

# May Your Fountain Be Blessed

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MAY YOUR FOUNTAIN BE BLESSED

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# CONTENT

## Introduction

### Prologue – What is sex?

1. The Consummation - Nightmare or Almost Heaven.
2. Somewhere in Between
3. A Walk Through The Old Testament
4. Song of Songs (Solomon)
5. In Need Of Repair
6. A Walk Through The New Testament
7. Rollercoaster Rides
8. Have Fun Experimenting And Practicing
9. Developmental Phases of Sexuality
10. How Sexual Trauma Effects Sexual Intimacy
11. Living a Twisted Reality
12. Stay Out Of The Gutter
13. Family Planning

### Epilogue – Every Tongue, Tribe and Nation

### Resources

**Please note:** This is a book about marital sexual life and contains detailed descriptions of sexual acts. They are meant to educate as well as to inspire couples who are married and those who are soon to be married.

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## INTRODUCTION

*“His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me”.*

*“My beloved is mine and I am his.”*

Song of Songs (Solomon) 2:6,16

*“Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer— may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love.”*

Proverbs 5:15-19

*“My son, share your love with your wife alone. Drink from her well of pleasure and from no other. Why would you have sex with a stranger or with anyone other than her? Reserve this pleasure for you and her alone and not with another. Your sex life will be blessed. Let her breasts be*

*your satisfaction, intoxicate you at all times. Be continually delighted and ravished with her love!" (Proverbs 5:15-19 TPT)*

This book is our attempt to help couples get a Biblical understanding of God's purpose and intention for their marital sexual life. We also want it to be a very practical guidebook to help you develop healthy and pleasurable sexual habits so that you can actually enjoy your sexual life together.

We are not experts on sexology but share from our own common knowledge and experience. For the last thirty years we have been teaching on sexuality to many young people in different parts of the world. We have also conducted lots of marriage workshops to help couples improve their marital relationship. Wherever we go we ask couples for their questions about sex. Each husband and wife writes them separately and anonymously and so we received hundreds of very personal and private questions. Those questions gave us an insight in how much couples all over the world struggle with their sexual life. We also noticed theological beliefs about sex which have absolutely no Biblical basis.

As God is the creator of our sexuality, we believe these struggles deeply hurt and concern Him. We believe He has called us to shed His light into the sexual darkness of this world. We have written this book with those questions in mind, turning them as much as possible into short stories.

May your love-life be blessed as you read this book and put its content into practice in your marital life!

Paul & Marjolein

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# PROLOGUE

## WHAT IS SEX?

*‘There’s no beauty in sex – the beauty is in people.’*

David Schnarch

With sexuality we mean everything that you feel, think, and do which is related to the physical attraction you have towards a person.

According to Webster’s dictionary:

Essential Meaning of *sexuality*: the sexual habits and desires of a person.

Full Definition of *sexuality*: the quality or state of being sexual<sup>1</sup>:  
a: the condition of having sex b: sexual activity c: expression of sexual receptivity or interest especially when excessive

As Christians we ask ourselves; for which purpose did God invent sex? Why did he make our sexuality as humans different from the animals?

One of the main reasons for the sexual system is of course to be able to multiply. But if that was the only reason, God could have made this a lot simpler, like he did with the animals and the plants. Although the ability to multiply is amazing and miraculous, sex is a lot more than producing children.

Let’s have a look at four more different functions we can see.\*

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1. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sexual>

1. We experience excitement – we can enjoy pleasure and happiness
2. We experience togetherness – becoming one
3. We can talk without using words – communicating love
4. We expose ourselves – affirm one another

### **1) Enjoyment and happiness**

Sex is to enjoy. It is play in which we use all our senses: touch, smell, taste, sight and hearing. Our skin and our entire being is very sensitive. The tension, the touch, the excitement, working towards a climax and the climax itself, gives a tremendous feeling of pleasure. God loves for us to enjoy this. It is how He intended our sexuality to be; to enjoy each other and to be happy together.

### **2) Becoming one**

Sex is something between you and your partner, something you practice just between the two of you. You give each other everything you have. It is something special you share with nobody else; it binds you together. It is supposed to not only satisfy our physical needs, but especially our emotional needs; our need to stay connected and go through life together.

### **3) Communicating love**

Sex is a way of communicating love without words. It is meant to tell each other: “I love you!”, “I am fond of you!” This is the case when you are focused on the other person instead of on your own desires. What does he/she like? How can I please her/him? Can you create enough safety to make the other feel at ease? Do you respect the other person’s boundaries? Sex creates an opportunity to express care, at-

tention, respect and self-control. In other words it is an opportunity to communicate love.

#### **4) Affirming one another**

When having sex, you expose yourself completely, physically as well as emotionally, to the other. In order for both to reach the sexual climax, you must completely surrender yourself. You lose yourself in the company of the other. This makes sex very vulnerable. Can you trust yourself completely to the other? If the other receives you with respect and affirmation, it turns sex into a very satisfying experience. It says to the other, "You are completely ok. With me you can be who you are."

This also makes sexual unfaithfulness so devastating. It tells the other person; 'You are not ok for me.'

Hopefully this book will help you to understand the sexual relationship and to turn it into the most satisfying, unifying, loving and affirming part of your marital relationship.

**\*Based on chapter 4 of the Dutch book "Geloven in Seks" (Believing in Sex)**

# CHAPTER 1

## THE CONSUMMATION

### Honeymoon Nightmare Or Almost Heaven

*‘Someone once said that if you’re going to “give yourself” to your partner like a bouquet of flowers, you should at least first arrange the gift!’*

Author unknown

*“... the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.” Gen 2:21-23*

We are aware that for many people in many societies today, the wedding night is not their first sexual experience. Many people have been sexually abused, and others might have had sexual experiences while dating. Some may have been living together for a while before they decided to get married. Others might have been married and have sadly been divorced or have lost their partner through death. Others may have been or are addicted to pornography. All those experiences

have a strong influence on your sexual identity and how you experience your sexual union. Some of those issues are addressed later on in the book, others require books specially written to address them. It is our hope that no matter which situation you come from, this book will help you in your present situation to grow towards a mutually satisfying sexual relationship in which both husband and wife feel safe, secure and loved!

*‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”*  
(Mark 10:8,9)

These words usually complete a wedding service. At the end of the ceremony, the pastor blesses the couple. After the service there will be a party and that night the couple ‘has’ to consummate their union. Depending on many factors this can either be an almost heavenly experience or a total nightmare. Let’s imagine both extremes and notice the crucial and long-lasting differences. We imagined them as being Adam and Eve in the garden. Having in mind that they could be any newlywed Christian couple anywhere in the world, at any given time or place.

### ***A Honeymoon Nightmare***

*At the end of the day, after God left Adam and Eve to themselves, Adam could not keep his eyes from staring at this beautiful creature. She was so different from him, the more he looked at her, the more he was filled with overwhelming emotions and desires. Strange things started to happen in his body as well. He felt the soft small trunk between his legs swell up and becoming as stiff as a tree. He could not help but touch Eve all over her amazing body. The more he touched her the more obsessed he became, and he just wanted to be inside her. He noticed that where his trunk was erect-*

*ed there was nothing between Eve's legs. He felt a kind of opening there. He pushed Eve down on the grass and while the birds were singing and the sun was setting, he forced himself on her.*

*Eve did not know what was happening to her on her first evening of their new life together. She was scared and resisted Adam, trying to push him away and wanting to run off. But Adam was strong and like he had been taming the animals, he was now teaching his wife how to behave when she was with him. He forced himself into her at which Eve cried out in pain. But once Adam was inside he got more excited and started thrusting his trunk up and down creating more and more excitement in his body. Until at the height of his tension, with a powerful release, some fluid splashed out of him. After this release Adam's trunk shrank and became soft and small again. All his feelings disappeared and he saw his wife looking at him with disgust and resentment. At once he felt rejected and ashamed. He resented his wife, got up and left.*

*Eve was crushed. She hated what had just happened to her. After God had introduced them to each other she had smiled at Adam and saw that he was a handsome man. He was very different from her though and she wondered what kind of being he was? After God had left, she wanted to sit down and talk to him, to ask him about this wonderful world which he seemed to know so well. But instead of sitting down to talk and to enjoy the beautiful sunset together, he got so extremely obsessed with her body that Eve felt she had become a 'thing' to Adam for him to play with. She hated what he had done to her and felt disgusted with him. She resented him even more for leaving her alone and confused.*

*They lived their lives unhappily together, living in two completely different worlds. Once Eve was with child she had a good excuse to keep Adam at a safe distance. She loathed his sexual advances and kept them to the minimum.*

We know that, as sin had not yet entered the world, this is not how it went with Adam and Eve. Their union would have been gentle, mutual and very pleasant. Yet, sadly we know that that is not the story of many newlywed couples. They were looking forward to a wonderful life together but the overwhelming sexual emotions often took over and sadly many women are raped or at least unpleasantly forced on the first night of their marriage.

Let's reset the whole thing and move on to see how this could have been handled very differently. As the Bible does not tell us the intimate details of their union, other than that Adam 'knew' his wife Eve and that she got pregnant from that, all the stories and details are completely imaginary.

### *Almost Heaven*

*At the end of the day, after God left Adam and Eve to themselves, Adam looked into Eve's beautiful eyes and smiled. He was so immensely happy to be with someone who was like him. He took her hand into his own and invited her on a walk through the garden. She gladly accepted, eager to know what his life was all about. Adam told Eve about naming all the animals and the fun he had with himself trying to come up with names according to the specific characteristics of the animal, bird or insect. He enjoyed her reactions and felt proud at her amazement and enthusiastic responses. As they walked along, he also shared about his friendship with God and how he enjoyed his daily walks with him during which they were dreaming together about how they could make this earth even more beautiful. He shared how he heard God talk about 'us', not knowing how it would be to be united with someone and living together as one.*

*They climbed a hilltop and were looking out over the countryside where the sun was beginning to set over the ocean at the horizon. It reminded them of what God spoke to them when He had brought them to each other and after He had blessed them. He had said that together they*

*would rule over this earth, over the animals, the fish in the sea, and the birds in the sky. He had also said that they would multiply and fill this earth with people. (Gen.1:27-28) They had no clue how they would ever manage to do this. At the same time they felt confident that together they could. Eve looked at Adam and felt a sense of awe and pride for this beautiful man who had introduced her to his world. She felt his strength as he handled the stronger animals and she felt his compassion for the weaker animals, not willing to hurt a single one. She had a growing respect for him as he did not feel threatened by her ideas or opinions. 'Wow' he even exclaimed a few times. 'I had never thought of this before. I am so glad that God has brought you into my life. Together we are the best team in the world and we will be able to do what God has asked us to do! Like God has been my helper, giving me wisdom, advice, inspiration and courage, he now has given me you to also be my helper. It is so exciting to be a team and to live and work together as partners!'*

*As the sun was sinking deeper into the ocean, it set the whole sky romantically aflame. Adam looked at Eve, he was captivated by the sparkle in her eyes. As she looked away to adore the splendor of the colors in the sky, his eyes started to scan her face and to explore her amazing body. He was awestruck as he looked at her breasts. She was so different from him! He could not stop himself from gently touching them. As he did he felt the dark spots at the tip of her breast grow and stiffen. Adam went wild inside, like a fire had been ignited in him. Though Eve enjoyed the growing sensation in her body, she was also very hesitant and bewildered at what she felt and did not want Adam to continue touching her this way. She took his hand into her own and gently pressed her body against his. Just holding him in a close embrace felt so good and also good enough. They held each other till the sun had set. Under the light of the moon and the stars they walked a bit down the hill until they found a comfortable place to lay down. Eve was so tired from all the impressions of the day that she soon was sound asleep. Adam could not sleep quickly as his body was still on fire. He would have loved to explore more of Eve. But a small voice inside him had encouraged*



*him to be gentle and to slow down. It had said to him: "If you want to love and enjoy her, take it slow, build a relationship, win her respect and her trust. She will love you for the rest of your life!" Adam recognized this as God's voice and he was happy that he was not alone in this new adventure. While he was slowly drifting away, he silently thanked God for this beautiful gift He had brought into his life.*

*The next morning Eve woke up with rays of sunlight tickling her body and a choir of birds singing their beautiful songs. She noticed that Adam was not beside her. When she sat up she saw he had made a small fire, upon which he was cooking something. As she looked at him, she felt so blessed, not only had he respected her wish not to touch her more but just to hold her, he was also willing to serve her while she was getting the rest she needed. She was filled with a sense of trust and respect. 'Wow, thank you God' she whispered. 'How I love this man!' When Adam noticed that Eve had woken up, he poured some of what he was cooking into two cups and brought it to her. 'What's this?' she asked, as she saw some kind of steaming black fluid in the cup. 'Oh some kind of drink I learned to brew. Just let it cool down a bit. I hope you will enjoy it as much as I do.' He walked back to where he had been cooking and came back with a wooden plate full of all kind of fruits he had collected. They were all kinds of different shapes, colors and tastes. Eve loved them and together they enjoyed eating the fruits he had collected and drinking the drink he had brewed. When they had finished, Eve spontaneously gave him a kiss and put her arm around his shoulder. 'Thank you', she said, 'You are an awesome guy!' 'You're welcome' Adam said, 'I am glad to serve you.'*

*By this time the birds had finished their morning songs, the animals had disappeared among the trees and the sun had warmed their bodies comfortably warm. Adam's eyes glanced again over the beautiful shape of Eve's body. He felt his body ignite and his little trunk was swelling up a bit. Eve noticed this and was fascinated by this strange soft trunk between Adams legs. She had felt it swell up last night when she held him against her. She smiled and looked Adam into his eyes. She saw he was holding*

*himself back from touching her and she felt safe enough to press her lips against his. Adam slowly opened his mouth and they were kissing. Feeling their lips, their breath and their tongues, they tremendously enjoyed each other's excitement. As they were laying down together Adam had started gently massaging Eve's body ... they entered into love-making and fully satisfied each other. Afterwards Eve was so excited that she exclaimed: 'Thank you, God!' 'This is so awesome!' They looked at each other and laughed together. 'Wow,' Adam said 'you are such an incredible amazing person. I love you!' They held each other in their arms and for a while just reminisced the experience they had just shared. 'Now we are truly one flesh!' Adam said. 'Just as God had intended for us.' After a while they got up and washed themselves in a nearby stream. After being refreshed by the cold water Eve asked Adam: 'Can you make me another cup of that black stuff?'*

Sexual encounters are very personal and intimate, each couple will enjoy each other in a different way. Each couple has to find their own way of making love to each other in order to satisfy one another. Throughout this book we will describe different possible ways to do so. Let them inspire you, but do not let them rob you of your own unique way of making love to each other.

Here is a 'conventional' way of making love (having sex) with each other.

When a husband and wife begin to get into their love-making mood and start to touch, kiss and undress each other, the male hormones quickly take over. Once the husband feels his wife's body, especially once the nipples on her breast stiffen, the husband can get wild with desire. His penis will swell up and he is ready to 'dive in.' But the wife warms up slower. She desires her husband, but her body has to warm up and get ready. The husband can slowly massage the wife's body, her buttocks, her back, her face, shoulders and finally her breasts,

stiffening her nipples. If they are lying beside each other, the wife on her back and the husband on his side towards her, he can kiss her on her mouth and with one hand start to massage her from the neck down to the inner part of her legs. (Some women do not like to get massaged. Every wife has to tell her husband what she likes and what she does not like.) After a while he can start to massage her vagina. At the top of the vagina, between the inner 'lips' is the clitoris, which is the most sensitive part of the woman's body, like the head of the penis is to the husband. Massaging the clitoris has to be done very gently and if the vagina is still dry, some moisturizing, like saliva, or a suitable lubricant, has to be applied. Once the wife gets more aroused, the vagina will moisturize itself. The husband can then slowly move in front of her, between her legs and gently insert his erected penis into her vagina and start to thrust it up and down. He can lay down on top of her or remain on his knees. The thrusting has to be done carefully and the wife has to indicate when it is painful and when he has to slow down, or whether she likes him to be more forceful and speed up. Once the husband starts to feel that he is getting close to his climax, he can slow down, and withdraw his penis, and continue to kiss her mouth and breasts, and to stimulate her clitoris with his finger(s) until she reaches her climax or indicates that it is enough. The husband can turn on top again, enter her and thrust himself to a full climax, ejaculating his sperm. After the love-making they can lay down and hold each other for a while, just relaxing and speaking kind words to each other and to God.

### **Male and female differences in physical intimacy\***

Men and women have a different sexual make up, therefore they also approach sexual intimacy from different angles. The man often emphasizes the physical aspect of the sexual intimacy. He focusses on seeing, touching, feeling, experiencing the foreplay and coming to the climax. It is physically exciting, stimulating and satisfying, and for many

men this is the greatest physical pleasure in life. Women, on the other hand, emphasize the emotional aspect of sexual intimacy. She focusses on feeling adored, protected and appreciated, and she enjoys being treated with tender care. When the physical unity is preceded by affirming words and loving interactions, in other words: when she *feels* loved, *then* the sexual experiences become an extension of the emotional experience. Sure, the woman enjoys an orgasm, but this is not a goal in itself for her. Her pleasure arises from the emotional connectedness she feels during the intercourse.

To build sexual intimacy, one needs to understand and respect these differences. The man needs to learn to focus on the woman's emotional need for love, while the woman needs to embrace the physical aspect of sex. When both the man and the woman are consciously working at making sex an act of love and are willing to take time to learn how to give each other pleasure, then they will experience true sexual intimacy. However, if they allow 'nature to run its course' it will result in a frustrating sexual experience.

The most important relationship in a healthy family is without a doubt the relationship between husband and wife. Within this relationship nothing is more important than intimacy. Sexual intimacy is the most physical expression of this intimacy, and the quality of the sexual intimacy highly depends on the intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual intimacy. Such an intimate relationship is not just deeply satisfying for the couple, it also sets an example for the children within the family.

**\*From the book: Five Signs of a Functional Family. © Gary Chapman**

## CHAPTER 2

### SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN

*'A great marriage is made up of two people who consistently put their vows before their feelings.'*

Ngina Atiende

Your first sexual union was most likely somewhere in between the nightmare and this paradise experience. All beginnings are hard, and with something so delicate and personal as our sexual life, it is not a realistic expectation that your first sexual union together will be heavenly. But be encouraged, practice makes perfect. Hopefully this book will give you lots of inspiration to improve your sexual life.

As you might have discovered it is crucial that people have some preparation for their sexual life. This should include understanding of the following:

#### **Menstruation**

A woman's monthly cycle is often consistent, but it can change due to stress. Getting married is for many people a very stressful event. Some women do not menstruate for months, others have a much shorter cycle than usual. Even if the menstrual cycle remains consistent there is a chance that the bleeding period is right at the time of the wedding. This means in most cultures that the couple will have to refrain from sexual intercourse till the bleeding period has stopped. This can be very disappointing but it also takes the stress off the couple of having to per-

form sexually from the very start. Communication is crucial though. It is not nice for the husband to be surprised on the wedding night and to hear when he is undressing; 'Sorry, I am menstruating, we will have to wait a few days.' The couple should talk about this a few days before the wedding so there will be no unmet expectations.

### **The Hymen & Virginity**

The hymen is a thin piece of mucosal tissue (slimy thin skin-like tissue) that surrounds or partially covers the vaginal opening. As far as we know it serves no medical known purpose. This tissue differs in shape and thickness with every woman. It is important to know that some women do not even have a hymen. The hymen is flexible and can be stretched with the first penetration (either sexual or even by inserting a tampon). In which in some cases it can tear and cause slight bleeding. Though less likely the hymen can also be torn by sports like gymnastics, cycling and dancing. You could read more on this on websites like Healthline.com (search hymen).

For those with a hymen covering more of the vaginal opening, the first sexual penetration can be painful and can sometimes lead to a small loss of blood. For most women this is slightly painful, while others feel hardly anything and for some this is painful. Depending upon the amount of pain and the loss of blood this can be the end of your first sexual experience. According to sex educator Emily Nagoski, the blood loss with the first penetration is more likely due to vaginal tearing from lack of lubrication than from damage to the hymen. In other words; when a woman starts to lose blood during her first sexual experience it can very well be that her vagina is tearing a bit because it had not become 'wet' from arousal, but had remain dry because of stress or simply because the man is entering too quickly.

Whatever the reason, if a woman starts bleeding or experience pain during the first intercourse, this is disappointing for both. But it can

also be celebrated as the beginning of your new life together. At the end of the wedding day most people are very tired anyway. Take this with a smile and by all means do use some lubrication. But if it remains painful do not continue with the penetration. Take time to but hold each other and look forward to living your life together. The tenderness and understanding a man shows his wife at this time will mean much to her. It tells her that he loves her more than that he loves to fulfill his own desires. With most women the pain of first intercourse ends the next day. For some it might take a few days.

The pressure on girls to 'prove' their virginity by showing the loss of blood during their first intercourse comes from a passage in Deuteronomy. 22:13-21 In the next chapter we will explain the context and meaning of this passage.

Having a hymen intact, or bleeding during first intercourse, is not an indication of virginity. Some woman have no hymen, while for others the hymen is able to stretch and remain intact. So being a virgin, whether you are a male or a female, is not really a physical thing you or a doctor can establish. It means that you have not given yourself in an intimate way to someone else. This is something only you can know for sure and the other person can only trust you upon your word. A fulfilling sexual life is after all not build on whether someone is a virgin or not, but on Love, Respect, Trust and Understanding.

## **Pain**

For some people the intercourse part can be painful. Because of an unknown cause, their body does not function as it should. This turns their sex-life into a huge disappointment and a painful experience. Other than the breaking of the hymen and sometimes lack of natural lubrication, intercourse should not cause any pain. If one of the partners experiences pain, they should make this known. If the wife's vagina does not naturally lubricate, a lubrication cream can be bought

in a drugstore or large supermarket. Always make sure the cream is suitable for sexual use.

If the pain does not go away, the couple should stop having intercourse and consult a doctor or a specialist, to see what the cause is and what can be done about it. In the meantime they have to be creative in their lovemaking, cherishing and pleasuring one another in different ways. During this time the emotional response of the 'healthy' partner is crucial to the partner who suffers pain. That person might feel very bad about disappointing her/his partner. It is a time of showing that the wellbeing of the other is more important than one's own sexual fulfillment.

### **Malfunction and embarrassment**

Most men dream of having sex and to be the best lover ever. But once they are in bed with their wives for the first time they might be very stressed and insecure. They might be so insecure that they will not be able to get an erection and cannot perform sexually. Of course this is very embarrassing, which leads to shame and increases his insecurity.

It can also be that the wife or the husband is very uncomfortable being naked in front of the other. Adam and Eve were naked and felt no shame (Gen 2:18) but if you have grown up in a culture which hides all nudity, and speaks negatively about the sexual relationship, and especially if there has been very little male-female interaction, it can be very stressful in the beginning to undress and to be naked with one another. You can then maybe not undress in front of each other, but meet each other under the sheets.

With love, patience and gentleness husband and wife can get used to each other and grow in feeling safe and comfortable with each other whether they can perform or not.

It might take a few days, or even weeks, but eventually most people learn to enjoy each other and learn to please the other sexually as well.



Until that time the respect and understanding the husband and wife show to each other will make all the difference.

## Sperm

The orgasm of the man is combined with the ejaculation of the sperm. This is a nice experience but ... for many not such a nice smell. And it is sticky and slimy. If it stays in the vagina this is not so much of a problem of course, but once it leaks out it can be quite uncomfortable to some. This could turn-off people with a sensitive sense of smell or people who dislike slimy stuff. For this reason, it is always good to have some paper tissue or a wet cloth nearby which can be used to hold against the vagina and to clean the penis after intercourse. Or prepare the bed in advance with a large towel. This way both partners can enjoy holding each other after the act and linger in their precious time together.

## Lack of self-control

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 says: *"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to live with your wife in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God ..."*

This talks about the necessity of **learning to live with your wife**. Other translations also use: **Learn to acquire a wife**, or, **learn to control your own body**; in a way that is holy and honorable and not in passionate lust.

Men have to learn to control their sexual desires when they are 'acquiring' a wife, this means in the process of dating and getting to know each other, but also when they live with their own wife. Within marriage sexual self-control is utterly important.

When a man forces his wife to have sex with him when she is not desiring it, he will do a lot of harm to their relationship. Men are sexually very different from women. Basically, most men are always interested in sex, especially when they can see and touch their wife. This is mainly due to their hormonal drive. When boys start to get into puberty their body starts to produce testosterone. Testosterone causes physical changes in puberty, it increases muscle mass, growth of facial, pubic, and body hair, deepening of the voice and is also responsible for sexual and reproductive development. But women are very different. Their body produces two different hormones; estrogen and progesterone, as well as a small amount of testosterone. Estrogen and progesterone are responsible for the menstrual cycle and the ability to become and to remain pregnant. They also have a small amount of testosterone which gives some sexual desire.

Most women need to slowly warm up to a sexual encounter, which requires much more of an emotional connection, than a physical interest.

Of course hormones are not to control our lives. They are an important part of us, but they cannot master us. We learn to control them and to use them for our good and for the benefit of the other person.

### **Pre-ejaculation**

A man can get so excited and aroused by finally seeing and or being able to touch his wife that his sperm ejaculates at the first entry or even before that. This is frustrating and can be highly embarrassing as well. Controlling your sexual muscle takes time and practice. But don't lose courage and remember; 'Only practice makes perfect!' Enjoy practicing. And wives, speak loving words that build your husband up.

Controlling our sexual muscles is an ingredient for a fulfilling sexual life. Without control a man can easily sexually satisfy himself (ejaculate) within two minutes or less. Yet this leaves his wife unsatisfied and

frustrated. Most woman need at least ten to fifteen minutes of sexual interaction and stimulation to come to a climax.

A man must learn to control not only his mind but also his inner muscles and make lovemaking an art towards mutual satisfaction. In order to not ejaculate too soon during love making, a man needs to build up his sexual self-control.

It takes active control of the inner-muscle, or so-called 'Kegel' muscle, also called the pelvic floor muscle. You can locate this muscle by slightly pushing with two fingertips between your legs, right between your front and back opening (between your anus and penis/vagina.) You then try to contract that muscle, without contracting only your anus or 'peeing' muscle.

With any exercise where you need to tighten your 'core' (belly) muscles it is important that you contract your Kegel muscle first and only then your belly muscles.

One way a man can train this muscle during intercourse is by slowing down the active penetration, withdrawing the penis when he feels he comes near to the point of ejaculation, maybe then continue stimulating his wife with his hands. When the urge of ejaculation has gone, he can slowly re-enter and continue until his wife gives the go-ahead for him to ejaculate.

Another way to train this muscle is to interrupt urination by contracting the inner muscle and to trying to hold it. You can start by tightening this muscle for ten seconds, then fifteen, until you can keep it for a whole minute or so.

On the internet as well you can find plenty of Kegel exercise tips. For example at the [mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org) website under the section of premature ejaculation.

The pause-squeeze technique is also a good one to do during your time of sexual communion. This requires the participation and understanding of the wife. Begin sexual activity, including stimulating the penis, until you feel almost ready to ejaculate. Then you or your wife

can squeeze the end of your penis where the head joins the shaft. Keep squeezing for several seconds until the urge to ejaculate passes. Repeat the squeeze process as needed. By repeating as many times as needed, you can reach the point of entering your wife without ejaculating. After some practice, delaying ejaculation might become a habit that no longer requires the pause-squeeze technique.

Our mind is our greatest tool to control ourselves. Increasing your self-talk during lovemaking helps. Say to yourself something like: "I want to become better at satisfying my wife. The more I can please her, the more pleasing it will be for me. Holy Spirit help me to control myself, help me to be at ease and to enjoy our time together." etc.

Sexual control takes time, practice and perseverance. Until this is mastered, it is crucial that the wife responds in a positive and supportive way. If her husband comes too quick (pre-mature ejaculation) and she responds to this negatively or in a demeaning way, then this is very humiliating for the husband. It will increase feelings of inferiority and anxiety, which will only have a further negative effect. Although it is frustrating, a wife could for example also respond like, "It looks like we have to practice again soon." This is the best assurance for a better performance in the future. The husband needs to know that he is loved, even if the sexual performance did not work out as expected.

If the husband pre-maturely ejaculates, he could still continue to caress and stimulate his wife with his hands, if she so desires. Or they could just hold each other and have a meaningful conversation together.

For the woman sex is also way more pleasing if she can control her sexual muscle. The more she has trained her inner muscle, the more she enjoys her own feelings and the more firmly she can 'hold' her husband's penis.

# CHAPTER 3

## A WALK THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT

*‘A real man opens more than a door, he opens  
his Bible.’*

Casey Treat

‘A holy marriage is a good marriage without sex!’ according to some. ‘Sex is sinful’ according to others. Where do we get our ideas and beliefs about sex from?

Our view of sexuality is shaped by many things: By our parents and by the family we were raised in, by the society in which we live, and by our church culture. They all have a significant impact on how we see sexuality, marriage and the role of male and female as well. Our belief system determines every aspect of life. What do we believe God thinks about sex? How do we think He views marriage and the roles of male and female? What does our church teach us (or not teach us) on those subjects? Is that in line with what the Bible teaches? We read many stories of sexual misconduct in the Bible. They are telling us the stories of how things went, which does not mean that God intended things to be that way. We need some wisdom to discover what God’s intentions were. In this chapter we would like to take you on a short walk through the Old Testament and see what we can learn about sexuality.

**Genesis**

1:26-28 *Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that THEY may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created THEM; male and female he created THEM. God blessed THEM and said to THEM, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

From these few verses at the beginning of the Bible we can learn a lot about God's intentions when he created mankind. He created male and female to rule over the earth together! Together male and female are the image of God, both representing different aspects of his nature. He positioned them as equal partners to rule together over the earth. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number." This is a direct blessing/command from God to have sex! He is the creator of the male and of the female body. Sex has come from the mind and imagination of God. This is how he wanted us to multiply. Sex is not a sinful thing. It did not come from Satan. It did not start after man sinned. God gave it as a blessing from the beginning of creation!

2:7 *Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*

2:18 *The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."*

2:21-23 *So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."*

Chapter two gives us some clues about how God had intended man and woman to live and work together. First God created Adam. Unlike God who is plural (let 'us' make), Adam was alone on the face of the earth doing what God had told him to do. When God looked at Adam and when He walked with him in the cool of day (Gen. 3:8) He concluded that this was not good. And He said, "I will make a suitable helper for him." Sadly, through the ages the word helper has been interpreted as servant, and women have been made second-class beings, born to serve men. We don't believe that this is what God had in mind. The word helper does not indicate a lower being or lower place. It is more like David said in Psalm 118:7 "*The Lord is with me; he is my helper.*" Like the Holy Spirit is a helper to us. When Jesus began his ministry on earth the Holy Spirit came upon him like a dove. Just like Jesus and the Holy Spirit were a team to do God's will, a husband and wife are also a team to do God's will. They are equal beings standing beside each other, in equal value, together representing God's image.

This concept of equal standing is very important for a healthy, fulfilling sexual life. One cannot dominate the other. We are created to stand beside each other. That's why God blessed them together. It is a blessing of partnership.

<sup>2:24</sup> *That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.* (See also Matthew 19:5 and Ephesians 5:31)

Marriage is about being united together and becoming one flesh, united in spirit, soul and body. For a husband and wife to become one, it is important that both leave their father and mother. Of course, it says that a man should leave his father and mother but then this is said in an old Jewish culture, where the wife would already have left her family and would have moved in with her husband's family. God is very clear on this. A man should also leave his father and mother.

Leaving though is something very different than forsaking. 1 Timothy 5:4-8 makes it very clear that we have a responsibility to look after our parents when they are in need.

If we cannot leave, we cannot cleave. It is impossible for a woman to give herself to her husband when her husband listens and is more influenced by what his father and mother say, than to her opinions and wishes. Sexual unity will only thrive when a woman knows that she is the most important person in her husband's life- even above his parents. Together as a unit they must find ways to relate well with both of their families.

“..., and they become one flesh.” Ending with a period, not with a comma. This Bible verse, which is repeated by Jesus in Matthew and by the apostle Paul in Ephesians, tells us that being united and becoming one flesh is the reason, or purpose, for marriage. It ends with a period and does not speak about the necessity of producing children. Of course, as humanity we have the Biblical mandate to multiply and fill the earth with people. Children are a blessing from God and most couples long to have children. But in many cultures, there is a lot of stress on the marriage and on the sexual relationship because of the ‘duty’ to reproduce. Even when a couple cannot produce children, their marriage can be very successful. The success of our marriage is determined by whether we live in unity or not. If we are living in disunity, our sexual life will suffer. If we live in unity, our sexual life will blossom. From the way in which God has made the woman's fertility cycle we can learn that there are only a few days in the month a woman can become pregnant (See chapter 13). But there are more days that a woman can have sex without becoming pregnant. From this we can learn that God has given the sexual relationship to humans for two reasons- to multiply and for pleasure. The pleasure stimulates attraction, which leads to unity. Humans are created differently than animals. Animals only have a sexual urge in their mating season. Its sole purpose is to multiply. Humans, especially men, have sexual urges the whole year round. This is



driven by their hormones. God has created and given our hormones so that we long to enjoy sexual life. This should motivate a man to seek unity with his wife so that they can both enjoy a sexual relationship the whole year round.

**2:25** *Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*

They were both naked and felt no shame. This verse speaks of being totally open and transparent. This is physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual openness. Intimacy is being known and being loved for who you are, not having to hide anything of yourself, and accepting yourself and your partner as God has created them to be. This is the ultimate goal of marriage. This includes physical intimacy and being naked together to admire and to appreciate the way God has made us.

**3:16** *To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. **Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.**"*

Sadly, sin came into the world. After Adam and Eve sinned, the whole creation came under a curse, including the relationship between male and female. Because God said that a woman's desire will be for her husband and that he will rule over her, for centuries men have believed that God gave them the duty to rule over their wives. And so it still is today in many parts of the world. Men rule over women, especially over their own wife. It is sad and definitely not a good setting for a fulfilling sexual relationship.

As Christians we believe in the redemption from sin, and in restoration to God's original plan. Physically, the creation is still under a curse. We still die, and women often still give birth in pain. But spiritually we have already been redeemed and set free from the curse of sin and shame and set free from the curse of a man ruling over a woman. Galatians 3:28 makes this very clear: "*There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, **nor is there male and female**, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*" In Christ we can go back to the unity

God intended in Genesis 2:24, ready to become one flesh as equal partners in God's Kingdom.

The birth story of Jesus shows how much value God places on women. God did not even use a man to bring the savior into the world. He chose a woman, Mary, so his Son could be born, to bring salvation to mankind. When Jesus was resurrected from the grave, he also showed himself first to a woman. To Jesus, women are not second-class citizens, but friends (Mary and Martha) and partners in His Kingdom.

<sup>4:1</sup> *Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man."*

Still today in many cultures a woman's value is determined by the simple fact of whether she can bare a son or not—something which is totally beyond her own control. It is even considered a curse to be born as a woman. And the lives of many females are aborted while they are still in the womb, even though God created man and woman as equals so that together they could be his image. *"In His likeness He created them, male and female He created them."* The demand for male offspring creates a lot of stress and anxiety in many women and in many marriages. This stress will have a very negative effect on the sexual relationship as well. God never intended this stress to be there. He wants every person, male or female, to stand up and be proud of who they are. It is good to think about your own cultural values. How has your culture shaped your self-image? What kind of values are you transferring to your own children? To be happy and comfortable with our own sexual identity is the first step towards a healthy and fulfilling sexual relationship. This is to be given to us at birth. If this gift was not given, it requires a 'renewing of our mind' (Romans 12:2) so that we can see ourselves and the other with God's eyes.

22:13-21<sup>3</sup> *If a man takes a wife and, after sleeping with her, **dislikes her and slanders her and gives her a bad name**, saying, “I married this woman, but when I approached her, I did not find proof of her virginity,” then **the young woman’s father and mother shall bring to the town elders at the gate proof that she was a virgin**. Her father will say to the elders, “I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he dislikes her. Now he has slandered her and said, ‘I did not find your daughter to be a virgin.’ But here is the proof of my daughter’s virginity.” **Then her parents shall display the cloth before the elders of the town, and the elders shall take the man and punish him**. They shall fine him a hundred shekel of silver and give them to the young woman’s father, because this man has given an Israelite virgin a bad name. She shall continue to be his wife; he must not divorce her as long as he lives. **If, however, the charge is true and no proof of the young woman’s virginity can be found**, she shall be brought to the door of her father’s house and there the men of her town shall stone her to death. She has done an outrageous thing in Israel by being promiscuous while still in her father’s house. You must purge the evil from among you.*

As already mentioned in chapter 1 ‘providing proof’ of one’s virginity is a big deal in many cultures. Based on this single passage in Deuteronomy there can be a lot of distrust in one’s marriage if the woman did not bleed during their first sexual encounter. Many women might even feel very insecure about themselves. “I did not bleed, am I not a virgin? How come? I know I never had sex before. Have I been raped as a child? What’s wrong with me?”

We know now that some women don’t even have a hymen, and of those who do, most don’t bleed at first intercourse because the hymen was already torn/stretched up because of reasons other than sex. Or the hymen just stretches without tearing. How then should we understand this passage?

First of all, this passage is not about a woman being a virgin or not. As verse 13 clearly states, it is about a man, disliking his newly married

wife, slandering her and giving her a bad name by saying she was not a virgin. This is about the honor of the woman and about the honor of her family. That's why it is the girl's parents who have to act to protect their honor. They have to bring proof of their daughter's virginity, by bringing the 'bloodstained' cloth of their wedding night. This cloth was apparently taken away right after intercourse and given to her parents. If they could produce this proof, the man would be heavily fined. If they could not (or were not willing to) produce this proof, the woman would be stoned to death.

This appears to be very harsh. But the power to produce proof and to protect the honor of the woman and of her family is hereby given into the hands of the woman's parents. Everybody in the Jewish culture of that time also knew that many women did not bleed on their first wedding night. (Koller\*) And everybody also knew how easy it would be to fake this proof by staining the cloth with any kind of blood, just like the brothers of Joseph did with when they wanted to convince their father that Joseph had been eaten by a wild animal. As the parents could easily provide this 'proof' this law is actually not about virginity or about putting a woman to death. It is a warning against men, not to slander their wife or give her and her family a bad name. The men knew that if the woman was in a good relationship with her parents, her parents would stand up and defend their honor. The man stood no chance to win. Hence there is no record of this law ever having been put into practice. This law also gave a woman the protection that if her husband disliked her she could not just be sent away with the excuse that she had deceived him by not telling him that she was not a virgin. Of course this would not provide a happy marriage but it would provide her with social and economic stability.

\*Koller, Aaron. *Sex or Power? The Crime of the Bride in Deuteronomy 22*. Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte (2010:16):279-296. Web.

**Virginity.** In many cultures there is a tremendous stress on the girl to prove her virginity. Strangely enough this is not the case for men.

We believe it is God's original, and still preferred plan that two people marry together as virgins. In this way there can be no sexual diseases (unless inherited from the parents) and there will be no 'others' in their mind to compare their sexual experience with. Sadly a lot of people have lost their virginity long before they got married, either through immoral sexual contact as teenagers or as young adults or through sexual abuse in the forms of rape or incest. This always has negative results and if this is the case it is important that one receives healing from the wounds their past. (Read: *Controlling the River of Love*. Available from [blessedfountain.info](http://blessedfountain.info) – other books and info)

Whatever the reason was, once we get married it is important to be open and honest about our sexual past. So a couple will accept each other with a loving and forgiving attitude. As Jesus embraced us with our past so a husband and a wife should embrace each other with their past. Honesty and openness before we get married is crucial to intimacy. Do we really want to know and understand our partner? If so, we have to take time to explore each other's past. Keeping in mind the story Jesus told about the prodigal son, he had lived a wasteful and unclean life, but once he repented and came back home, the father welcomed and loved him. And we keep in mind how Jesus responded to the woman caught in adultery. Only those who were without sin could throw the first stone. Jesus did not condemn the woman, but said, 'go home and sin no more'. Once we come to Christ and repent from our sins, we receive forgiveness, are washed, sanctified and justified (1 Cor.6:9-11).

So our main concern should not be is he/she a virgin, but has he/she come to Christ with repentance, and is he/she living a life dedicated to Christ? With that person we can become one, no matter how their past has been.

## Proverbs

5:15-19 *Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. **May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer— may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love.***

Or as The Passion Translation puts it in more modern language:

*My son, share your love with your wife alone. Drink from her well of pleasure and from no other. Why would you have sex with a stranger or with anyone other than her? Reserve this pleasure for you and her alone and not with another. **Your sex life will be blessed. Let her breasts be your satisfaction, intoxicate you at all times. Be continually delighted and ravished with her love! (TPT)***

This passage is a warning against adultery. As always, the best defense is a good offense. Proverbs is encouraging this young man to rejoice in the wife of his youth. *‘Let her breast satisfy you always, may you be ever captivated by her love.’* This passage shows us again that God intended the sexual life for pleasure. To be enjoyed! When we pursue unity in our marriage and cultivate our sexual life, it is not only a strong weapon against adultery, it is a strategy for a lifelong fulfilling relationship.

31:10-12 *A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.*

31:28 ***Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:***

Although these verses do not mention the sexual relationship, they are the very foundation of a good sexual relationship. Mutual trust, doing good, showing respect and giving praise. Without the four pillars of a healthy relationship - Love, Respect, Trust, and Understanding -

it is almost impossible to maintain a relationship. Here we see an excellent example of a loving couple: A trustworthy wife who does her husband good, and a husband who stands up for his wife and gives her praise. When these simple things of love and respect disappear from a relationship our sexual relationship will dry up very quickly as well. Expressing praise, respect, gratitude and doing good things for the other person not only does tremendous good to our soul, they feed our sexual appetite as well.

### Song of Songs (Solomon)

We will discuss this book in depth in the next chapter.

## 2 Samuel

13 <sup>1-2</sup>*In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David. Amnon became so obsessed with his sister Tamar that he made himself ill. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her. <sup>6</sup>So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to him, "I would like my sister Tamar to come and make some special bread in my sight, so I may eat from her hand." <sup>11</sup>But when she took it to him to eat, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my sister." <sup>12</sup>"No, my brother!" she said to him. "Don't force me! Such a thing should not be done in Israel! Don't do this wicked thing." <sup>14</sup>But he refused to listen to her, and since he was stronger than she, he raped her. <sup>15</sup>Then Amnon hated her with intense hatred. In fact, he hated her more than he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and get out!" <sup>19</sup>Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornate robe she was wearing. She put her hands on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went. <sup>20</sup>Her brother Absa-*

*lom said to her, "Has that Amnon, your brother, been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother. Don't take this thing to heart." And Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, a desolate woman.*

We live in a world which is incredibly impure and immoral, where lust is worshiped. As Christians we hopefully understand that having sex outside the boundaries of marriage is sinful and destructive. Lust within marriage is also very destructive. There is a big difference between a God-given sexual appetite and a perverted lustful desire. God's idea of sex is that a husband and a wife appreciate and enjoy each other, that the sexual union is like a celebration of each other. Lust on the other hand is a very strong persistent desire to have sex, regardless of the relationship. Lust desires to make someone else a slave to its own desires. Lust turns a person into just a body to have sex with. We read an example of this in the story of Amnon and Tamar. From this story we can learn that lust cannot wait. Lust just wants to gratify its own desire, regardless of what the other person thinks or feels. Lust does not respect the other person's boundaries. Lust easily turns into hatred and rejection. A victim of lust feels used and humiliated. It leads to desolation (loneliness).

If a man allows his sexual desire to turn into lust, and he forces his wife to have sex with him, it will turn his marriage into a hell for his wife and ultimately for himself as well.

Lust grows on uncontrolled fantasy. We can diminish it by controlling our mind and let it be a sexual desire which stimulates us to invest into our relationship. Or we can feed it and let it take control over our mind and actions. Men usually feed lust with their eyes. By looking at women, or pictures or videos of women, they stimulate their sexual desire into lust. Jesus already said, in **Matthew 5:28** *'But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.'* If we want to control lust in our mind, we have to control our eyes. If we keep looking lustfully at women, either real women or pictures in a magazine or on the internet, lust will take



over and we will be sinning against God and against our partner. Job in the Old Testament already discovered the secret to keeping his life free from lust. In **Job 31:1** he said, *'I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.'* Even though Job was a rich man, with many servants and most likely with many slaves at his disposal, he kept his life free from lust and was faithful to God and to his wife.

A man does well to let his sexual desire lead him to Investing in his relationship with his wife. It would be good for all of us to tell ourselves; "It is not about sex, it is about the relationship."

## CHAPTER 4

### SONG OF SONGS (SOLOMON)

***‘If you want your husband to act like a man,  
make him feel like one.’***

From: God's intended intimacy, by Adrian Chua

There are different views on the meaning of the book Song of Songs (Solomon). Some see it as a spiritual book, describing the love between Jesus and His Bride, the Church, while others see it as a romantic book, describing the romance between a man and a woman. It can easily be both. The apostle Paul said in Ephesians 5:31 and 32 *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.”* But Jesus Himself in Matthew 19:5 and Moses in Genesis 2:24 applied it to the marriage relationship alone. In the Jewish culture Song of Songs is seen as a love song describing the romantic attraction between a man and a woman.

Let's see what we can learn from this book concerning the sexual relationship.

1:5,6 (She) ***Dark am I, yet lovely, daughters of Jerusalem, dark like the tents of Kedar, like the tent curtains of Solomon. Do not stare at me because I am dark, because I am darkened by the sun.***

2:1 (She) ***I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.***

In order to enjoy an enduring relationship of love and respect, and to give yourself sexually to someone else, it is crucial that you have a healthy self-image. How do you see yourself? With which words would you describe yourself? Do you respect yourself enough to set boundaries and to say 'no'? Do you see yourself as a gift, worthy to be given? Someone who will enrich somebody else's life? Have you accepted your own weaknesses and shortcomings? Your uniqueness? If so, you will have something to offer to the other person. You will have the strength to give, to please the other, as well as the strength to fight for a healthy relationship.

A sexual relationship requires us to be naked and unashamed. Can you stand naked in front of a mirror and say like David in Psalm 139:14: "Thank you God for creating me. When you made me, you made no mistake. I praise you because you made me beautiful! I know this full well."?

For some people this might be very hard. Especially if you have never been affirmed by your parents, teachers and significant others in your life. Your self-image might be even worse if others have said negative and demeaning things to you. Building up a healthy self-image will take time. You will need to replace all the lies you believe about yourself with God's truth. Starting to meditate on Psalm 139 will be a good start. Read/Pray the Psalm out loud and where-ever David wrote the word 'me', replace it with your own name. Let God speak to you, let Him give you His perspective of how He views you. This is not only about your body, it is also about your personality, your gifts and talents, and about your gender.

The verses 13, 14 and 16 are fundamental things to believe about yourself. Verse 13 says, "*You created my inmost being, You knit me together in my mother's womb.*" We know that children are conceived through the sexual intercourse of their father and mother. And yet, it is God who created this system and who said to Adam and Eve, "*Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth ...*" When God said this, He was

already thinking about you. He created the DNA strings in such a way that from Adam and Eve only completely unique individuals have been knitted together into their mother's wombs. God created you, and he wanted you to be born. He had planned for everyone to be born into a loving family. Sadly, because of sin, because of people's disobedience to God's guidelines for life, many children have been born in very unwanted circumstances, like rape, adultery, prostitution, etc. God did not want these circumstances, but He did want you! He is your creator!

Verse 14 says, *"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."* Do you believe that about yourself? This is not pride or arrogance. Pride says, "I am better, more beautiful than somebody else." That is not what David is saying, He is simply saying, "Thank you God, when you made me, you did a great job." You can practice this by standing in front of a mirror and saying to God, "Thank you for my hair, it is lovely. Thank you for shaping my nose, thank you for the color of my skin, etc. When you made me, you made no mistakes I am beautiful." This might be hard to believe if nobody ever told you this. Keep on saying it, and ask God to help you believe it.

Look at yourself and describe yourself with positive words. Like: "I am a Rose of Sharon", or, "I am like a Lion". The more positive words you can use, the better!

Verse 16 says, *"Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."* This tells us that God has a plan for our lives. We do not believe that God has a pre-worked out book with a script for every day of our lives. There are lots of things in our lives and in this world that happen against God's will. He has given people a free choice. We can sin and disobey God, and others can choose to sin against us. But we believe that God has a plan for each one of us. This makes us valuable and irreplaceable. There is no one on this earth who can replace you. God has dreams about you, and has things prepared for you to do. (Eph. 2:10)

You are not worthless nor good for nothing. You are priceless and irreplaceable.

The more you believe this about yourself, the more you can believe this about others, and especially about your partner in life. Tell them that they are created by God, beautiful and valuable.

You yourself are of course responsible to take good care of yourself and to develop the gifts God has given you. This includes keeping a healthy diet, exercising to stay in shape and to put in effort to develop your skills.

2:6-7 (She) *(I wish) His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me. Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.*

From the beginning of chapter one, it is clear that this beloved and her lover are infatuated (in love) with each other. Both of them burn with desire to be with each other. <sup>1:2</sup>(She) *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,* <sup>1:13</sup>(She) *My lover is to me a sachet of myrrh resting between my breasts.* <sup>1:15</sup>(He) *How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves.*

She longs for him to hold her in a close embrace. *His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me.*

Imagine a man holding a woman like this. Picture them lying down, her on her back and him on his side with his left arm under her head and with his 'free' right arm embracing her. This way it is very easy for a man to touch the breast of the woman and to slide down and start massaging her all over her body, thus stimulating her sexual desire.

But the woman stops here and says: *'Do not awaken love until it so desires!'* Physical closeness combined with sexual desire requires a lot of self-control. Without self-control it can easily ruin and devastate the relationship. Once a couple starts dating and meeting in private places,

it is easy to get physical with each other, and if we are not careful, this can easily lead to sexual intercourse. God has intended this for within the marriage relationship. If we start this before our marriage it can lead to many complications, resulting in physical, emotional and spiritual damage. The woman can become pregnant, which will have multiple complications. The relationship can end, causing a lot of emotional pain. And we could be so focused on sexual feelings that it becomes a binding power of lust. The courtship time is a time to explore the relationship, to see if we want to make a lifetime commitment to this person. It is not a time to explore each other's bodies and to live in lust. There will be strong feelings of attraction and a sexual awakening once we are in love with each other. It is a time of practicing self-control and restraining our desires. If we manage to do so before our marriage, we will also be able to control ourselves during our marriage.

2:16(She) ***My beloved is mine and I am his;***

A wife desires to feel a strong connection. "My husband is mine and I am his!" She longs to feel that she is the most important person in his life - that she is more important than his work or his friends and that he is not in love with another woman (real or digital). If she does not feel connected and does not feel that her husband values her as the most important person in his life, she will not desire to give herself sexually to him. So a man who has no attention for his wife the whole day and who makes everything and everybody in his life more important than his wife, should not expect a romantic adventure in the evening when he comes to bed. On the other hand, if a man is able to show his wife that he loves her and that she means the world to him, it increases his wife's desire to have (even to initiate) a sexual encounter with him.

4:1-15 (He) *How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes ... Your hair ... Your teeth ... Your lips ... your mouth is lovely. Your temples ... Your neck ... Your breasts ... I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense. You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you. Come with me ... my bride, come with ... You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much more pleasing is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your perfume more than any spice! Your lips ... The fragrance of your garments ... You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain. You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water ...*

It is fascinating how this man describes his bride. He gives a very poetic meaning to many of her body parts. Starting from her face, sliding down towards her breasts and then expressing his desire to go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense. He does not mention what this place of myrrh and incense is. But as he is sliding down, it could very well be the place he wants to end up. It is definitely increasing his passionate desire for her. But he ends this portion with, "you are a garden locked up, a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain." He realizes he still has to wait before he can enter her. And yet, because he is voicing his desire in a very romantic way, it increases the desire of his bride to be with him, and to give herself to him.

4:16 (She) *Awake ... come ... Let my lover come into his garden and taste its choice fruits.*

Because he is taking his time to awaken her love and her desire, it increases her desire to let him come in. It is this love play that keeps the romantic flame alive. Lovemaking requires time and effort - no rush nor straight-on attack.

5:2-8 (She) :5,6 *I arose to open for my lover... I opened for my lover, but **my lover had left: he was gone.** My heart sank at his departure...*

This is an unexpected part in the play. It looks like he is teasing her. First he awakens the flame till she is ready to let him come in, and then he disappears. It almost looks like he is playing a game. Maybe from this part in the story, we have the saying: 'Good sex starts at breakfast.' It is not only showing interest in your wife when you are sexually interested in her, but starting in the morning and throughout the day, pleasing her with romantic hints, acts of kindness, and encouraging messages. This way her anticipation increases and she is longing to be with you.

When her friends asks her why she so desperately wants to be with him, she is also able to describe him in great romantic detail:

5:10-16(She) ***My lover is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among thousands.** His head ... his hair ... His eyes ... His cheeks ... His lips ... His arms ... His body is like polished ivory ... His legs ... His appearance ... His mouth is sweetness itself; he is altogether lovely. This is my lover, this my friend.*

They both knew how to paint a pleasing picture of each other by using a lot of symbolic words. This would work for any couple; describing your spouse with as many positive describing words (adjectives) you can think of. Just go from top to bottom and make each other feel special, falling in love with what you say (or write?).

6:1 *Where has your lover gone?*

6:2,3(She) *My lover has gone to ... **I am my lover's and my lover is mine ...***

Although her lover had gone, she did not doubt his love for her. She knew: "I am my lover's and my lover is mine." This kind of trust is fundamental for a good sexual relationship. To know that the other person is faithful to you and that you are the most important person in



their life. "I belong to him, and he belongs to me. Even when we are far away from each other, I know that he (or she) will not run for another, or dive into pornography. But he (or she) is waiting for me!"

6:4-9(He) *You are beautiful, my darling as ..., lovely as ... majestic as. Turn your eyes from me; they overwhelm me. Your hair ... Your teeth ... Your temples ... Sixty queens there may be, ... but my dove, my perfect one, is unique.*

7:1-5(He) *How beautiful your sandalled feet, Your graceful neck ... Your navel ... Your waist ... Your breast ... Your neck ... Your eyes ... Your nose ... Your head ... Your hair ...*

He goes on and on describing her in his detailed poetic language, really taking his time.

7:6-8(He) *How beautiful are you and how pleasing, O love, with your delights! Your statue is like that of the palm, and **your breast like clusters of fruit. I said, "I will climb the palm tree; I will take hold of its fruit."** May your breasts be like clusters of the vine ...*

As easy as he describes her feet, navel and neck, he is not afraid to complement her on her breasts and even to voice his desire to take them into his hands! This increases her response to be with him:

7:10-12(She) *I belong to my lover, and his desire is for me. Come, my lover, let us go to the countryside, let us spend the night in the village. Let us go early to the vineyards, ... **there I will give you my love.***

She is desiring to give him her love. She longs for a quiet, private place, to be away from the city and into the fields. There in privacy she longs to give him her love.

Lovemaking needs a place to be private, away from family and children, in a place where we will not be disturbed nor heard. This might be in our own (locked) bedroom, with maybe some music on so the people on the other side of the walls are not listening in. Wherever, as long as we can enjoy some time being alone together, giving each other our love.

For a more extended read on Song of Songs we recommend Adrian Chua's book, 'God's intended Intimacy'.

## CHAPTER 5

### IN NEED OF REPAIR

*'The reporter was asking the old married couple: You are together for 65 years. What is the secret of your relationship? The old lady said: This is simple. Both of us have been born in the time where broken things used to be repaired not thrown out!'*

Author unknown

*Priscilla and Aquilla's relationship had gone down the drain. After a wonderful start of their marriage, in which they enjoyed each other and had made love often, life had gotten rough. If something went wrong Aquilla would always blame Priscilla and would never take responsibility for his own mistakes. Priscilla had taken her own confidence and made her own decisions without consulting Aquilla. Their children were not on speaking terms with each other and had left the house at a young age. Aquilla was usually out of the house to work, making tents. The hard labor to get enough bread on the table had worn him out. On top of that Priscilla had started her own business and was making more money than him. She used this power to belittle Aquilla. It had been years now since they had had anything of a romantic encounter between them. The few times they had sex was a very quick thing, where Aquilla would almost force himself into her, quickly relieved himself and leave Priscilla even more frustrated*

*and unsatisfied. She resented the thought of even allowing him to get close to her. She often remembered the harsh angry words he had yelled at her, and still felt the bruises of his last lashing out. Though they still slept in the same bed, they did not have any meaningful conversation. Aquilla also resented Priscilla. Her lack of respect for him, made him despise her. He felt betrayed that she took advice from others, but was always correcting him, and telling him what to do. He was bitter towards her because she never wanted him to be close to her and have sex with him. He worked hard, but it was never enough. She always compared him with people who were doing much better. It made him feel so inferior and worthless that he would burst out in anger, shout all kinds of bad words to her and sometimes even beat her. After an outburst he would take long silent retreats for days on end. They both felt stuck and trapped in their marriage. To the outside world, at work and in the church, things looked pretty normal. But in the house and especially in bed, it was a totally different story. They wanted to do good, to love one another and to honor God in their lives, but somehow they were unable to step out of this downward spiral of destructive behavior.*

*One day a stranger, Barnabas, came to their house. He soon noticed the deafening silence between them and knew things were in dire straits. Instead of talking about the weather, he looked both of them into the eye and asked them about their marriage. Aquilla said they were doing well, and asked Barnabas if he was married. Barnabas did not reply, but just looked into his eyes. Priscilla said nothing. She was afraid that her husband would lash out at her after the stranger left if she said anything that would dishonor him in the eyes of this man.*

*The silence grew worse and Aquilla grew redder and redder. He finally admitted, 'No, our marriage is not doing well at all. We resent each other and I hate my life. I can't stand the way my wife treats me.' Priscilla wanted to say something but kept quiet. Barnabas commended Aquilla and*

said, 'Thank you for being honest with me.' He asked them, 'Would you allow me to help you?' They both nodded. They started talking about all the hurts and disappointments and how much they resented each other. After a while Barnabas said, 'I hear that you both have hurt and sinned against each other. Let's not talk about who started and who is more wrong than the other. I wonder if both of you would be willing to apologize to the other person and ask if the other would be willing to forgive you?' They both nodded in agreement, but both grew silent, waiting for the other person to start. While he was silently waiting Aquilla was praying, 'God if she asks me to forgive her, help me not to respond in anger but to say that I forgive her.' But then the words of an Apostle that were read from a letter in the church last Sunday came to Aquilla's mind, "in humility consider the other better than yourself. ... Your attitude should be that of Christ Jesus ... who made himself nothing ..." He realized that God wanted him to become more like Jesus in his marriage and to lay down his pride. He finally opened his mouth and although it was very hard for him, with tears in his eyes he said to Priscilla, 'I am very sorry for all the hurt I have caused you. It was wrong of me to lash out in anger to you and to beat you. And I am sorry that I have not given you the love you need. I have been far from the husband God wants me to be. Will you please forgive me?' Priscilla cried and responded, 'Yes, I forgive you! I also am very sorry for all the mean things I have said to you, for not giving you the respect you need. That I have belittled you and did not believe in you. Will you please forgive me?' To which Aquilla responded, 'Yes, I forgive you! I hope we can start over again!' Barnabas smiled and asked them if he could pray for them? They gladly agreed, he laid his hands on their heads and blessed them. 'Father God, you have heard their confession and their plea for forgiveness. Thank you that the blood of Jesus also cleanses them from all their sins. I pray that you fill them with your Holy Spirit, that you give them the strength to leave the past behind and to do things very different from now on. Will you inspire them to love and to respect one another. In Jesus name.' They all said a loud 'Amen!' and breathed a deep sigh of relieve.

*'Well', Barnabas said, while it is still light outside, why don't you go for a little walk together? I have heard that both of you have really hurt one another with your tongue. I don't know if you have ever read the old proverb which says, "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit." (Proverbs 18:1) Both of you have spoken a lot of death into your marriage. Now it is time to practice speaking life into each other and into your marriage. As you go on your walk I would like each of you to speak at least five positive things about the other. Think about the past and think of things you want to thank the other person for. They said goodbye to each other and Barnabas left, looking forward to meeting them again in a few months' time.*

*Aquilla and Priscilla set out on their walk, first through the neighborhood and then out into the fields. First Priscilla thanked Aquilla that he had kept working hard for them in spite of her humiliating words. Although it was not easy for him, Aquilla thanked her that she had started her business so that they could pay the bills and even had been able to improve their house. As they kept going, Aquilla took Priscilla's hand and held it in his. Priscilla's heartbeat went up and she wanted to pull her hand away, but then she relaxed and allowed him to hold her hand. They walked in silence for a while, enjoying the change of atmosphere and feeling each other's warmth. The compliments did Priscilla good. They were melting away her resentment. That evening when they went to bed, for the first time in a very long while they both slept in peace.*

*The next day they got up early as both had a lot of work to do. Before they left the house they took a short time to pray together and to bless each other. They held hands and gave each other a kiss. A few days later Aquilla finished his work earlier than Priscilla. Instead of waiting in the house for Priscilla to come home to make dinner, Aquilla started to make the preparations for the meal. When Priscilla came home, she was pleasantly surprised and couldn't believe he had started preparing the meal. 'Can you*

*teach me to cook?’ Aquilla asked? ‘I would like to prepare the meal at least one day a week.’ As Priscilla was teaching him they cooked the meal together.*

*Later in the evening they looked at each other uncomfortably. How to start over again? Aquilla cleared his throat and broke the ice. ‘Well’ he said, ‘we have never talked about our love life. I really enjoyed it in the beginning but I know that I have hurt you in the last couple of years. I am very sorry about that. I wonder how we can do this differently. How can we enjoy each other again?’ Priscilla felt very uncomfortable talking about this, but now Aquilla brought it up she welcomed the opportunity to have a say in how things would go from now on. She also knew that her husband’s desire was always there and that she had no reason to refuse him anymore. They wanted to make a new start and this was an important part of it. She suggested that they were going to give it a try tonight and then would keep talking about it. Aquilla smiled in relief. ‘Thank you,’ he said, ‘I am going to have a shower.’*

*While he was having a shower, Priscilla was getting in the mood and made the bedroom nice and lit a few candles to create a nice atmosphere. She showered after Aquilla and while she showered Aquilla went out into the garden and picked some wild flowers, put them in a small glass and placed them next to the bed. He also sprinkled some of her favorite perfume on the bed. When Priscilla came into the bedroom she was delighted to see and smell. They were both dressed in their nightclothes and Aquilla looked at her in anticipation.*

*‘Before we continue’ Priscilla said, ‘I would actually love to take bread and juice of the vine and pray together.’ Aquilla was a bit taken aback, he was getting aroused and now she wanted to hold some kind of a church service? ‘Well ... uhm ... ok.’ He said. He went to the kitchen and poured a cup of red juice from the vine, took a piece of bread and placed them on a plate. He came back to the bedroom and they both sat on the floor. ‘Why do you want to do this now?’ he asked. ‘I think it would help me to leave the past behind and I want God to be part of our sex life as well,’ she responded. ‘I*

*see,' said Aquilla. 'Well, He is the one who created us this way, so I guess He knows how to help us in this area as well.' He took the piece of bread and the cup into his hands, held it up and started to pray. 'Lord Jesus, I thank You that You have sacrificed Your body on the cross for our sins. That Your hands and feet were pierced, that Your back was whipped open, and Your head was crowned with thorns, that You died for us, as a sacrifice for our sins, to take away our transgressions. Thank You that Your blood has been poured out to cleanse us from all our sins. Thank You that there is healing in Your sacrifice, also for our sexual life. (Isaiah 53:5) You have invited us to eat Your body and to drink Your blood so that we will remain in You and You in us. (John 6:56) As You have forgiven us and remember our sins no more (Psalm 102:8-12) we also forgive each other our sins and will not hold them against each other any longer. (Matthew 6:12)' After giving thanks, he put the cup back on the plate and broke a piece of the bread. He gave the bread to Priscilla and said, 'This is the body of Christ Jesus, broken for you.' She received it from him, put it aside and also broke of a piece of the bread and gave it to him saying, 'This is the body of Christ Jesus, broken for you.' They looked each other into the eyes and slowly ate the bread, not remembering the past, but rejoicing in forgiveness- seeing Jesus on the cross. After that, Aquilla took the cup and gave it to Priscilla saying, 'This is the blood of Jesus poured out for you.' She took a sip, remembering and imagining the blood of Jesus cleansing her whole body and soul, seeing herself in an embrace with God the Father. After taking it in, she gave the cup to Aquilla, saying, 'This is the blood of Jesus poured out for you.' Aquilla trembled as he took the cup. He thought of the beatings he had given his wife here in this room and how he repeatedly had forced her against her will. He cried and said again, 'I am so sorry for hurting you.' Jesus has forgiven you, and so have I,' Priscilla lovingly responded. Aquilla took a sip from the cup, and felt it fill his whole body. He imagined the blood of Jesus filling him and cleansing him, it even cleansed his conscience, (Hebr. 9:14) and he felt free. 'Thank you Jesus!' He exclaimed. They put the cup and plate aside and embraced each other. While they were holding each other*



*they continued to pray together for a while, praising God and praying for each other. Aquilla finished with praying God's blessing over their sex life. 'Father God,' he prayed, 'I thank you for Priscilla my wife. Thank you for the gift she is to me. Thank you that I can share my life with her. I want to be the best husband I can be for her. I also thank you for the gift of our bodies. You have made us male and female. Thank you for the beautiful body that you have given Priscilla. I love her and she excites me. Father, I pray that you will teach us through the Holy Spirit how we can please each other. I do not want to use her as a thing to satisfy myself. Please help us to satisfy each other. I pray that we can keep our marriage strong so that we can be a shining light of your love. In Jesus name we ask.'*

*With an 'Amen' they rolled into bed and started kissing. The candles were still burning, lightening up the room. Aquilla took off his clothes and was laying on the bed. Priscilla stood up again and was slowly undressing. Aquilla enjoyed seeing his wife undress in front of him. It had been a long time since she had allowed him to see her undress. Seeing her breasts and the form of her naked body made him groan with desire. She smiled and was so happy with the anticipation to give him pleasure, she shook her breast and was teasing him by not coming in bed yet. Instead she started to slowly fold her night clothes and put them neatly on a chair. Aquilla actually loved to see her do this and relaxed on the bed. Then Priscilla crawled on the bed and went to sit on top of Aquilla's belly and started to kiss him. They enjoyed an exciting time together and fully satisfied each other. Afterwards they lay in each other's arms and relaxed. They were both thrilled with this experience, and more importantly, with the whole turn around in their marriage. To her surprise, Priscilla heard Aquilla pray. 'Thank you God for this wonderful experience. You are such an awesome loving God! Thank you for restoring the passion in our marriage.' He then opened his eyes and said to Priscilla, 'And thank you for being such a thrilling and exciting woman.' She smiled and said, 'I am at your service. Thank you for pleasing me!'*

Sexual encounters don't have to be the same every time. There are many different positions both husband and wife can take. For example:

The wife can sit on top. This exposes her breast to her husband just above his face. The husband can start massaging his wife from her legs, to her buttocks, to her waist, from her back to her neck, to her face, back to her shoulders, her upper arms and slowly to her breasts and stiffening her nipples. Once the wife is fully aroused and her vagina is moisturized she can then hold up his penis, raise herself up a bit and slowly move her body down and letting his penis slide in. By continuing to move her body up and down she can bring her husband to a climax. As this might go very fast, the husband may have to signal his wife to stop moving. The wife can roll off and lay beside her husband so that he can bring her to a climax by stimulating her clitoris with his finger(s), maybe suck on her nipples or kiss her on the mouth, while continuing to stimulate her clitoris and so bring her to a climax. After enjoying her climax and taking a bit of time, the wife could sit on top of her husband again and bring him to a climax.

## Chapter 6

# A WALK THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT

*‘Your marriage is a test of your devotion to Christ.’*

From ‘Love & Respect’ by Emerson Eggerichs

### 1 Corinthians

*7:3-6 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. Do not deprive each other except perhaps 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. I say this as a concession, not as a command.*

The apostle Paul gives a very important concession here. Of course this needed not to be written to the couple in Song of Songs, but apparently there were couples in the Corinthian church that were withholding sex from each other. Paul makes it clear to them that when they married each other they also committed their bodies to each other. You are not your own anymore, but you belong to your spouse. Every couple will have times and seasons where one of them will not be interested in having sex. Maybe because they are angry with each other, or disappointed in each other, maybe because they are just too tired from the demands of daily life. Especially mothers with young children can be

exhausted by the demands of motherhood and cannot stand the idea of having to engage in sex at the end of the day.

Yet, Paul, is suggesting here that we should not deprive the other person. This is a difficult dilemma. How can you give yourself sexually when you are angry, or feel unloved, or are just too tired? Every situation is different of course. Let's look at a few.

If you are very angry or deeply offended because you are hurt by the offense of you partner, you will have to first sit down and sort this out. Hopefully both partners will take Philippians 2:1-11 to mind. To consider the other better than yourself, and to take on the attitude of Jesus-to be humble and to ask your wife or husband for forgiveness. Say that you are sorry and that you want to work on restoring your relationship. This takes time. This cannot be done in an attitude of: 'I told you I am sorry, I asked you to forgive me, now it is ok and you should be willing to have sex with me.' No. A sexual relationship cannot be forced nor manipulated. Always keep telling yourself. 'It is about the relationship, not about sex!' If you would like to enjoy sex, then keep the focus on improving your relationship.

What if you feel unloved, or not respected? In general women need to feel loved in order to desire a sexual relationship and men need to feel respected in order to perform sexually. It will be good to sit down together once in a while and talk about your emotional needs. The husband can ask his wife: 'How can I make you feel more loved?' and the wife can ask her husband: 'How can I make you feel more respected?' If we are locked in a downward spiral of not giving love because we don't feel respected, and not giving respect because we don't feel loved, our relationship will go from bad to worse. It is a downward spiral. When a woman refuses to engage sexually because she is not feeling loved, a

man will feel disrespected because his wife refuses him and it will be much harder for him to show love. Sometimes it is good to break the cycle by committing to a sexual encounter and then talk about how you can improve your relationship. Other times it is needed to sit down and talk first and then finish by committing sexually to each other.

The book 'Love and Respect' by Emmerson Eggerichs is a very good read on this topic.

What if you are just too tired and exhausted from the demands of daily life? This is the case for many couples where both are working full-time jobs to make ends meet and especially for couples with young children. But we cannot refuse sex till the children leave home or till you retire from work. Something has to change. Husband and wife will have to sit down and discuss together what improvements they can make. Maybe the husband can take over some household chores and share the workload? Maybe a sport, a hobby, or a church activity will have to be put on hold for a while? As husband and wife we have made a promise in front of God, family and church members, that we will love and cherish one another. We have made this promise to no one else except our husband or wife. We have to keep this promise and look after each other. You could plan a date night together and ask someone to babysit your children at their house. Be creative, talk together, pray together and ask God to help you to manage your life so that you can be faithful to your commitment to each other.

13:1-8 *If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I*

*may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*

A sexual relationship thrives on love. Not on just a romantic feeling, but the daily experience that you are loved by the other person. To experience that that person is patient and kind, not proud, that he or she does not dishonor you and is not self-seeking, not easily angered and does not keep a record of your wrongs.

Some people do all kinds of ‘spiritual’ work in the church. They preach, prophecy, evangelize and counsel many people. They might do this very successfully, but true spiritual life is practiced at home. At home we have the ability to practice the fruits of the spirit. Love, joy, peace, forbearance (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23) If we practice these in the home, it creates the spiritual and emotional atmosphere in which a sexual relationship can blossom.

## Ephesians

5:22-33 *Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—for we*

*are members of his body. "For this reason a man will **leave** his father and mother and **be united** to his wife, and the two **will become one flesh**." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

Ephesians chapter 5:31 gives us the foundations for a fulfilling sexual life.

1. **To leave** (your parents)
2. To be united (**To cleave**)
3. **To become one flesh**.

If the first two steps are not done well and if they are not being maintained, the sexual oneness will suffer.

First of all we have to leave our parents. See for this the part on Genesis 2:24 in chapter 3.

The cleaving part, to be united, starts with the wedding, where a man and a woman become husband and wife. But the wedding of course does not guarantee a bonding unity between two very different souls. To cleave, to become one, requires hard work. The apostle Paul gives a very challenging framework, within both husband and wife will be challenged. He is asking a woman to submit to her husband as to the Lord. This is a sacrificial commitment in which you say, 'not my will be done, but yours'. For centuries this has been the whole summary of Ephesians 5. And in the name of God, women have been made second class citizens, servants to their husband's selfish desires. But that is far from what Paul is saying here. He continues asking the husband to love his wife, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her. Christ loved the church by dying for us on the cross. Paul is asking husbands to sacrifice their lives for their wives. So he is actually asking both the husband and the wife to sacrifice their own life for the other person, not living for your own interest but in humility considering the other more important than yourself (Phil. 2:3 and 4). Paul finishes this portion off by saying that a husband must love his wife as he loves himself

and that a wife should respect her husband. When we cleave to each other in this attitude of sacrificial loving and submitting, showing love and respect, the sexual unity will be the icing on the cake of a loving relationship.

## Colossians

*3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*

Sexual immorality, impurity and lust are very damaging to one's sexual life.

See the part on lust in Chapter 3 - 2 Samuel 13:1-21

## 1 Thessalonians

*4:3-5 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God;*

See the part in chapter 2 on lack of self-control.

## 1 Peter

*3:1-7 Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. Like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daugh-*



*ters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and **treat them with respect** as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.'*

This passage shows us some more keys to a fulfilling sexual life. First Peter addresses the attitudes of the wife. As she is created to be the helper of the husband, to work together bringing God's Kingdom on earth, she might be more able, more intelligent, etc. Because of this she might be tempted to tell her husband what to do (to rule over him) but this will only have the opposite effect. They will both be very frustrated. They have to learn to be a team living a sacrificial life for each other. A woman might be tempted to make herself more beautiful and more attractive with all kinds of outward things but mutual sexual satisfaction does not come from the way someone looks. Deep fulfillment comes from being loved and feeling respected. Of course there is beauty in all kinds of outward things, as we read in Song of Songs. And a woman who respects herself will keep herself beautiful and attractive. But the real beauty comes from within, from your inner self, as Peter says. It comes from unfading beauty and a gentle and quiet spirit. This of course does not mean that women cannot be temperamentful and passionate. Every personality has its own beauty and attractiveness. But it is the attitude in our marriage that counts. 'Am I here to serve and love my husband, or to dominate him and to force him to do what I want him to do?' If a woman has the attitude of serving and loving her husband, without losing her own personality and beauty, her husband will be thrilled with her and he will be sexually attracted to her.

Peter then addresses the husbands. He tells them to be considerate as they live with their wives and treat them with respect as a partner in the gracious gift of life. So that ... nothing will hinder their prayers. This is quite an amazing thing to say for Peter at that time and age. If a husband does not treat his wife with respect and as a partner, God will not listen to his prayers. It's like God is saying if you cannot take proper care

of the woman you have been joined together with, I am not interested in anything else you have to say. That makes the opposite also true. If a man does treat his wife respectfully as a partner, God will be on his side and He will listen to his prayers. Respecting your wife and seeing her as a partner in life will not only have spiritually blessings, it will also bless your sexual life. Because it will cause your wife to be willing to look after your sexual interests as well. It will turn her heart towards you.

## Chapter 7

# ROLLERCOASTER RIDES

***‘Marriage is not 50-50.***

***Divorce is 50-50.***

***Marriage has to be 100-100.***

***It isn’t dividing everything in half,  
but giving everything you’ve got!’***

Dave Willis

*Although they made a good new start, things did not always go that easy for Aquilla and Priscilla. They both were working hard to make a reasonable living, their children and their elderly parents needed their attention and on top of that they had more and more responsibilities in the church. Often at the end of the day they rolled into bed dead tired, and fell asleep straight away. Though their life had meaning as they were serving God together and they were now supportive of one another, their passion started to fade. Aquilla often desired to have sex in the evening before going to sleep. But Priscilla was just too tired and her mind was far from having sex. It was wonderful on the rare occasion when they had a day off. Priscilla would sleep in, and Aquilla would make them a nice breakfast. They would enjoy eating the breakfast in bed and then took time to make love to each other. But those occasions were maybe once a month or even once in every two months. For Priscilla this was fine but she knew her husband had his physical desires and wouldn’t mind doing it every day. She did not want to disappoint him all the time, so sometimes she consented*

*to his desires. Aquilla felt awkward though, and, did not really enjoy it. It reminded him of the times that he forced himself upon his wife. He did not want to use her to satisfy himself. But still he had persistent sexual desires and longed to make love to his wife. He channeled this desire to be nice to her. He cooked at least ones a week and often did part of the household chores, even though this was considered to be purely a woman's job in his culture. He did not care what the neighbors thought about this, he just kept asking himself, 'What would Jesus do now?' His Master was a Servant, and Aquilla desired to become more and more like Him. Doing household chores became a pleasure to him, not because he liked it, but because he was doing it to serve his wife with an attitude of becoming more like Jesus. He knew Priscilla really appreciated this change in their marriage, but somehow it still did not make her want or desire to have sex with him every time he wanted.*

*When she tried and consented to him, Priscilla often had the mindset of, 'Ok, if you really want this, go ahead, but you have to arouse me and do your best.' To Aquilla this was an impossible task. He felt each time like he had to resurrect a dead horse. Although he got some relief, and although Priscilla also enjoyed it after a while, it was not satisfying to both of them and their sex life became a bit of a drag. They both wanted this to be different and to have a much more passionate life.*

*In their search for change they ended up in a marriage workshop. The weekend away did them good, they had lots of inspiring input and plenty of time to process and to talk in depth about all kinds of issues. They even made love twice that weekend and really enjoyed being together. There was also a discussion with question and answer time about sex. During this time they learned that for many couples their sex life suffers under the pressure of work, children, family, friends, sport, hobbies and church activities. One woman was frankly sharing that their sex life really changed when she started using the best sexual tool she could find. Everybody thought she was talking about some kind of sex toy! But it appeared she was talking about her mind. She shared that our mind is strongest sexual organ. It*

*determines whether we enjoy our sexual life or not. If we leave it to our husbands to try to arouse us while we keep our minds switched off, it is not going to work. When we do decide to have sex, we have to switch on our mind and say to ourselves, 'I am going to enjoy this and I am going to give my husband a great time.' The greatest arousal in ourselves comes from our own mind. If our mind wants to enjoy this, our body starts to respond. Your husband will feel this change in you, which will also arouse him more, and he will enjoy pleasing you!*

*Besides this, they also learned that if they want to take their sexual life seriously, they would have to make a plan to make it work. Planning your sex life sounded very boring and unromantic. They couldn't imagine taking out their agenda and scheduling Bible study on Wednesday evening and sex on Thursday evening from 9.15 to 10.00 PM. But failing to plan is planning to fail. It is just like planning your next date night. Sit down and make a plan. When are we going to plan an evening together, shall we get a babysitter and go out to a restaurant?*

*Plan an evening together which includes a sexual encounter, but don't make it boring. Invest in your marriage and you will see that it will be more than worthwhile, it will keep the passion alive and the flame burning!*

*Aquilla and Priscilla took these new advices to heart. They started planning a monthly date night which they both enjoyed. Those days they both scheduled less work and no other appointments. If friends or family called to see if they could come by, they kindly declined saying they could not be available that evening. In order not to offend them, they straight-away made an appointment with them to come by on another day. Sometimes they went to a restaurant to eat, other times they went for a walk together and then had a candle light dinner at home, often finishing the evening off with a time of love making.*

*Though they enjoyed this, for Aquilla this was not quite enough yet. But Priscilla had also taken the other advice to mind. Now when Aquilla would try to raise her interest after they hadn't had sex for a week or two,*

*she tried to respond as positively as possible. Taking in mind the advice of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 7 that her body did not belong to herself anymore but to her husband, she would consent more often. She not only consented, but decided to use her mind and to enjoy it. It was not that she felt like a slave. Aquilla had become much more loving and he did not demand sex from her, but when Priscilla felt his desire, she wanted to please him because she loved him and felt loved by him.*

*In the end they agreed together to have sex within seven days after the last time. Not as a fixed rule, but as their goal, to see how this would work out for them.*

*Sometimes, though, there was just not much time and they would have a long day ahead the next day, but also the day after that and the day after that. Postponing would not always be a good option. She would then lovingly look into his eyes and would say something like, 'Just go ahead, I will enjoy a quick ride. How can I please you?' After their 'quickie' they would hold each other for a while, pray together and fall asleep.*

Some suggestions for a 'quickie' would be:

-The couple can have sex in a conventional way but without all the foreplay. The husband not trying to make it last as long as he can, but rather come quickly.

-Wife could be on her knees, resting with her head on the bed, while the husband penetrates her vagina from behind her.

At all times the husband (or the wife) should make sure to moisturize the vagina with some salvia or a suitable lubricant.

To avoid the wife having to wash herself afterwards, a condom could be used, or the husband can withdraw just before ejaculating and ejaculate into a tissue or small towel.

-The wife could satisfy her husband by stimulating him with her hand or any way she feels comfortable.

It also could be that the wife has a higher need for a sexual encounter than the husband. This would be more complicated for a 'quickie' as it will require more active involvement of the husband. Having sex with a 'flaccid' (non-erected) penis will not work. The husband would have to consent and let his wife go her way with him, to arouse him, and to bring herself to an orgasm.

-She could start arousing him with her hand or mouth. Once his penis is erected she could sit on top of him, move his penis inside and move up and down. To stimulate herself more she could also massage her clitoris with her own hand. The husband would have to control himself, though, from ejaculating too soon. He can signal to his wife to have her stop moving up and down so he or she can stimulate her clitoris and have her enjoy coming to an orgasm.

-The husband can also please his wife by bringing her to an orgasm by stimulating her clitoris with his finger(s), or with his tongue.

## Chapter 8

# HAVE FUN EXPERIMENTING AND PRACTICING

*‘Sex with one wife for Life ISN’T like playing the same record over & over again but learning to play one instrument well for years of beautiful music!’*

Rick Warren

Like everything else our sexual life needs to be approached with humor and lots of practicing.

In order for a couple to grow in their love-making it is essential that they learn to talk together about their sexual needs, feelings, wishes and dreams and that they evaluate their sex life together. For most couples this is not so easy. Here are a few questions every couple can use to start talking about their sexual life. It works best if one partner answers the first question first. After this the other person then also answers the same question. The next question they can switch around and the other partner answers first, continuing to alternate until you have gone through all the questions.

1. My favorite memory of sex with you is ...
2. The best moment for sex I think is ...
3. My arousal immediately disappears when ...
4. You can pamper me physically by ...



5. What I think is really beautiful about you is ...
6. What sometimes bothers me during sex is ...
7. What I really appreciate about our sex life is ...
8. What I think would really give our sexual life a boost is ...
9. If I sometimes worry about our sex life it is about ...
10. What you could say or do, or not say or not do during our love-making, in order to improve things is ...
11. What sexually arouses me is ...
12. My biggest wish for our sexual life is ...

The foundation of our sex life is our emotional intimacy together. Without love, trust, respect and understanding our sexual life will be meaningless and frustrating. The stronger we make those four pillars, the more we grow in enhancing our physical relationship. Sex is physical and our whole body is loaded with millions of sensitive sensors. Every nerve, muscle and all our senses—touch, smell, sight, hearing, taste and our imagination—play a part in our love making. Every person is totally unique in what they like or dislike, what arouses them and what turns them off. That's why you can never learn from a book how to satisfy your partner. There is no ABC that works for everybody. Only by experimenting and by practicing can you find out how to best please the other.

Here are some suggestions:

- Practice massaging every part of each other's body and see what excites or relaxes you most.
- If you like you can use your mouth to please the other. Oral stimulation of our sexual parts can very well be a part of our love making.
- Put on some of your favorite music, try different styles with different rhythms. As a side effect it also keeps noises down in

the room.

- Use your favorite perfumes, or deodorants.
- Take turns in who is taking the lead. Express how you would like things this time.
- Write each other a sensual letter expressing your appreciation, as well as your desires and wishes.
- Excite each other with your words, expressing your sexual feelings to each other while making love.
- As a foreplay, play a game together naked on the bed. (Though the husband could wear a tie.)
- Play a series of quick games, undressing one piece of your clothing each time you lose a game, until someone plays the last game fully naked.
- If there are no others in the house and you can safeguard your privacy, have sex each time in a different room. On the couch or on the dining table.
- Have sex in the dark, with candle light, or with the lights on.
- Try all kind of positions. As each position uses different muscles, it gives a different kind of sensation. Also, the vagina has some spots that are more sensitive than others- the so called G-spot. Trying out different positions will help to find out which spot is most exciting to you.
- Husband laying behind wife
- Wife sitting on top of the husband
- Wife laying on the table, husband standing in front
- Husband half sitting/laying on the bed, wife sitting on top facing away from him.
- Etcetera.

Both of you have two hands. It might sound strange but it can be very helpful if the wife sometimes uses her own hand to stimulate herself. As it takes longer for her to rise to her climax, the husband could

massage her breast (or ears or whatever) while the wife stimulates her own clitoris. Husband and wife can take turns in doing this. Finding out what is most enjoyable and satisfying.

It is good to read a book on sex together, but watching sexual movies together is a totally different thing. God intended this to be between the two of you, without comparing yourself to other couples. Watching sexual movies could also lead to lust and adulterous thoughts.

Be creative! Make sure you are both comfortable and respect each other's boundaries and physical limitations- and keep it between the two of you.

## Chapter 9

# DEVELOPMENTAL PHASES OF SEXUALITY\*

*‘Culture hides much more than it reveals, and  
strangely enough what it hides, it hides most  
effectively from its own participants.’*

Edward T. Hall

Most people sadly start their sexual/marital life with some negative influences. Part of this has to do with our sexual education which we did or did not receive. The way our parents dealt with their own sexuality and with our developing sexuality has a huge impact on us. It is very important that we recognize which part of our sexuality has not developed well, so that we can correct this in our own lives as well as stop the cycle of negativity and do not pass on the same distortions to our children. \*Based on the books of C. & J. Penner we will take a closer look at the different sexual developmental stages we go through from infancy to young adulthood.

### Stages of Sexual Development

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Critical Learning</b>	<b>Impact on Sexual Life</b>
<b>Infancy</b>	Bonding	Capacity for Intimacy
<b>Toddlerhood</b>	Touching, Naming, and Controlling of Genitals	Positive Acceptance of Genitals
<b>Preschool</b>	Question-Asking	Open Communication Regarding Sexuality
<b>School Age</b>	Exploration	Sexual Awareness
<b>Teenage/Puberty (Preadolescence)</b>	Erotic Feelings and Bumbling Discovery (Butterfly feelings)	Self-Acceptance and Competence in Relating to Opposite Sex
<b>Young Adult (Adolescence)</b>	Decision-Making	Taking Responsibility for Own Sexuality

## **Infancy**

During infancy, from birth to age one, children learn about themselves as relational beings. They learn this through the type of touch and holding they are given. When a close, warm, secure, and trusting bond is formed, children have learned to form close relationships. This skill they will take on into their future relationships, including the physical relationships later on in life. Thus the ability to enjoy sexual intimacy is developed at an early age.

When a child does not learn this early task of bonding it has a negative impact on the ability to enjoy sexual intimacy later on in life. Some adults might not even feel the need for physical intimacy. If bonding did not take place as an infant, sexual closeness as an adult might even be frightening.

If your intimacy needs were not developed, you will need to learn to give and receive pleasure through sensuous touch. (See book: *Restoring the Pleasure*)

## **Toddlerhood**

Sexually, toddlerhood is a genital-centered stage of development. Our genitals are the penis and the vagina. From one to three years of age, it is natural for children to touch their own genitals and learn that it feels good. This is the time when children learn to control peeing and pooping and learn to talk about and to name their body parts. The way which family and society responds to this during this stage will determine whether a child accepts his or her genitals as a natural, beautiful part of God's creation or whether he or she views the genitals and thus sexuality, as untouchable, unmentionable and dirty.

Touching the genitals is natural for every toddler. It is soothing/comforting but usually not erotic. If children are given an accurate understanding of "germ theory," they will learn to view their genitals as clean, rather than dirty. The fact is that the urinary and reproductive systems (the penis and the vagina) are clean and sterile; no disease-producing bacteria are present. The rectum (the part behind the anus where poop is being stored up) is highly contaminated with disease-producing bacteria, thus requiring the washing of hands after pooping. Understanding the difference between the clean genitals and the dirty anus is important for children to learn during the toilet training process of toddlerhood.

How parents refer to name the genitals communicates their view of sexuality. Avoiding the accurate names and their functions teaches children that these parts are difficult to talk about. In contrast, parents communicate to children an acceptance of sexuality when they call a penis a penis and a vagina a vagina. The refusal to speak aloud sexual words may lead to later difficulty in talking about sex with one's spouse.

When a toddler is playing with or touching his penis or her vagina and the hand is taken away and given a slap or a “no-no,” the toddler will think of them as untouchable, something to be afraid of. A sense of disgust or “yuckiness” communicated about peeing can teach the toddler that sex is dirty.

In contrast, when peeing and pooping is guided with praise and the genitals are named with pride, parents give their children a gift. The children then accept their genitals as a friendly part of themselves. He or she will later enter the marriage relationship with an acceptance of his or her genitals, them being a part of the body to be freely shared with his or her spouse.

## **Preschool**

A preschooler's sexual curiosity is expressed by asking questions. How these ‘sexual’ questions are handled at this age will set the tone for adulthood discussions about sexuality. If the child receives a positive response for asking questions, and if open, factual sexual data was given with a matter-of-fact attitude, a person will be better able to communicate openly about sexuality. If sex simply was not talked about, or if the child was shamed for asking ‘naughty’ questions, the child may later as an adult have difficulty communicating openly about sexuality within marriage.

## **School Age**

Curiosity continues into school age with the development of a sense of modesty. This is a sign of sexual awareness. During this stage, nudity becomes an issue. Children begin to feel shy about their bodies, first with non-family members and then within the family.

At the same time, children begin to be aware of sexual differences and may be stimulated by seeing a more developed nude body of the opposite sex. A mother may notice her son staring at her. This is a signal to begin covering up and probably stop brother-sister baths. It is not that children should be kept from ever seeing parents' bodies nude, but rather caution should be used.

Children often have the desire to check out each other's genitals. This is a common expression of sexual curiosity during the early school-age years. It may take the form of playing house-doctor, or "you show me yours and I'll show your mine." This play is a universal, innocent expression of sexual curiosity at this age. It should be seen as an indication that teaching about sexual differences and boundaries is needed.

If the child's innocent search is met with punishment, humiliation, or an explosive reaction from a parent or primary caregiver, he/she will have been left with incredible confusion about natural sexual feelings and interest. This may have connected guilt with sexual feelings because he or she connects sexuality with something seriously wrong. This makes natural sexual expression difficult in adulthood. The playful checking out of each other's genitals by children of similar age who have not been exposed to sexual experiences beyond their age level causes no harm. Boundaries are necessary though. For example, children should be required to keep their underwear on and leave the doors open. Parents should be nearby and make their presence known. The lack of boundaries or a traumatic reaction to being found in this play can cause incredible pain throughout life.

### **Teenage/Puberty (Preadolescence)**



Erotic feelings begin to tingle as the hormones kick in. This is the kiss-and-run stage. Bumbling and indirect interaction with the opposite sex is natural. Not all teenagers are allowed this bumbling interaction. Some are restricted from the normal interaction with the opposite sex because they are socially shy, immature, overprotected by their parents/society/school, or have health problems which restricts their availability. In that case, self-acceptance and competence in relating to the opposite sex is not mastered.

If a young person is pushed into sexual activity at this age, confusion is usually connected with sexual relationships. When a teenager is ahead of or behind his/her friends in their sexual development it will make them question whether they are normal. During this stage hormones begin to be released, changing the body from that of a child to that of an adult, at the same time also triggering erotic sexual feelings.

Masturbation may have become a regular practice at this time. If this was connected with a sense of guilt, sexual excitement will always be connected to tension and guilt. If masturbation has been condemned as a sin, a believing person will feel excited as well as guilty when secretly masturbating. The Bible does not mention masturbation at all. 1 Thess. 4:3-5 does say that we should learn to control our body and not live in lust. In the process of getting to know our body and learning to control our body, many young people practice masturbation. We would not call it a sin, but rather encourage young people to not live in sexual lust and fantasies and to focus on developing healthy relationships. Sexual feelings are not wrong. Marital sex is not wrong. That is why it is vital that young people recognize that their sexual feelings and desires are God-given and not wrong.

If a masturbation habit began in response to sexually explicit material, one may have become addicted to pornographic materials. Overcoming this addiction may require help.

During the curious years, from preschool to the end of the teenage years (preadolescence), a young person has to learn the following attitudes/beliefs:

- Sex is good and of God
- Sexual curiosity is natural
- Sexual responsiveness is inborn
- Sexual responsibility belongs to each person
- Mutual respect and Biblical standards are the guideline for all sexual relationships.

If someone enters *young adulthood (adolescence)* with positive knowledge of these attitudes, he or she will be comfortable with one's own sexuality and will be comfortable in relating to the opposite sex.

### **Young Adulthood – Adolescence**

Young adulthood is the time to assume responsibility for one's own sexual behavior. These decisions need to be consistent with Christian beliefs, family values, and commitment to the relationship.

When the sexual activity engaged in is in conflict with the young adult's inner beliefs and values (like having sex before marriage), anxiety/fear is triggered at the same time that pleasurable sexual feelings are aroused. Thus, anxiety/fear and sexual pleasure are paired. The resulting adrenaline rush becomes addicting. When the persons later decide to get married there is no more fear of getting caught or fear of pregnancy. There is no more anxiety thus there is also no pleasurable sexual arousal. The pleasure response has developed a dependence on the "adrenaline hype."

Sexual feelings must be separated from sexual behaviors. God designed sexual feelings. Sexual desire is good. Nevertheless, decisions must be made regarding the behaviors that occur in response to the

desire. Young adults can learn to redirect the sexual-drive/energy into self-enhancing activities (e.g. Sports, music, schoolwork, etc.).

Learning to accept sexual feelings while making decisions that control sexual actions is the task of the young adult that, if successfully mastered, leads to adult guilt-free, unrepressed sexual expressions within the boundaries of marriage.

When for example a young man is experiencing sexual feelings/attraction, he could respond in prayer like; 'Thank you God for making me a sexual being. I do feel attracted to this lady. Help me to relate well to her and to get to know her. Help me to not allow my sexual feelings to dominate me, and not to see her as a sexual object but as a person. I do not want to fantasize about her and increase my sexual feelings. Help me to relate to her and to develop a good relationship.' And once they are in a good relationship he can respond like, 'Lord I am totally in love with her and I look forward to have sex with her. But help me to not touch her sexually and not to engage in sexual activity with her until we are married.'

Physically the young adult's body is ready to function sexually. However, emotionally and economically they can still be even ten years away from being ready to live independently as a married couple. Christian young adults need to make decisions to restrict their sexual behavior while acknowledging and not repressing their sexual feelings. Separating behavior from feeling will be vital. One will be wise to be very deliberate in building other forms of intimacy into one's relationship. Learn to share feelings and to accurately understand and care about the feelings of friends. Learn to work, talk, play, and pray together.

Who you are today as a sexual person depends on how successful you were at learning about your sexuality at each of these stages. It also depends on the modeling and interaction that took place between you and your parents. From your same-sex parent you learned what it

meant to be male or female. If your same-sex parent seemed secure and content with his or her sexuality, you will probably also be. From your opposite-sex parent, you learned how to relate to the opposite sex. If you were affirmed and respected by your opposite-sex parent, you will expect affirmation and respect from your spouse.

**When the developmental task of each stage has been mastered, one should have an integrated sense of sexuality and spirituality that will act as a guide for the tasks of adult relationships.**

Not mastering one of the developmental tasks can leave a person with an inadequacy in the marital sexual relationship. Fortunately, developmental gaps can be filled to a certain extent. The later the stage of development, the easier the healing.

### **In Summary**

Here is what is needed at each of the developmental stages:

**Infancy:** Lots of warm, gentle touch and holding.

**Toddler:** Mentioning and naming of the genitals. Positive affirmation while learning to master peeing and pooping.

**Pre-schooler:** Responses to questions with a matter-of-fact attitude, honest and simple replies.

**School Age:** Continued answers to questions. Modest exposure of nudity, and respect of growing need for privacy. Responses to exploratory play as something normal, and setting of boundaries. Education on sexual differences. Maybe with the use of an educational book with some pictures.

**Teenage/Puberty – Preadolescence:** Social interaction between the sexes. Education of Biblical standards for the expression of sexuality. Affirmation of sexuality as something God-given, including the beginning of menstruation and the release of sperm.

From School-age to the end of the teenage years a child needs to learn that:

- Sex is good and of God
- Sexual curiosity is natural
- Sexual responsiveness is inborn
- Sexual responsibility belongs to each person
- Mutual respect and Biblical standards are the guidelines for all sexual relationships.

**Young Adult – Adolescence:** Continued encouragement of social interaction. Communication of Biblical standards. Availability to talk when the adolescent wants to talk.

**\*Content in this chapter is taken mainly from the books: Getting your sex life off to a great start, page 36-42, by C. & J. Penner and Counseling for Sexual Disorders. By: Joyce J. Penner, R.N., M.N. Clifford L. Penner, Ph.**

## Chapter 10

# HOW SEXUAL TRAUMA AFFECTS SEXUAL INTIMACY

*By Becca C. Johnson, PhD, Psychologist*

***‘What you bury alive – stays alive.’***

Author unknown.

One woman shared of being raped as a teenager, another of being sexually abused as a child and yet another of being forced to have sex with strangers for money. They all have experienced sexual trauma. Whether it happened one time or multiple times, it can have devastating and long-lasting effects.

Anna, a young woman in her 20s, disclosed that she had been raped at a friend's party. She was a virgin and wanted to keep herself for marriage. After she was violated, she felt worthless and blamed herself for what happened. Even though it was the rapist who raped her, forcing himself on her and stealing her virginity without permission, she blamed herself. She was not at fault. As a result, she became sexually active and began taking drugs to deaden the inner self-hatred and pain. She was a victim of sexual trauma.

Unfortunately, there are far too many stories similar to hers. A study conducted in the USA reported that 52% of women had an unwanted sexual experience before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Sexual abuse and rape happen to females and to males – some as a young toddler, a school-age child, a teenager, a young adult or as a newlywed. Yes, boys

are also victims of sexual abuse, though most hesitate to tell about what happened. Societal pressures, cultural norms and sexual expectations keep many male victims silent, left to wonder about their sexuality.

Anyone can be abused. Abuse happens to those of all races and religions, ages, wages, stages, genders, and generations. Unfortunately, abuse exists and is all too common. Anyone can be abused – regardless of group or family, community or nation.

Most victims of rape or childhood sexual abuse blame themselves. The blame grows into self-hatred and self-directed anger. Harmful behaviors develop in an effort to divert or deaden the internal agony (pain). These may include drinking, taking drugs, promiscuity, over compliance, perfectionism, self-harm, suicide attempts, stealing, lying, vandalism and more.

Most abusers are known to the victim – a family member, neighbor, relative, coach,... This leads to a deep sense of betrayal as well as confusion regarding blame and responsibility. This is especially difficult when the abuser tells the victim it is his/her fault, even though it is not.

Sexual trauma can include any unwanted, inappropriate, or non-consenting sexual activity. Sexual abuse and trauma includes a wide variety of inappropriate behaviors and activities that can happen both *indirectly* and *directly*.

*Indirect:* Sexual activities that do not involve direct contact with the offender, yet are undesired and considered abuse, include indecent exposure; an adult or older child engaging in voyeurism (observing the minor undress, bathe, urinate, etc.); child pornography (photographing nudity of or having a minor engage in explicit acts); and allowing, showing, or forcing a minor to watch pornography or other sexual activities (i.e., someone masturbating, sex, or an orgy).

*Direct:* Sexual abuse also includes any sexual activity that involves contact with the abuser. It can include fondling, rubbing, and sitting on a lap, finger and penis penetration (vaginal or anal), oral sex, bestiality (sex with animals), as well as various forms or versions of these.

Sexual trauma deeply wounds its victims, leaving them with a variety of emotions – guilt, shame, anger, confusion, fear, uncertainty, self-hatred, sadness and more.

### **Comply or Consent?**

Those who abuse want their victims to think that they deserved, agreed with, or consented to the abuse. Many victims believe this themselves. The abuser wants to convince you that you are responsible or to blame for what happened—that you complied and consented—which is absolutely absurd. Even if you enjoyed the attention or the bodily sensations—you did not initially agree to abuse. You may have thought that you agreed to or consented to the abuse because you never told anyone about it.

Many who are sexually abused are confused and unaware that what happened was wrong, illegal or considered ‘abuse’. When a thirteen-year-old girl is forced to do sexual things with a much-older boy, that is abuse. When a teacher requests a student to show her breasts, or his/her genitals, that is abuse. With any sexual activity when there is an age difference and/or a position of authority over the minor, it is considered sexual abuse. Few, if any, exceptions apply. Even if you consented, it is still abuse.

One victim shared that her older sister’s boyfriend would force her to do sexual things with him. She stated, “Even though I didn’t want it or didn’t like it, I didn’t know it was against the law. I thought I had consented because I didn’t tell anyone.”



## **Sexual Trauma and Marriage**

Sexual trauma, if not addressed and helped, can cause long-lasting effects. The unhealthy beliefs, harmful habits and possible problems that develop after the trauma can negatively affect not only the individual but also the marriage relationship. For healthy marital sexual intimacy, it is important that both partners share with each other about any past sexual trauma. The hidden secrets and pain need to be shared in order for healing to begin. Sharing is essential in order for a marriage to be built on honesty and vulnerability.

Sharing one's sexual abuse history becomes a major concern in countries and cultures that devalue a woman if she is not a virgin. These same countries have no negative stigma for men who are also not virgins. We must believe and understand God's perspective that a woman's worth is inherent. She is precious to God, a beloved daughter. A loving relationship is about the relationship and love and not about sex and previous sexual experiences.

Those with a history of sexual abuse have said that certain sexual touching or activities can trigger negative memories of the abuse or rape. This must be shared with the partner so that love-making can be enjoyable and free of past reactions. One woman realized that when her husband touched her a certain way, she immediately got tense (froze) because it was what her abuser always did. Tell your partner what is helpful and what is harmful – what is good and new to your relationship and what things remind you of what the abuser(s) did.

The abused have also shared the importance of developing new sexual activities with their partner. During your adjustment to marital sexual intimacy, you may find that too many past memories are triggered. If this happens, take it slow, communicate and pray for God to help you overcome the old reactions and replace them with new, positive, loving-making memories. Both partners need to show patience and grace.

Many of those who have experienced sexual trauma would like to forget about it. They deny, minimize or pretend it didn't happen for

fear of others blaming them or viewing them as damaged and dirty. Most suffer in silence, never telling parents or even spouses about their past. It can be painful to face the pain and seek healing. But, it is better to address the past and the pain, allowing God to bring restoration and healing than to live one's entire life filled with secrets and shame. Please find an emotionally safe person with whom you can share and/or seek the help of a professional counselor.

Far too many people have been victims of sexual trauma. Healing is possible and hope can be restored, especially as we look to God. He can heal the broken-hearted and bind up their wounds. He is a God of love, acceptance, forgiveness, mercy and grace. Our God desires to shower us with good things and give us a hope and a future.

# Chapter 11

## LIVING A TWISTED REALITY

This story is based upon a real testimony of a couple we know.

***'Sex becomes beautiful when we bring our personal beauty to it. The issue isn't simply who your partner is, whether you're in love, or how good you can do it. It's who you are.'***

David Schnarch

*As soon as Robert's wife Susan was sound asleep, Robert slipped out of the bedroom. Careful not to make any noise that would wake up his wife nor his son. He flipped on his phone and searched the net for babes. With a growing sense of unrest and anticipation, he stared at the images of nude women. The mixture of fear to be caught and his growing excitement at what he saw caused him tremendous arousal. Though he wanted to stop and to not cheat on his wife, he was hooked and went on to watching people have sex with each other. He was fully aroused now, went to the toilet and brought himself to an ejaculation. He felt relieved and guilty at the same time. When he back to bed, he promised himself to never do this again, praying that God would give him the strength to do so and believing that he was an overcomer. Yet, he found himself repeating the same behavior only a few days later.*

*As a young man Robert had grown up with his mother and brothers. His father had passed away when he was a child. He enjoyed going to church and loved to sing in the choir. He was a very social and sensitive man and soon became an influential youth leader. He also enjoyed looking at the girls in the church and as his sexual feelings were developing they caused him more and more physical sensation. Whenever he was alone, he felt a growing desire to stimulate his penis with his hand while delighting himself in the sensations he felt remembering the girls. He came to a climax and released his semen. He was captivated by this and also bewildered. He throughoutly enjoyed it, but strangely also felt guilty about it. No one had ever talked to him about this and he dared not talk to anybody about this sensational mystery. It became his habit, often at night and on Sunday afternoon after church. He later learned that this was called masturbation (having sex with yourself). It was a habit which was hard for him to stop. One day as he was browsing on his smartphone he came across several pictures of naked women. At first he swiped them away as soon he could, knowing that looking at them was immoral and that God forbid it. Yet he was also strongly attracted to them, and soon he find himself hunting for more images. It was not so hard to find them and staring at the pictures filled him with intense sensations, after which he often masturbated. He also came across lots of short video pictures where he actually could watch people having sex in various different positions. Deep in his heart he knew this was all wrong, and that God wanted him to live a pure life, free from lust and immoral desires. He often prayed that God would take away his sexual desires, for the blood of Jesus to cleanse him and to make him whole. Yet, he was stuck, caught up in a web that kept pulling him back and bound him tighter and tighter. At last he had to admit to himself that he was addicted.*

*Finally Robert found the courage to talk with Jeff, another youth leader, whom he trusted. When he confessed his hidden sins and talked about his addiction it was a great relief for him. Jeff was very understanding, he did not condemn him and shared from 1 John chapter 1 that if we*

*walk in the light together and confess our sins, that God is faithful to forgive us our sins and that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sins. They prayed together and Robert felt understood and forgiven. Jeff confirmed to him that he would not share his sins with others. They said bye to each other and went home. Robert enjoyed his new found freedom. He delighted himself in reading God's Word and in praying for the lost souls of the world. He did not watch any pornography for ... two whole weeks.*

*One day during a combined youth group outing he got acquainted with Susan. They liked each other's company and kept seeing each other in the weeks that followed. Susan was proud to become a friend to this handsome and talented youth leader. She was hoping that he would ask her to marry him, and was looking forward to live a life of serving God together being led by this spiritual man. She did not know that Robert was addicted to pornography. Robert felt really bad about his sinful behavior and desperately wanted to break free from this before he would get married. He talked again with his befriended youth leader, Jeff. Jeff was sad to hear that Robert was still struggling. To Robert's surprise he also shared that he was struggling himself with pornography, but that he was too ashamed the first time to be open about this. Robert was shocked but it also did him good to hear that he was not the only youth leader struggling with this. They talked about it together and decided to look for help. They found a really helpful website called 'setting captives free'. It offered different online courses to help people break with their addiction. They talked with some other guys from their youth groups who had shared with them about their struggles and they began a man's group and did the 'purity bootcamp' course together. It was really powerful for all of them to be honest and open about the struggle with pornography in their lives.*

*Because of the support he received from the group and the insights he got from the studies Robert managed to weaken the grip of pornography on*

*his life and sometimes did not watch any for a whole month. Yet he kept falling back into this nasty habit.*

*Soon Robert and Susan became engaged and the families started to prepare for the wedding. A couple of months before the wedding Robert had come to the conclusion that it was not fair to Susan if he didn't tell her anything of his addiction. With support of his friends he found the courage to sit down with Susan and to share about his struggle.*

*Though Susan appreciated his honesty, openness and courage to share with her, she was also in shock. How could this lovely, godly man have such a dirty sinful addiction? She could not imagine nor believe it and was disgusted by the thought of it. Yet she also was deeply impressed that he had taken the courage to share this with her before their marriage. She contemplated to calling the engagement off, but decided not to. Nobody is without mistakes after all, and she trusted and believed that Robert would overcome this, that he would never watch any of it again, and that they would have a wonderful, fulfilling and happy marriage together.*

*After a month or so, she noticed that Robert was not his joyful self and that his eyes were avoiding hers. Though he had said that he was doing fine, Susan knew something was not fine. As soon as they had the chance to talk in private together she asked how he was really doing. Robert had to confess to her that he was not doing so well and that he had fallen back in watching pornography again. Susan was so upset and boiling with anger. How could he betray her like this? She cried and vented out in anger that she would not marry him if he would ever do this again. After letting her emotions out they sat in quiet together. He asked her for forgiveness and expressed his hopelessness. They prayed together, asked the blood of Jesus to cleanse Robert. Susan also shared her appreciation to Robert for not keeping this a secret to her. She saw that he was truly remorseful and deeply sad about his*

*failure, and that he really wanted to break this addiction. They decided to share more of their emotions together so Robert would not fall into this pit, and that they would pray more for each other.*

*They also decided that they would read a good Christian book about sexual life so that they would not be unprepared. They wanted to have God's perspective on sex, and were in need of knowing how this all works.*

*The wedding was wonderful. Their families and friends rejoiced in the union of this godly couple. Everybody looked up to them and expected them to grow from youth leadership into church leadership in the years to come.*

*They enjoyed their wedding night and were thrilled to finally be able to stay together and to sleep together. Their first times having sex, though, did not go so smoothly. Instead of watching people have sex, and all the fantasies that Robert had stored up about that, Robert now had to deal with a living person and with all kinds of emotions. Reading the book about sex had really helped both of them though and soon they enjoyed pleasing each other.*

*After a few months though when Susan was at work and Robert was at home alone, he was drawn back to the internet and fell back into his addiction. Not just for a second, he could not stop himself and watched all kind of things for quite a while. After he finally stopped, he was disgusted and hated himself for doing this. Later that evening Robert confessed his failure to Susan. She was so devastated that she left the house and went to sleep at a friend's house. The next day they talked together and Susan demanded that Robert seek help to end this horrible habit. Robert went to see a counselor which did help him somewhat.*

*Like any other couple, Robert and Susan had to get used to living together, seeing each other day and night and learning to deal with each other's 'not so perfect' daily habits and emotions. Susan started to notice when Robert*

*was emotionally not doing so well, when he would shut down or be irritated by her slightest imperfection. They would have fights over tiny things and did not manage to communicate reasonably about it. Susan would try to please Robert, hoping it would prevent him from falling back into pornography. She would give in to all his requests and try to keep him happy. She would also try to arrange more social contacts for him and stimulate him to do more physical exercise—anything she could think of to help him. She hated to see him struggling and didn't want to stand by passively while he made unhealthy decisions. But sadly Robert kept falling back from time to time. This made Susan feel angry, hopeless and lonely. 'Am I not good enough for you?' She had a hard time dealing with her own emotions. The man she loved the most, was causing her incredible pain. At the same time she longed to be understood and to be comforted by him. Night-times became nightmares. Sometimes she would sleep well, but often she was restless, especially if Robert had not come to bed yet. She was wondering, 'should I go and check on him or is it better not to?' 'But what if I do not go and tomorrow he confesses to watching again? I could have prevented it by asking him to come to bed.' Sometimes she was too tired, so she would phone him to ask what he was doing. It became very tiring and frustrating for her though. She thought that Robert had all the tools to become free. He had received therapy, was still connected with the men's group, did the 'Set The Captives Free' course. He should be free by now! After each confession she got angrier. He was still trying to run his race alone, not allowing her or a close friend to help him when he was not feeling well and was in his 'danger zone'.*

*They both had learned that a good marriage is built upon four pillars called Love, Respect, Trust and Understanding. Susan was starting to feel unloved by Robert, her respect for him was crumbling, she could not trust him anymore and did not feel understood by him. Nor was she under-*



*standing him. She knew her marriage was going in the wrong direction and was falling apart.*

*On top of Robert being addicted to pornography, he was also taking Susan along in his 'secret life'. Susan had always been a very open person, but now as she was married, she felt obligated to keep her husband's behavior a secret. Hardly anybody knew of Robert's addiction. The stress, frequent fights and sleepless nights began to take a toll on her health. Yet when her concerned friends and work colleagues would ask her what was wrong, she lied to protect her husband's reputation. Unable to be her real self with others, she grew more and more isolated and lonely, and blamed Robert for this.*

*Their sexual life had also become complicated for Susan. Nobody had prepared her to deal with this! After every confession it took a while for her to be able to even think about having sex with him. She knew that withholding sex for a longer period of time would not solve the problem. But she felt that he had wounded her and was just not ready to pretend in bed as well. Sometimes she wanted to know what exactly he had been watching and on the other hand she also did not want to know at all.*

*Although the whole situation with Robert's addiction was very confusing and complicated, Susan never doubted whether she was beautiful to Robert or not, or whether he loved her. She knew that he saw her as a beautiful person that he would die for and do anything to make her happy. She understood that his porn addiction had to do with him, and with how he was dealing with life, it was not about her. Though she knew this, she did not always feel this way and was living a constant inner roller coaster.*

*The first five years of their marriage were marked by his addiction. Years of both wonderful heights, but also of very deep depths. They enjoyed nice times together, had many fun outings, times to get to know each other better. But also many fights and discussions about his addictive behavior and everything that had to do with it.*

*One evening Robert's friends were watching some interesting Bible Study clips on YouTube. Something in the videos triggered Robert and once back home he looked them up on YouTube and asked Susan to watch them with him. It was teaching about the disciples of Jesus in the book of Acts and how they were led by the Holy Spirit. Something touched Robert in his spirit. For the first time in his life he started to understand the message of the gospel and to experience it. He had believed in God his whole life. He could preach well and share with the world around him, but deep inside he was broken and not at peace.*

*Robert finds it hard to explain why these videos were making such an impact on him. He began to see all his emotions from God's perspective. His years of self-centeredness, the pain and loneliness he had caused Susan. His hypocrisy. The kind of father he wanted to be for their son. At the same time he started to experience God's love for himself, and how God wanted to pour the Holy Spirit out on him. Instantly he found it insane that he thought to be led by the Holy Spirit in church and watch porn a few hours later. How can someone who is led by the Spirit watch porn?*

*Now Robert learned what conversion to Christ really meant. After studying the Bible on this topic it became clear to him. John the Baptist already said that people have to break with their former way of life. To stop lying, cheating, hypocrisy, and in Robert's case to stop watching porn, and no longer lust after woman. Robert wanted to turn his life 180 degrees around towards God. Someone in the men's group asked him once, 'Do you see yourself as a sinner or as a saint?' The answer was very simple as well as very confronting to him. He started to realize that as long as he kept seeing himself as a sinner he would never be able to break the sinful and destructive habits in his life. While he continued studying the Bible he realized that Jesus not only came to forgive his sins, but also to save and deliver him from his sins. (Matt 1:21)*

*As a result of all this Robert was able to break free from the addiction and to stop watching porn. He got more and more convinced that he would*

*choose not to watch it again. He learned step by step to renew his mind. (Rom. 12:1,2) Every day again.*

*This is how it worked for him: He had learned that his old self had died with Jesus Christ on the cross. This became an increasingly living faith to him. At the same time he discovered that in Christ he had become a new creation. Someone who can be led by the Holy Spirit. He learned to renew his mind and see himself as a beloved child of God. This became a new reality to him as he believed and experienced that the Holy Spirit was working in him. Did he ever sin again? Well, yes, he did sin again. He not only had to learn to stop watching porn and looking lustfully at other woman. He also had to learn to deal in another way with his feelings of disappointment, anger, suppressed rage, and frustrations. But the fact that we will not be able to live without sinning does not mean that God does not deliver us from sinful habits. We call this 'sanctification', which means that in our character and in our behavior we will become more and more like Jesus, within the unique personality and life-experiences God has given each one of us.*

*Sometimes people ask Robert, 'Do you never have any temptation anymore?' The answer is that he still faces temptations. He knows from James 1:13-15 that temptation comes from his own sinful desires. Sometimes his thoughts return to what he has seen in the past. The difference is that he is dealing with them in a different way now. He realizes the danger of those thoughts, and takes them to God immediately, sometimes out loud, sometimes in his mind. He reminds himself that he is forgiven and that he is a new creation, led by the Holy Spirit. When he finds the temptation becoming stronger, he speaks this out to Susan now, or to a trusted friend. It really helps him to resist the temptation and to enjoy the freedom God gives.*

*Robert learned to renew his mind. At the same time he discovered that this is what baptism is all about. (Rom. 6-8) That the old self is being*

*buried with Christ in His death and to is resurrected with Christ to new life, as a re-born human being. In this way, the power of sin is broken. This is not only symbolically. It is something you do physically, which has a tremendous spiritual impact. This new human being needs the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. God changed Robert's identity from the old person to a new person. He was now truly born-again. Studying David Pawson's book 'The normal Christian birth' really helped him understand this.*

*The change in Robert's life also had a profound impact on Susan's life. As they studied the Word together her relationship with God became much more alive. But even though she did see a dramatic change in Robert, it was not easy for her to believe that he was really free from his addiction. There had been times in the past he had breakthroughs. But he always fell back in his old patterns. Could she really believe and trust that it was different now? But she did see a clear change, Robert was becoming a different person. Robert started to believe that he could be free and so did Susan.*

*Now that they had come into a different season, Susan found that she had to deal with her own emotions. The past few years had been very tense for her. She had experienced deep loneliness, confusion, anger and fear. She really needed to talk about those feelings with Robert even though it was hard for him to hear. Luckily Robert understood that his wife needed time to heal. In their 'spiritual awakening' she had come to know God as a personal Father. She was incredibly grateful that she knew that God was always there for her. She also learned that when Robert could not comfort her, she could always sit on the Father's lap and be comforted by him.*

*During the years of his struggles they had used all kind of security programs to restrict internet access. Now Robert would like to remove those as they were inconvenient for other internet uses. But Susan wasn't ready for this yet, so they agreed together that Robert would only remove the restrictions once Susan would feel ready for it.*

*Their sexual life had become very complicated to Susan. After Robert's deliverance it became more enjoyable to her and there were moments when she really enjoyed their sexual union. But there were also times that her body would just 'lock up' and she was overwhelmed with sadness, unable to engage in sexual activity. During those times it was helpful and healing to her that she could share this with Robert and that he would just hold her, without insisting to have sex. They would often pray together and she would rest in his arms.*

*As time was progressing, Love, Respect, Trust and Understanding were being restored in their relationship, and their sexual life was healing. Robert and Susan are now a strong, solid team, serving the Lord together in love and unity.*

### **Other factors that played a role in Robert's addiction and deliverance.**

Though the teaching, of which none was really new to Robert, and the spiritual awakening he went through were crucial in his deliverance there were many factors playing a role in his life and deliverance.

Robert had always been looking for the affirmation that he was a man, partly due to having lost his father at a young age. Sadly, no other adult man in his life gave him this affirmation. He suffered from a deep-rooted sense of insecurity and often felt rejection and fear, even with his own body and sexuality. Robert had experienced abuse by a man when he was only seven years old. This had left a deep sense of shame within him. He had suppressed the event and the feelings surrounding this. Deep inside he was rejecting himself, wondering if he would ever be able to have a loving relationship with a woman who would respect him.

This contributed to him turning to porn and becoming addicted. Later in his life he read the book 'Wild at Heart' written by John Eldregde. The book writes about the process of how the identity of boys develops. And how everything in and around their lives influences this. Eldregde writes about how a boy's identity develops, and how this shapes and influences everything else in their life. Unconsciously a boy is always looking for an answer to the question 'Am I a real man?' The answer to this question is partly being formed in the development of a healthy relationship with one's father. But the answer is also being given when a man makes a sexual approach to his wife. If he is rejected sexually, a man does not only feel sexually rejected, he feels his masculinity is being rejected.

Ultimately boys and men have to learn to not expect that their imperfect earthly fathers nor a woman can answer this question. But that they have to turn to God, the one who gives us our true value and identity. For Robert this was an important key on his way to freedom.

But every time he watched porn or masturbated the lies of rejection he believed about himself were being fed; that he was not a real man, that he was unworthy and unlovable. This brought him back to the twisted reality of shame, telling him that he failed as a man. He kept comparing himself with other men around him who seemed successful and had happy families and loving relationships with their wives. Until the full reality of the redeeming gospel and the implications of this to follow Jesus in every aspect of his life set him free from the bondage of sin and shame.

## Chapter 12

# STAY OUT OF THE GUTTER

*‘Done well, marital sexuality can be a  
supremely healing experience.’*

Gary L. Thomas

It can be tempting to involve the anus in your love-making. It is a muscle and has lots of nerves and thus feelings as well. But it is a very delicate muscle. It is not meant for an entry, but only as an exit. Right behind the anus is the anal canal and then your rectum where the feces are being stored before you poop them out.

The section on: ‘Anal Sex Safety and Health Concerns’ on the webmd.com website, which is a leading secular website on sexual health, states:

There are a number of health risks with anal sex, including the following:

- **The anus lacks the natural lubrication that the vagina has.** Penetration can tear the tissue inside the anus, allowing bacteria and viruses to enter the bloodstream. This can result in the spread of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Studies have suggested that anal exposure to HIV poses 30 times more risk for the receptive partner than vaginal exposure. It can also boost the risk of getting the human

papillomavirus (HPV). HPV may also lead to the development of anal warts and anal cancer. Using lubricants can help some, but doesn't completely prevent tearing.

- **The tissue inside the anus is not as well-protected as the skin outside the anus.** Our external tissue has layers of dead cells that serve as a protective barrier against infection. The tissue inside the anus does not have this natural protection, which leaves it vulnerable to tearing and the spread of infection.
- **The anus was designed to hold in feces.** The anus is surrounded with a ring-like muscle, called the anal sphincter, which tightens after we defecate. When the muscle is tight, anal penetration can be painful and difficult. Repetitive anal sex may lead to weakening of the anal sphincter, making it difficult to hold in feces until you can get to the toilet. Kegel exercises to strengthen the sphincter may help prevent this problem or correct it.
- **The anus is full of bacteria.** Bacteria normally in the anus can potentially infect the giving partner. Having vaginal sex after anal sex can also lead to vaginal and urinary tract infections.

### **Anal sex can carry other risks as well:**

- For heterosexual couples, a woman can still get pregnant if semen is deposited near the opening to the vagina.
- Even though serious injury from anal sex is not common, it can happen. Bleeding after could be due to a hemorrhoid or tear, or something more serious such as a perforation (hole) in the colon. This is a dangerous problem that needs medical attention right away. Treatment involves a hospital stay,



surgery, and antibiotics to prevent infection.

- Anal sex also increases your chance of getting an anal fissure. A fissure is a tear in the tissue of your anus.
- It also increases the likelihood of developing piles, or making existing piles worse and thus more painful.
- Oral contact with the anus can put both partners at risk for hepatitis, herpes, HPV, and other infections.”

Although anal sex is a more and more being normalized, it should be clear to us that God has not intended the anus for sexual intercourse. The vagina is a very special organ which, except from external infections, keeps itself sterile and lubricates by sexual arousal. The anus does neither. It is not sterile and does not lubricate. As we have read above this leads to multiple complications. If one is tempted to try anal sex, just keep telling yourself: “This might feel nice, but because I love my wife I will bring no damage to her and will control myself.”

The risks of spreading or of getting a sexual disease is only for those who have had sexual contact before or outside the marriage. If two virgins marry together, there is no risk of contaminating your partner with a sexual disease or of getting one from your partner. But if either of the two already had sexual contact with someone else before (or outside of) their marriage, they might be carrying a sexual disease without knowing it. In which case they could spread it to their husband or wife through vaginal, oral or anal sex. If this is the situation, the most loving thing is get a check-up from a doctor to see if there is any STD (Sexual Transmittable Disease). If there is, you should take the necessary medicine and precautions.

But even if both partners have no STDs they can still get serious infections from anal sex. This happens when the bacteria from the rec-

tum gets into the vagina, or when the rectum tears and the bacteria gets inside the bloodstream, or when the penis tears a bit and the bacteria gets into the men's bloodstream.

You can enjoy vaginal sex without any of these concerns. The vagina should be well lubricated for this. If the vagina is dry, which sometimes happens because of stress, illness, or during and after menopause, the vagina can be safely lubricated with lubrication creams that are made for vaginal use.

## Chapter 13

# FAMILY PLANNING

*‘God gave men a brain and a penis, but only enough blood to run one at a time.’*

Robin Williams

Fear of pregnancy can be a great hinderance to enjoying the sexual relationship. Every culture has their different preferences. Some want to get pregnant straight away, while others prefer to first spend a few years together without children. Some only want one or two children, others five or six. But few want to be pregnant all the time and have an endless row of children. Most people come to a point where they feel that enough is enough. For some people this leads to theological dilemmas. Does God allow us to control our own fertility? Did He not command us to go forth and multiply? Is it not God who decides whether we get pregnant or not? There are probably as many different opinions on this as there are different churches.

The following is just our opinion for you to consider.

Yes, God did give us the command to go and multiply and to fill the earth with people. Children are a blessing from God. Yet God has created us humans very different from the animals. Animals have a strong sexual drive in their mating season. The sole purpose of their sex drive is to multiply. The rest of the year they don't even have sexual desires. God has designed us humans so that we can experience great enjoyment

in our sexuality and so that we basically desire sex and romance all year long.

As we have seen from our walk through the Bible, God has created us in such a way that we can have sex just to pleasure each other and to strengthen our relationship. God has designed the female body in such a way that there are many days in a month where a woman can have sex without being able to get pregnant.

Let's have a basic look at the woman's fertility cycle.

Although every woman's monthly cycle is different, at average a woman's fertility cycle is 28 days. But it could as well be 20 or 40 days. The cycle starts with about 7 days loss of blood due to menstruation. During this time the unfertilized egg of the last cycle leaves the body. Then there are about 5-10 days where the vagina is dry and slowly starts to produce more 'dry/sticky' mucus. At the end of these days the mucus gets more slick and slippery as the time of ovulation is near. The ovulation is the moment the egg leaves the ovary and moves towards the uterus. The day before the ovulation, the day of the ovulation and the three days after the ovulation, a woman can become pregnant. The day of the ovulation and the day right after are her most fertile days. Again, this is different for every woman. The fertility period can differ from a couple of hours up to five days. Once the slippery mucus has become dry (or sticky) again there is a fixed period of 10 days till the next menstruation starts.

Roughly it looks like this:

6 days of bleeding (menstruation) – 8 dry days – 4 fertile days – 10 dry days

For woman with a short cycles it could look like this:

6 days of menstruation – 1 dry day – 3 fertile days – 10 dry days

And for woman with a very short cycles it could even look like this:  
6 days of menstruation – fertile days starting at the last or second last day of the menstruation – 2 fertile days – 10 dry days.

Technically the dry days before and the dry days after the fertile time are days when sexual intercourse can be enjoyed without the possibility of becoming pregnant. The days of menstruation are of course also infertile days (unless a woman has a very short cycles).

Yet, due to various reasons, such as stress, sickness and exhaustion the dry days before the fertile days can differ every month! So the only sure days not to get pregnant are the days after the fertile days, once the mucus has become dry/sticky.

The book 'The Joy of Being a Woman' by Ingrid Trobisch is a good read on this topic.

**For those who want to get pregnant**, it is crucial to have sex during the fertile days. Each couple has to find out how long the wife's fertile days last and make use of those days. Having sex once during those days should result in a pregnancy. If no pregnancy occurs after having intercourse during the fertile days for a couple of months, it is best that the husband goes for a medical check-up and have his sperm tested. This is not so difficult to be done and is often the reason for failing to become pregnant. If the husband's sperm is proven to be fertile than the wife will need to be examined. Once the cause of failing to get pregnant is established the couple will need lots of wisdom to decide if they want to try the different treatments that might be available. Those are often invasive but might lead to a pregnancy.

**To prevent becoming pregnant** leaves us with the following options:

**Natural family planning.**

Natural family planning makes use of the infertile days to enjoy sex without having the chance of becoming pregnant. Making sure that the dry days after the fertile days have at least started for 24 hours keeps you on the safe side. If couples use natural family planning it would be wise to keep track of the woman's monthly cycle in an agenda. Make sure you plan some extra 'couples time' during the dry days to celebrate your union together.

**Natural family planning combined with condom use.**

Many couples have active and busy lives, making it hard to plan time together during the dry days. For those couples it is likely more convenient to combine natural family planning with the use of condoms. During the dry days the couple can enjoy sexual intercourse without the use of a condom. During the fertile days or when you think the dry days have ended they should use a condom. A condom is a way of family planning which keeps the sperm from reaching the egg and thus preventing pregnancy.

Condoms are easy to buy and easy to use, but they need a special word of caution.

- a. A condom needs to be put on properly before the penis enters the vagina! Some people would like to 'warm up' the sex-play without the condom and then put on the condom when the man gets close to ejaculation. This will not be safe to prevent pregnancy. From the beginning of the erection the penis will also produce a little bit of fluid. This fluid also contains sperm cells, which could lead to a pregnancy when the woman is in, or just before, her fertile days.
- b. While putting the condom over the erected penis the man/ woman should make sure not to get any fluid from the penis

on his hands, nor on the outside of the condom. If the man has the fluid on his hand and then touches the wife's vagina with his hands, he will transfer the sperm to her vagina, which could lead to a pregnancy after all.

- c. Make sure the condom stays on the penis after the ejaculation. When retreating the penis from the vagina, hold the condom with your fingers at the beginning of the penis, to prevent it from slipping off once the penis has lost its erection.
- d. Condoms should be used only once! Throw them away after use. Do not wash and dry them. You should only buy them from trustworthy shops that are not selling recycled condoms.
- e. If possible use a condom with sperm killing cream/lubricant. When using a lubricant with a condom make sure it is suitable for condom use. Not all lubricants are! And not all lubricants have a spermicide in them.
- f. Make sure you use the right size condom, so they won't burst if too small or slip off if too large. Make sure by trying one on before your first use. Remove it and throw away after 'fitting'.

Of course condoms also have a positive side effect. They make the penis a bit less sensitive so it will help the men to last a bit longer before ejaculation. They could even be used just for the sake of pre-ejaculation training.

Condoms might be disruptive during love-making, but if both partners approach it with a positive mindset it should not have to be disturbing. Always have them ready at an easy to reach place so that you won't need to go and look for them while being aroused.

**Always using a means of family planning.**

If a couple does not want to risk any chance of becoming pregnant, or does not want to be bothered with counting days, it is best to always use a way of family planning. Besides using condoms there are different means of family planning. It is best to consult a trusted doctor for advice.

But take notice!

Some ways of family planning are actually mini-abortions! They cause the fertilized egg to not settle in the uterus or they destroy the fertilized egg. We personally believe that pregnancy is sacred and is the beginning of a new life. Once the sperm has entered the egg (conception), a new life has begun. We should not willfully destroy this.

There are other means of family-planning/contraceptives that either:

- just kill the sperm, like spermicide creams
- prevent the sperm from coming into contact with the egg, like condoms, either male or female ones,
- prevent the egg from being released, like 'the pill', a medicine which needs to be taken daily to prevent the egg from being released.

Whatever is available in your situation, you will have to get yourself well educated on your chosen means of contraceptive so you understand well how it works.

### **Take definitive action to prevent any further pregnancy.**

If a woman's health is at serious risk when she would become pregnant or if a couple has already enough children to look after, it could be wise to make use of a permanent means of contraceptive. Of course this is a very personal decision that every couple has to make by themselves in good conscience with their faith.



But permanent is permanent! For both the husband and as well as for the wife it is possible to get an operation which will make any further pregnancy impossible. For both of them this will not hinder or lessen their sexual desires neither their sexual functioning. But for women this is a more complicated, more invasive and thus a more risky operation as well as more costly. The operation is called tubal ligation and has to be done under full/general anesthetic. For the men it is a very minor and easy operation called a vasectomy. If done in a proper clinic has only a normal very minimal risk and is done for little cost, under local anesthetic. As only one of the couple has to undergo this operation, we personally say, 'It is the wife who has gone through the huge process of giving birth and nursing the babies, now it is up to the husband to go through a little trouble to make sure that there will be no more pregnancies'.

# EPILOGUE

## EVERY TONGUE, TRIBE AND NATION

*‘Christians should be known for being people  
who have the most fulfilling sex lives.’*

Author unknown

We hope you have enjoyed reading this book and that it has been beneficial to your sexual life. It has been our intention to write this book for a multicultural audience. Hoping that it will be acceptable to couples from all cultures. We know that culture can be very dominant in how we talk and write about sexual issues and can have many ‘taboos’. Instead of beating around the bush we have purposefully crossed over some of those taboos so that there will be no misunderstanding of what we actually mean to say. Hopefully this has not caused offence. If we did offend you, please forgive us, that has not been our intention. We are also open to learn and would love to hear your suggestions as to how we can improve in our multicultural approach.

We know that many people cannot read English. For them we want to see this book translated in as many languages as possible and make them available from our website [blessedfountain.info](http://blessedfountain.info) Please do contact us via this website if you are interested in helping us to make a translation into your language.

In the book we have excluded some aspects of sexual life that are specific to certain cultures or to someone's personal situation. Like female mutilation or disability to have sex due to bad health, etc. We will try to add short writings on those topics on our website. In order to do so, we need to hear from you. If there are any topics you would like us to write about, please do send us your story so we could work on covering those topics as well.

We love to hear from you how this book has influenced your marriage. If you could share your testimony with us we would be very grateful.

May God bless you abundantly in all areas of your life,

In Christ Jesus,

Paul & Marjolein

# RESOURCES AND USED MATERIAL

## **Bible:**

**All Scripture references used are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.** THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

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## **Books:**

Getting your sex life off to a great start - C. & J. Penner  
Counseling for Sexual Disorders. - Joyce & Clifford L. Penner, PhD.  
Five Signs of a Functional Family. - Gary Chapman  
Wild at Heart - John Eldredge  
Love & Respect – Emmerson Eggerich  
The Joy of Being a Woman – Ingrid Trobisch  
Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage – Mark Gungor  
The Journey of Hope: Overcoming Abuse – Becca C. Johnson, PhD.  
The normal Christian birth - David Pawson  
God's Intended Intimacy – Adrian Chua  
Head & Helper – P. Th. Heiligenberg  
Geloven in Seks (Believing in Sex) – Tiemen Westerduin & Ilonka Terlouw

## **DVD:**

Mark Gungor – The #1 key to incredible sex. (Laugh your way to a better marriage)

## **Websites:**

[www.webmd.com/sex/anal-sex-health-concerns](http://www.webmd.com/sex/anal-sex-health-concerns)  
[www.settingcaptivesfree.com](http://www.settingcaptivesfree.com)



## **About the Author**

We, Paul & Marjolein Heiligenberg, are Dutch nationals living in The Netherlands. We are married since 1990 and have three adult children. We have been serving in the area of Family Ministry here in Europe and in Asia since 1991. We have a passion to see marriages thrive and be a shining light of the love of Jesus Christ.

Read more at <https://blessedfountain.info/>.



