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A Biblical Approach to Establishing Marital Intimacy

Part III: Commands and Commendations

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Marital intimacy comes not only by following God's model¹ but also by following God's message. Before it is possible to follow God's message on marital intimacy, the commands and commendations for behavior which lead to marital oneness and the aspects or categories of marital intimacy must be understood.

Commands and Commendations

Marital intimacy was enjoyed by the first married couple in their sinless world. However, their marital intimacy was shattered by sin. Once sin entered their relationship with God, it affected their relationship to each other. Intimacy was only restored when man acknowledged his sin and by faith responded to God's provision for sin (Gen 3:21; 4:2). Regeneration by the Holy Spirit allows man to function as God intended in interpersonal relationships.

God's commands and commendations appeal to the Spirit-controlled believer's mind and will to discard sinful patterns of thinking, expressing feelings, and behaving; and to develop biblical patterns for living. The Christian who thinks God's thoughts after Him and chooses to obey His commands and to follow His commendations will experience godly thinking, behavior and feelings. Such obedience by a Christian couple will produce marital intimacy.

A Permanent One-Flesh Union

Marriage is intended by God to be a permanent one-flesh union as seen in Genesis 2:24-25:

For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.
And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

The context of these verses is God's creative days, following His creation of a "helper" for Adam on the sixth day. Created as a social being by God, Adam had no one with whom to relate. God in response to his need made a woman for him. Adam recognized Eve's similar nature, but different features when he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."

Commentators are divided over who is speaking in Genesis 2:24-25. Some like Delitzsch argue that it is Adam rather than Moses.² Whoever the speaker might have been, at God's direction Moses included these fundamental laws of marriage in the creation record. Keil explains:

The words which follow, "therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall become one flesh," are not to be regarded as Adam's, first on account of the *'al ken*, which is always used in Genesis, with the exception of chap. xx.6, xlii.21, to introduce remarks of the writer, either of an archaeological or of a historical character, and secondly, because, even if Adam on seeing the woman had given prophetic utterance to his perception of the mystery of marriage, he could not with propriety have spoken of father and mother. They are the words of Moses, written to bring out the truth embodied in the fact recorded as a divinely appointed result to exhibit marriage as the deepest corporeal and spiritual unity of man and woman, and to hold up monogamy before the eyes of the people of Israel as the form of marriage ordained by God.³

The three fundamental components of marriage are "leaving," "cleaving" and becoming "one flesh." The word "leave" (*ya'azeb*) has a primary signification of "loosing" and the common signification of "forsaking."⁴ The man by leaving his parents for a wife is "loosing"

himself from their authority. This breaking of family dependence is the first step to reliance on a mate. Mack explains that "leaving parents" means:

1. It means that you establish an adult relationship with them.
2. It means that you must be more concerned about your mate's ideas, opinions and practices than those of your parents.
3. It means that you must not be slavishly dependent on your parents for affection, approval, assistance and counsel.
4. It means that you must eliminate any bad attitudes towards your parents or you will be tied emotionally to them regardless of how far you move from them.
5. It means that you must stop trying to change your mate simply because your parents do not like him the way he is.
6. It means that you make the husband and wife relationship your priority human relationship.⁵

Severance from the original families is necessary for oneness in marriage.

The second behavior needed to establish a permanent marriage is "cleaving." The word *dabaq* means "to cling to, to be joined to, to keep close to."⁶ It further carries the sense of clinging to someone in affection and loyalty.⁷ This exclusive relationship which is formed in marriage is to be permanent. Yates declares:

God planned that the marriage bond should be forever indissoluble. Cleave (*dabaq*) means to "glue himself to" his wife (his own wife). The word for wife is singular. The man, who is stronger, is the one who is to cleave. The wife will be held when the husband exerts the kind of loving power described in this verse. Love is strong and enduring.⁸

The decision to leave and cleave is a volitional choice to establish a new social unit by a commitment (Mal 2:14). It is a commitment to each other before God and others who may be present which is renewed daily by selfless behavior. It is a willingness to keep one's promise, in spite of legitimate reasons to break it. It is a commitment to God's Word which declares that

marriage is permanent (Mal 2:14-16; Matt 19:6-9; Rom 7:1-3; I Cor 7:39).

The third action fundamental to marriage is "becoming one flesh." "One flesh" certainly includes the sexual relationship, but that is not its primary meaning. Vawter says, "Biblical Hebrew actually has no separate word for 'body,' 'flesh' is used instead. But the flesh of man is his very being itself, his identity, his heart and soul."⁹ Adams agrees:

Similarly, the Hebrew word for "flesh" means "person."

So when Moses writes that the "two shall become one flesh," he means that the intimacy of marriage is so great that it is like two persons becoming one person.¹⁰

"Becoming one flesh" involves the complete identification of one personality with the other in a community of interests and pursuits, a union consummated in intercourse."¹¹ The sexual union of man and woman in marriage allows the couple's oneness in other areas to be joined. It is a channel through which flow their mutual feeling, appreciation and understanding. The sharing is sensual, but it also is emotional, intellectual and spiritual. It involves the whole person. It is complete intimacy. Mack rightly states, "Marriage is a total commitment and a total sharing of the total person with another person until death."¹²

This fundamental statement regarding marriage is repeated in Scripture. Moses records it of mankind before the fall into sin (Gen 2:24-25). Matthew and Mark record Christ's quotation of the statement (Matt 19:5; Mark 10:7-8) to sinful Pharisees and the multitude. The Apostle Paul uses it to complete his treatment of marriage as it illustrates Christ's relationship with His bride, the Church (Eph 5:22-33).

In quoting Genesis 2:24, both Christ and Paul use the phrase "they two shall be one flesh." To translate *dabaq* in the Genesis passage, Matthew uses *kollethesetai*, while both Mark and Paul add the prefix *pro-* meaning "glued to" or "joined very closely."¹³ Matthew and Mark both record Christ as saying, "so that no longer are they two, but one flesh. Therefore that which God joined together, let no man separate." The relative pronoun *ho* "strengthens the idea of complete fusion into a single being."¹⁴ The

verb *sunezeuxen* has the meaning of "yoke together" or "join together."¹⁵ In Matthew 19:6 and Mark 10:9 it is used as a timeless aorist indicating something which is always true.¹⁶ God does the "joining" or "yoking" of married couples and no one is to do the dividing or separating. In response to the Pharisees' question on divorce, Jesus appeals to the law of creation in Genesis 2:24 and concludes that marriage is indissoluble.

Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 in his analogy of the "one flesh" marriage relationship (Eph 5:22-33) to support what he has said about the responsibilities and relationship between a husband and a wife. "Subjection" and "love" should be characteristics of a Christian marriage.

Paul also quotes the creation passage in I Corinthians 6:16:

Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, "The two will become one flesh." But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

Paul is teaching that it is spiritually inconsistent for Christians to be involved in any form of sexual perversion. There is no such thing as casual sex outside of marriage which does not affect the persons who are involved. "According to Scripture this union is more than an incidental function of the members. It is a coming together as one *soma*, and it is thus of far-reaching significance for the whole physico-spiritual personal life."¹⁷ Gromacki notes:

The act of sexual intercourse physically makes the two parties "one flesh." This union was designed by God as the climax of marital oneness, reflecting the spiritual, mental, and emotional unity already expressed and given (cf Gen 2:24). The verb "is joined" was used of gluing two pieces into one. No one could argue that he was simply being joined physically, and not mentally or emotionally. The sexual act involves a total, not partial oneness. Spiritual union should govern physical union (6:17).¹⁸

In contrast, Paul speaks of union with the Lord in one spirit as that which promotes the highest exaltation of the human personality. Thus, Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 to substantiate his teaching on moral purity and the need to flee fornication.

Thus God ordained marriage to be a permanent one-flesh union (Gen 2:24) and repeated this moral life-ordering statement three times completely (Matt 19:5; Mark 10:7-8; Eph 5:31) and once partially (I Cor 6:16). This is God's formula for marital intimacy.

A Covenant of Companionship

Man was created as a social being in need of companionship (Gen 2:18). One purpose for the creation of woman and marriage was to meet man's need for companionship. The adherence to the spouse (cleave) and the intimacy of oneness (one flesh) testify to the companionship of marriage.

There are three words used in the Old Testament which express the idea of "companion" and which are used in the context of marriage.

'alluph. This word refers to "a person who is familiar" or is "a confidant."¹⁹ Adams further claims that this word "refers to one in intimate relationship with."²⁰ The word is used by both Solomon and Jeremiah. In Proverbs 2:16-17 Solomon warns his son:

To deliver you from the strange woman. From the adulteress who flatters with her words;
That leaves the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God.

The companion which the adulteress is forgetful of is her husband. Some commentators understand "covenant" to refer to the prohibition of adultery in the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:14). However, the marriage contract which is of Divine origin and sanction is meant (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:5).²¹ Jeremiah uses this same structure and marriage context in Jeremiah 3:4 where God is portrayed as the husband who speaks with His spiritually adulterous wife, Judah.

rea'. *Rea'* is used in the sense of marital companion by Solomon in his Song (5:1). The word appears in the plural in the context of sexual intercourse:

I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat friends (*rea'*); Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers.

Solomon is using language descriptive of his sexual relationship with his wife. The use of both "companions" and "lovers" in this context of intimate marital relationship makes this difficult to interpret. Some commentators hold that God is approving married love by the use of these two lines. On the other hand, Palestinian love songs sometimes use the plural even though the context seems to demand the singular.²² That is, the wife is encouraging her husband to experience the ultimate in lovemaking. She is calling him "companion" and "lover."

In Song of Solomon 5:16, the wife calls her husband "companion" (*rea*) meaning a friend who shares confidences and to whom one feels close.²³ In a marriage context it could have the sense of "marriage partner." With the wedding imagery in the opening chapters of the Song of Solomon and the virginity of the bride extolled in the book, one understands the companionship as that involving physical love which takes place after a public covenant of marriage was taken.

Habereth. Malachi uses this third word which is translated "companion." It has the meaning of "united to," "knit together," "associate with."²⁴ It is found in a context condemning divorce (2:14-16) where Malachi states:

Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. "For I hate divorce," says the Lord, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the Lord of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."

The word "companion" parallels "wife by covenant" denoting closeness and commitment. Adams asserts:

Together, they speak of a relationship in which there is constant commitment and intimacy. Intimacy apart from commitment to remain together is not adequate; commitment to remain in association apart from intimacy is equally deficient. Both elements are necessary to defeat loneliness.

Marriage is companionship, one aspect of which involves mating. The intimacy of biblical companionship extends to every aspect of human nature. That is one reason why sexual relations are to be limited to the marriage relationship. There can be no intimate companionship between two persons when a third intervenes. Fornication, adultery, and even polygamy vitiate true companionship because they destroy the intimacy of a constant, close relationship.²⁵

The prophet Malachi twice in these verses uses "wife of your youth." The passing of time should not have lessened the degree of affection or closeness of intimacy they were experiencing in marriage. Age should have purified, solidified and deepened marital love. "Affectionate ties should have persisted as a result of love sharing of common experience."²⁶ God's desires for companionship (intimacy), continuing commitment (covenant), and propagation and rearing of godly children were being thwarted by the carnal desires and actions of the Jews who were divorcing and remarrying.

Fulfilling Role Responsibilities

Role responsibilities have existed since the creation of the first couple. After the fall into sin, man was to continue exerting leadership with his mate, but it would be harder because of the selfish desires of the wife (Gen 3:16).²⁷ This desire is to possess or control the husband; even though the wife was created to be a "helper" or "assistant" (Gen 2:18). Her supportive or submissive responsibility existed from her creation and was in accordance with her nature (I Pet 3:7). These roles have never been changed; in fact, God has given revelation to clarify and to encourage the fulfillment of the role responsibilities.

The key passage on role responsibilities is Ephesians 5:22-33. Chapter five presents God's principles for a godly manner of life. The Christian is to walk in love (5:1-2), to walk in light (5:3-14), to walk carefully (5:15-22) and to walk properly in marriage (5:22-33). The responsibilities of the husband and wife are presented in comparison with Christ's relation to His bride, the Church (5:23). The husband is to be the loving leader in the marriage. Being "head" involves a superior rank as seen from the context of Christ's superiority over the Church. As the head, he is the preserver, ruling and protecting the subordinate. Mack points out how Christ modeled leadership:

1. Jesus Christ practiced the principle of continuous association with those whom He led.
2. Jesus Christ carefully and relevantly instructed His disciples.
3. Jesus Christ led His disciples by being a good example.
4. Jesus Christ led His disciples by making decisions and delegating responsibility to them.²⁸

To be Christlike in leadership, the husband is commanded to continually love his wife. Love (*agapate*) is selfless behavior for the loved one. Husbands are commanded (5:25) to continually be selfless in their behavior to their wives. Christ's sacrificial death for the Church is held up as a model for husbands in giving of themselves for their mates. Husbands also have a continuing moral responsibility (*opheilousin*) to be selfless in their behavior for their wives (5:28). This love shows in conduct which is concerned with the well-being and betterment of the wife. The husband is to nourish and cherish his wife. This must at least refer to his provision of food and warmth for his wife, as he does for himself.²⁹ This behavior promotes intimacy in the relationship by developing and enhancing trust, security, appreciation and openness.

The wife and husband's roles are complementary. The wife is to assist the husband. This assistance requires submission to her husband (Eph 5:23-24, 33). The term submission (*hupotasso*) has a background in military terminology and refers to "being subject to," "to place under" or "to subordinate oneself to the control of another."³⁰ Nowhere is the idea of inferiority connected with subordination. The wife has responsibility to submit herself to her husband just as to the Lord (5:23; I Pet 3:1). One writer explains:

Submission means that the wife puts all of her talents, abilities, resources, energy at her husband's disposal. Submission means that the wife yields and uses all her abilities under the management of her husband for the good of her husband and family. Submission means that she sees herself as a part of her husband's team.

She has ideas, opinions, desires, requests, and insights, and she lovingly makes them known. But she knows that on any good team someone has to make the final decisions and plans. She knows that the team members must support the team leader, his

plans and decisions, or no progress will be made, and confusion and frustration will result.³¹

In fulfilling their responsibilities of being a mate, a mother, and a house manager, women must be submissive to their husbands in the Lord (Eph 5:22-33, Tit 2:5; I Pet 3:1-6). Submission is the wife's way to be selfless and to advance or maintain intimacy.

Communication with the Companion

Man was created with the ability to communicate (Gen 2:18). Satan's first attack was aimed at God's communication with Adam and Eve (Gen 3:1ff). After Adam and Eve sinned, their communication was affected. They hid from God and from each other. Sin's effects have complicated communication since that time. God intended honest, open communication to characterize a marriage. For a husband and wife to be one in all the aspects of their lives, they must communicate (Gen 2:24-25). As one has said:

Whenever you find two people who are continuously and harmoniously walking together, striving toward the same goals, conducting their lives according to the same standards, giving mutual assistance, enjoying sweet fellowship with one another, you can be sure that they are in agreement.³²

Since sin has so grievously affected the ability of people to communicate, God has given much revelation on how to communicate with each other.³³ The Apostle Paul enumerates a number of speech behavior patterns which should replace bad ones:

Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on our anger.

And do not give the devil an opportunity

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you (Eph 4:25-27, 29, 31-32).

The Scriptures present many such principles for communication, which married couples must practice to experience intimacy. For example, in Malachi 2:14, the wife is called "companion" (*rea'*) and as such she is portrayed as "a friend who shares confidences and to whom one feels close."³⁴

Communication can be verbal and/or nonverbal. The Apostle Peter advises godly wives who are married to non-Christian husbands (I Peter 3:1-6) to carry on a non-verbal communication aimed at winning their husbands. One writer says:

God specifically forbids preaching at her husband (without a word) or nagging him with the gospel. . . . The point to get across is that the Christian wife should not expect to win her husband by verbal means (witnessing to him, turning on Christian radio broadcasts for him to listen to, leaving tracts all over the house, etc.). Instead, God orders her to stop all that and demonstrate her faith!³⁵

In the communication with the husband on subjects necessary to discuss for daily living, she is to be respectful and display a "meek and quiet spirit." Stibbs says:

Meek describes the way in which a wife submits to her husband's demands and intrusions by docile and gentle cooperation. Quiet describes her complementary and constant attitude and the character of her actions or reaction towards her husband and towards life in general. She shows no sign of rebellion or resentment, fuss or flurry.³⁶

A Christian wife should communicate in this manner to her husband whether he is saved or lost. Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord (I Pet 3:6). She recognized his leadership position respectfully. Husbands also must communicate respectfully for they are to "nourish and cherish" their wives (Eph 5:29) and are not to be "bitter" or "harsh" against them (Col 3:19). Communication with the marriage companion should be conditioned by love (I Cor 13:4-7). Selfless communication is a key to an intimate marriage.

Dwelling with the Mate

I Peter 3:7. Husbands are commanded to dwell with their mates according to knowledge (I Pet 3:7). The word "dwell with"

(*sunoikountes*) is an old verb for domestic association and only appears here in the New Testament. The word is a compound of *sun* (together with) and *oikeo* (to live or dwell). Husbands are commanded to continually dwell with their wives according to knowledge. This speaks of spending time with the wife with an attitude of understanding. Lack of proper time spent with the mate will undermine the relationship, cause it to emotionally dry up and will place the husband and wife in a condition in which they will be open for temptation.

I Corinthians 7:12-13, 15. Paul writes:

But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, let him not send her away.

And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, let her not send her husband away.

Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace.

Paul, led by the Spirit, gives revelation on behavior with an unregenerate mate. He teaches that the believer and unbeliever who are married are to dwell together if there is agreement to do so. Consent (*suneudokei*) means "to agree with" or "consent to."³⁷ Continual agreement means continual dwelling. Paul forbids the believer to leave the unbeliever as long as the unbeliever agrees. As long as this condition continues, the unbeliever and the children are set apart to be influenced by the godly mate (I Cor 7:14). If the unbeliever departs, the believer is commanded to let him depart. One author writes:

The words "is separating" (or, possibly, "separates") show not only that the unbeliever has divorce in mind, but (at the very least) has taken the step of plainly declaring that he/she wants to dissolve the marriage. The words indicate that there is some movement in that direction.³⁸

Verse fifteen teaches that when the unbeliever does not agree to continue the marriage, the believer must not stand in the way of divorce. When this happens, the believer is not under bondage, he or she is free to remarry. The desertion by the unbeliever, which is

finalized by divorce, releases the believer from the marriage obligations to that unbeliever.

Deuteronomy 24:5. Moses writes: "When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out with the army, nor be charged with any duty; he shall be free at home one year and shall give happiness to his wife whom he has taken." The newly married Jewish man was exempted from military service and from public responsibilities for one year in order that he might have time to spend at home with his wife. During this time he was to "give happiness" (*simmech*) to his newly married mate. Hebrew scholars write:

The verb *samach* suggests three elements: (1) a spontaneous, unsustained feeling of jubilation, (2) a feeling so strong that it finds expression in some external act, and (3) a feeling prompted by some external and unsustained stimulus.³⁹

It is significant that it is the man's responsibility to set the emotional tone of the relationship by behavior which would cause his wife to rejoice. By doing this for a year, he would establish patterns which would bring joy year after year.

Ecclesiastes 9:9. Solomon writes: "Enjoy life with the woman you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life, and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun." The context of this verse describes the hedonistic philosophy of the man without faith in a righteous God and a future life. Verses nine and ten instruct man to enjoy the temporal blessings of God including a happy marriage and satisfaction from work accomplishments. "But this 'good life' apart from God has severe limitations of vanity and futility, at its best bringing limited satisfaction and enduring only for a circumscribed length of time."⁴⁰ Although verse nine is addressed to the unregenerate man about his wife and home, it describes a home life that both regenerate and unregenerate can enjoy with God's allowance. Man is encouraged to enjoy all the pleasures of marital love both emotional and physical. This includes sex as well as other activities together. He is to do this all the days of his fleeting life. His dwelling with his wife in joy is to be a permanent relationship in this life.

Malachi 2:14-15. Malachi uses two terms, "wife of thy youth" and "wife of thy covenant," which indicate extensive time of dwelling

together. The "covenant" refers to the agreement at the time of marriage which was not to be broken. The use of the phrase "wife of youth" is designed to remind men that their wives have gone through the good and bad experiences of life with them. God intends that marriage be for life while sharing confidences, memories, joys and sorrows.

Understanding the Mate

In order to act in love towards one's mate, a person must understand him or her. Peter (I Pet 3:7) commands husbands to dwell continually with their wives with understanding (*gnosin*). To "understand" indicates a relation between the persons knowing and the object or person known. In this respect, what is known is of value or importance to the one who knows, and hence the establishment of the relationship takes place.⁴¹ The husband must understand his mate's abilities, strengths, weaknesses and interests since she is the weaker vessel. As the head of the home, he is to continually put forth effort to know his wife in order to build the relationship, to love his wife Biblically, and to avoid bitterness or harshness (Col 3:19).

Honoring the Marriage Partner

The responsibility of honoring the marriage companion is mutual. Respect for the husband, even if unsaved, is stressed for the wife in I Peter 3:1-6. Likewise husbands are given two commands which should result in proper respect. First, he is commanded to dwell continually with his wife according to knowledge since the wife is a weaker vessel. Second, he is commanded to portion out honor to her as heirs together of the grace of life so that their prayers be not hindered. This second exhortation is introduced with a participle that functions as an imperative. The participle *aponemontes* has the meaning of "portioning out" or "showing." The honor portioned out was to be continuous and was to be expressed to the wife as a spiritual equal (joint-heirs of God's grace). It is to be displayed by appropriate attitude and action. Actions should include positive non-verbal and verbal behavior (Prov 31:28) as well as deed and gifts. Husbands have a constant duty to be understanding and to honor their wives. This will produce closeness which should characterize two companions who are joint-heirs of the grace which brings eternal life.

Wives are also to give honor in marriage. Proverbs 12:4 reads, "An excellent wife is a crown of her husband, but she who shames him is as rottenness in his bones." The word "crown" speaks of a mark of dignity or a chief ornament which brings recognition. Wardlaw explains the crown:

(It) represents the respectability, credit, reputation, which accrue to a man from such a connexion; -- not only from his having made so suitable a choice, but from the inevitable association of the one with the other, and from the discreet and generous conduct of the wife, in at once hiding her husband's failings, and in giving prominence to his excellencies and virtues.⁴²

The woman who shames her husband is like decay in his bones, a disease that reaches to the core. Unger states that it affects his vital powers of mind and body and affects his entire life, public as well as private.⁴³ Paul states in Ephesians 5:33 that the wife is to continually respect (*phobetai*) her husband. Thus wives are commanded to respect or honor their husbands in a way similar to that required of husbands in I Peter 3:7. As the head of the family, the husband is to exert the leadership in this area.

Rearing Children with the Mate

Bearing and rearing children are responsibilities which God gave to every married couple unless they are physically unable. Adam and Eve were commanded to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:27-28). A similar command was given to Noah and his family when the earth was depopulated by the flood (Gen 9:7).

Examples. Example and loving, firm instruction is the key to producing godly children. Scripture provides several examples of parental love and example in child-rearing. In Genesis 35:2-3, Jacob called his entire family together to get rid of false gods and to go to Bethel to worship God. Job continually offered burnt offerings to God for his children to make sure that even sins of the heart be taken away (Job 1:5; cf his wife in 2:9-10). A New Testament example of godly parents is provided by Joseph and Mary. The instruction of the synagogue and of the temple annually at the Passover added to the instruction in the home (Luke 2:51-52). The experience of rearing children can lead to intimate sharing between the parents and produce memories that bind them closer together.

Exhortations. Scripture also provides many exhortations concerning child rearing. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 assigns the teaching of the child to the parents.

And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart;
 And you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

Concerning the word "teach," Lovik writes, "A strong emphasis is placed upon this by using the Pi'el stem of *shannah* meaning 'thou shalt repeat again and again'."⁴⁴ The parents are commanded to speak continually in accordance with God's Word as models for their children. This instruction is to occur both inside and outside the home. This instruction would lead to a fear of the Lord in the child.

Child rearing is a much repeated subject in Wisdom literature. The Psalmist alludes to child training in several passages (cf. 34:11; 78; 103:13,17; 115:13-14; 127; 128:3-6; 132:12). The writers of Proverbs continue the theme (4:1; 5:7; 7:24; 8:32; 17:6; 20:7; 22:6; 23:13; 29:15; 31:28). Solomon opens the book with a call to heed parental instruction, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching" (1:8; cf. also 6:20). The responsibility is placed on the child to listen and to observe the education imparted by both parents. Perhaps the classic verse on child training in Proverbs is 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it." The word "train" (*hanok*) has the concept of rubbing the palate of a newborn child with chewed dates.⁴⁵ The purpose of this act is to create a taste which will induce the child to suck. In view of context, Proverbs 22:6 is a command to the parents to create a taste in the child, at the beginning of life, for a righteous lifestyle. This word also has the idea of "consecrate," "dedicate" or "initiate" the child in the way he should go. The promise is that the seed sown in childhood will come to harvest in adulthood (Gal 6:7). "In the way he should go" indicates the content of the teaching material which will be used to bring about such a harvest.

The New Testament reinforces the concept of child training which is given in the Old Testament. Although several NT passages

refer to the topic of child training, only Ephesians 6:4 will be examined as typical. Ephesians 6:4 contains both positive and negative commands for child training. First, fathers are commanded to "stop provoking" (*parorgizete*) their children to wrath. This is a warning against authoritarian discipline that breaks the spirit of the child. It condemns unjust demands, unreasonable severity and unremitting criticism which produce bitterness, rebellion or a careless attitude in the child. In contrast, they are positively commanded to continually "bring up" or "rear" (*ektrepheete*) them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Discipline (*paideia*) implies training in proper conduct and chastening in times of failure.⁴⁶ Instruction (*nouthesia*) means to "place in the mind." Smith declares that the word is closely related to "teaching" (*didaskalos*) yet includes the concepts of correction, discipline or admonition. He further proposes that the word be translated "to correctively counsel by confrontation."⁴⁷ Kent writes that it is "teaching whether by praise, warning, censure or explanation of principles."⁴⁸ The principles of God are to be continually urged upon the child.

Spiritual Activities with the Mate

While many passages speak of spiritual activities of believers as individuals, only a few verses address the spiritual activities of the believing married couple. Genesis 3:21 records the repentance and acceptance of Adam and Eve by faith of God's provision for the sin problem. Lehman writes:

The initiative taken by God bears the same character as that found in the entire encounter. God needed to do what man was unable to do. In the second place, the provision of garments of skins may carry deeper meaning by reason of the shedding of blood required for providing them.⁴⁹

Though Adam and Eve's daily walk with God in the garden was stopped by sin, they appear to relate to God properly after their confrontation by God and His provision of the skins from the innocent animals (Gen 3:8ff; 4:1).

Aquila and Priscilla are a Christian couple who served the Lord together in Rome, Ephesus and Corinth by helping Paul (Rom 16:3), instructing Apollos (Acts 18:2-3, 24-28), and starting churches (I Cor 16:19). Paul in I Corinthians 7:1-5 sets forth principles relating to the relationship between a husband and wife. In his development he

notes that the only reason for cessation of regular sexual relations is agreement (*sumphoniou*) to stop for a time during which they would devote (*xolasete*) themselves to prayer. Devote means to "busy oneself with," or "give one's time to."⁵⁰

Peter also writes about the prayers of a Christian couple (I Peter 3:7). He points out to husbands that failure to treat the wife with understanding and honor will result in "hindered prayers." That is, there would be a continual hindrance to prayer as long as the wife is not treated as a spiritual equal who is understood and honored. Lenski writes, "A husband who treats his wife in a wrong way will himself be unfit to pray, will scarcely pray at all. There will be no family altar, no life of prayer. His worship in the congregation will be equally affected."⁵¹

A prayer life with a Christian couple is one of the best ways to develop intimacy. When the couple is praying together before the Lord, they should be open and honest. Other activities besides prayer, such as family devotions, worshipping together, witnessing for Christ together, serving other Christians in need, holding Bible studies and reading and discussing Christian literature, can increase spiritual intimacy in a marriage.

Sexual Relations with the Marriage Companion

In the establishment of marriage, God created man and woman with sexual appetites and the apparatus to satisfy them. God's purpose for marriage was (1) for the social-emotional (companionship) needs (Gen 2:18); (2) for the satisfaction of the God-given sexual appetite (I Cor 7:1-5); (3) for the pleasure of the sex act (Song of Solomon); and (4) for the procreation of the human race (Gen 1:27-28). Dave and Diana Garland write, "Rightly understood, sexuality is the centerpiece in the development of intimacy between husband and wife."⁵² The closeness in the other facets of their marriage will come together in a joyful unity in the sexual relationship. Lack of unity in other aspects of the marriage will hinder intimate fulfillment in sex. Josephus claimed that sexual relations were a mingling of souls--the soul of each was shared with the partner.⁵³ The sex act is something that is done with and for the other; leading to a selfless physical relationship. Grentz states:

Sexual intercourse is an outward act that seals and signifies an inward commitment. In marriage the partners enter into a mutual

covenant, as they pledge their faithfulness to each other. Their commitment is sealed in the marriage bed; and the continuing practice of the sex act is a repeated reaffirmation of their pledge.⁵⁴

God not only commands this reaffirmation of their covenant by the sex act (I Cor 7:1-5), but also calls it an honorable aspect of marriage (Heb 13:4). Sexual relations in marriage entail a knowledge of the mate that is of such a profound nature it resembles communication which touches the center of one's being.⁵⁵ The body becomes the channel by which one communicates one's whole cognitive, physiological and spiritual being to another. Sexual intimacy should be the climax of intimacy in the entire marriage relationship. It is the manifestation of the complete oneness of two persons in married love.

Significant terminology for sexual relations. Words in the Bible which are used to relate to sex such as love, desire, male, female, etc. are personal.⁵⁶ This means that sex is viewed as an aspect of humanity and human interpersonal relationships. In Genesis 1:27-28, God commanded the first couple to be fruitful and multiply, which could only come about by sexual intercourse. In Genesis 2:24-25, the fundamental for forming marriages involves cleaving to the mate and becoming "one flesh" (cf Matt 19:5-6; Mark 10:8; Eph 5:31; Mal 2:15); both of which, in part at least, point to sexual relations. In Genesis 4:1, Adam is said to have "known" his wife and as a result she conceived a child. This expression, used throughout the Old Testament, reveals that the sex act is a means of deep communion and sharing "through which a husband and wife come to know each other in a very intimate way."⁵⁷ Genesis 24:67 describes Isaac's marriage as beginning with the bringing of Rebekah into his deceased mother's tent, after which he took her and loved her and was comforted. Baker writes:

This shows appreciation of the unique closeness and basic need of male/female companionship and love and also awareness that it is the closeness of love, care and affection which is vital in that relationship to meet man's emotional needs.⁵⁸

Other expressions which refer to sexual relations are: "lie with" (Gen 30:15-16), "lie with the seed of copulation" (Lev 15-18), "to go in unto her" (Gen 29:21, 23, 30), "sport with" (26:8), "became his

wife and he loved her" (Gen 24:67), "to give pleasure to" (Gen 18:12; Deut 24:5?), and "to spread the skirt over" (Deut 27:20; Ruth 3:9; Ezek 16:8).

Proverbs 5:15-21. Solomon uses metaphorical language to describe human love in a clear, but discreet way. Proverbs 5:15-21 reads:

Drink water from your own cistern
 And fresh water from you own well
 Should your springs be dispersed abroad,
 Streams of water in the streets?
 Let them be yours alone,
 And not for strangers with you.
 Let your fountain be blessed,
 And rejoice in the wife of your youth.
 As a loving hind and a graceful doe,
 Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
 Be exhilarated always with her love.
 For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an
 adulteress, And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?
 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord,
 And He watches all his paths.

Solomon exhorts his son to be refreshed sexually with his own wife (cistern, well). "Let your fountain be blessed" speaks of the wife bearing numerous progeny. She is called "the wife of your youth" (cf Eccl 9:9; Mal 2:14-15) as a reference to longevity and shared experiences. Sexual satisfaction and exhilaration is to be the continual experience of the marriage relationship. The word "exhilarated" (*tishegeth*) means "to be intoxicated" or "to reel from wine."⁵⁹ If a man is satisfied and exhilarated or captivated by his wife's love, he will not have a desire for the love of an adulteress (5:20). Baker writes: "The sheer delight and joyful abandon of romantic love at the emotional and physical levels commended here is only possible, and only has God's approval, within the committed fidelity of marriage."⁶⁰ God's approval is upon sexual relations in marriage. The wicked who seek sex elsewhere will be held by the cords of his sin. He will die for lack of discipline (5:21-23).

Song of Solomon. Although the Song of Solomon is one of the smallest books of the Old Testament, it has been the subject of

more controversy than any other book of its size. The erotic, poetic language of the book has produced a multitude of interpretations including Jewish allegory, Christian allegory, drama, a collection of love songs with no unity, a type, an adaptation of a cultic liturgy, a scene from a harem, a parable and a lyric idyll.⁶¹ This writer understands the Song of Solomon to be a lyric idyll, a kind of love song in which speeches and events do not follow in chronological order, in which the chorus, an imaginary group, interrupts certain scenes to make brief speeches and to give warnings.⁶²

The title of this love poem describes it as the best of songs (I Kgs 4:32). The woman, bride and wife, is possibly Solomon's first wife since the queens, concubines and virgins (6:8) are not of the number that he later had (I Kgs 11:3). The wife of Solomon is called "Shulammith" (7:1). Scholars argue that the word indicates that she was a Shunamite, from Shunem in Galilee.⁶³ Acceptance of this identification leads some to identify her as Abishag, a beautiful girl who kept David warm in his old age, but who did not know him sexually (I Kgs 1:1-4; 2:13-25).⁶⁴ There is no evidence of this, although they were contemporary. Other scholars⁶⁵ take the word as a feminine of Solomon and call her "Solomoness." It is best to identify her as a beautiful virgin of northern Palestine (Lebanon) who is addressed as Shulammith. She is courted by Solomon, a shepherd king, who marries her. Song of Solomon consists almost entirely of reciprocal speeches between these married lovers about each other's physical charms and about the delight of sexual love. Baker observes:

The Song is a celebration of true love between a young man and young woman in all its emotional intensity and physical and personal delight, in a way which extols both the one-to-one principle (which marriage proclaims) as against polygamy or promiscuity, and the need for virginity to be preserved intact until the day when a girl is 'spoken for' in marriage (Ct. 5:9ff; 6:8-9; 4:12; 8:8-10).⁶⁶

Kaiser writes, "The book then was intended as a commentary on Genesis 2:24 and a manual on the blessing and reward of intimate married love once Yahweh had lit the flame and given the capability of enjoyment."⁶⁷ Song of Solomon recounts the behavior patterns prior to and during sexual relations between a husband and a wife which lead to sexual intimacy and other aspects of intimacy.

(1) **Seeing.** The sight of a person's love partner is an appealing experience in the Song of Solomon. Seeing each other during courtship is mutually enjoyable. However, as a married couple, seeing each other during sexual relations is especially significant (cf Matt 5:28; I Cor 7:1-5). Each views and compliments the other. She describes his body by comparing him with gold, a raven, doves, being bathed in milk, a garden bed of balsam, perfumes, myrrh, rods of gold, yellow jasper, ivory, sapphires, alabaster, fine gold, cedars and says that his complexion is fair and ruddy (5:10-16). In speaking of her, he speaks of her sex appeal by comparing her to a mare (1:9). Her eyes were likened to doves (1:15). He further compared her with doves, she-goats, a flock of newly-washed sheep, twins of sheep, red thread, a slice of pomegranate, the tower of David, twins of a gazelle, myrrh, frankincense, wine, all spices, honey, the scent of Lebanon, a garden, a spring, a fountain, henna, nard, saffron, calamus, cinnamon, aloes, streams, balsam juice, milk and so forth. These multiple descriptions reflect her beauty.⁶⁸

In his descriptions of her, he unashamedly spoke of her physical appearance. He uses such terms as "spring" (4:12, 15, etc.), "well" (4:15), "a garden" (4:12, 15-16; 5:1; 6:2, etc.), "fountain" (4:12), "sprouts" (4:13, "fresh fertile wady" (torrent valley) (6:11), "water troughs" (7:6), "our openings" (7:14), and "under the apricot tree" (8:5). She spoke of delighting to sit in his shadow and to taste his fruit which was sweet to her palate (2:3). Sight in these instances moved the lovers to voice what they saw and stirred them to sexual relations. Sight is important in courtship days and more so in sexual marital relations.

(2) **Hearing.** Hearing the words of one's mate when they are lovingly expressed increases intimacy in marriage. In the courtship days, it advances the relationship toward marriage. Hearing affects the thinking of the person which leads to behavior which evokes the feeling of the person.

In his courtship days, Solomon addresses his companion with terms of love, "O my dove . . . Make your voice heard, for your voice is sweet and your appearance beautiful!" (2:14). When she perceives his approach, she explains, "Listen! My Love! Look! Here he comes!" (2:8). In the time after the wedding, he continues to long to hear her voice: "My companions are listening for your voice, Make me hear it" (8:13). However, when the voice of the lover is desired and not heard, the joy is replaced by tragedy.

Terms of endearment are used by both prior to and during marriage. He calls her "my companion" or "darling" (1:9, 15; 2:2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:2; 6:4), "my sister" (sometimes translated beloved or darling, 4:9-10, 12; 5:1-2), "my dove" (2:14; 6:9) or "perfect dove" (5:2), "chosen damsel" (6:9) and "pure damsel" (6:10), "nobleman's daughter" (6:12) and "daughter of nobility" (7:1), "beautiful" (1:8, 14; 2:10, 13; 4:1 (twice), 7; 6:4 (twice); 7:7), "lovely" (pleasant, pleasing, agreeable) (7:6), "perfect one" (6:9), "bride" (spouse) (4:8, 10, 11, 12; 5:1) and "garden" (frequently). She calls him "my love" (lover) (1:13, 14, 16; 2:3, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17; 4:16; 5:1 (?), 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 16; 6:2, 3; 7:10, 11, 12, 14; 8:14), "one whom my soul loves" (1:7; 3:1, 2, 3, 4), "my friend" (5:1 (?), 16), "charming" (beautiful) (1:16), "shepherd of the lilies" (2:16), and "gazelle" and "stag" (2:9, 17; 8:14).

She, in addition to complimenting his body (5:10-16), praises his manliness or character (1:3). He, not only compliments her beauty and her body (1:9-10, 15; 4:1-5, 7; 6:4-7; 7:2-10), but also, her virginity (4:12; 6:10) and her lovemaking (4:10). The security of Solomon's wife is seen in a refrain: "My love is mine and I am his" (2:16), "I am my lover's and he is mine" (6:3), "I am my lover's and his longing is for me" (7:10). Dillow explains the progression in this refrain of possession:

This could possibly suggest a deepened sense of security in Solomon's love. When she first mentions the refrain it is during their courtship, and her possession of Solomon is primary, while his possession of her is secondary. The second time she reverses the order, making his possession of her primary, indicating a greater degree of security in him. Now, after this love scene where she has totally satisfied her man, she not only places his possession of her in the forefront, but she strengthens it by saying that his desire is toward her. She is so focused on him that she omits her possession of him. She is revelling in her "woman power"--her ability to satisfy her man physically.⁶⁹

Very significant to intimate marital love are the vocal statements of the mates requesting sex or making statements of intent about giving it. Song of Solomon portrays the wife as aggressive in requesting or promising sexual relations as her husband. She makes the statement, "He shall spend the night between my breasts" (1:13). On the wedding night, she declares that he brought her to the place of lovemaking and signaled his interest by his glance. She requests

him to stimulate and excite her for she is "sick from love" (2:4-5). She speaks of leading him to her place of conception, where she would "give him sweet wine of her pomegranate" (8:2).

Solomon as well speaks of their sexual relations. In Song of Solomon 4:9, 10, he says:

You encouraged me, my sister, my bride!
You encouraged me with one (look) from your eyes!--
With one necklace from your necklaces!
How beautiful is your love my sister, my bride!
How much more pleasing than wine is your love!
And the scent of your oil, than all spices!

After his wife had spoken of his sexual approach (4:16), he declared that he had come to his garden, his sister, his bride (5:1). Eating and drinking are used metaphorically to indicate his sexual enjoyment. Song of Solomon 6:11 pictures Solomon going to his wife's "garden." "There," he says, "you will give me your myrrh" (6:12). The vocal expressions of godly mates during daily activities and sexual relations demonstrate the closeness of the two persons. The descriptions of each other's body and the expressions during sexual relations communicate acceptance, ownership, security, mutual privilege and responsibility, unashamedness, and sexual satisfaction. If married couples heard terms of endearment, loving descriptions, expressions of delight and satisfaction and requests and promises of sexual relations, they would be moved to thoughts and behavior which would produce intimate feelings.

(3) Touching. Touching is very important to relationships and especially in marriage. Wheat writes:

God created us with hundreds of thousands of microscopic nerve endings in our skin designed to sense and benefit from a loving touch. A tender touch tells us that we are cared for. It can calm our fears, soothe pain, bring us comfort, or give us the blessed satisfaction of emotional security. As adults, touching continues to be a primary means of communicating with those we love, whether we are conscious of it or not.

Snuggling and cuddling, sleeping close to each other, sharing affection through simple touch will meet many of the emotional needs that you hoped sex would provide. At the same time, this

pattern of affectionate closeness provides a delightful prelude to the entire sex relationship, preparing the way emotionally for wonderful times together.⁷⁰

Touching is evident between Solomon and his wife by the allusions to kissing and embracing. The book begins with her declaring: "He is kissing me with the kisses of his mouth" (1:2). He speaks of her lips dripping honey and milk, and of honey being under her tongue (4:11). In 5:13 of the Song, she says, "His lips drip flowing myrrh." His mouth is described as "sweetness" and "delightfulness" (5:16). He declares that her mouth is "like good wine" (for celebration) which "goes down with smoothness" while "gliding over sleeping lips" (7:9). In 8:1 she wishes her lover might be as her brother who could be kissed in public without society's reaction. Twice the word "embrace" (*hillah*) is used (2:6; 8:3), both contexts consist of a married man and wife involved in foreplay of sexual relations. Delitzsch says of "embrace": "To embrace lovingly, to fondle, of that gentle stroking with the hand elsewhere."⁷¹ Touch is a significant means of communicating love in courtship and marriage. It is a behavior pattern that men, especially, need to cultivate at times other than during sexual relations.

(4) **Smelling and tasting.** The Song of Solomon describes the places of love as lovely gardens, rustic spots, and meaningful places which have pleasing fragrances (1:15-17; 4:12-5:1; 6:1-3, 11-12, etc.). In 1:3 of the Song, she expresses her pleasure with the odor of his cologne. Again in 1:12-14, she speaks of it and compares him to a bundle of myrrh and a cluster of henna flowers. Song of Solomon 3:6 describes Solomon's sedan chair as fumigated with every aromatic powder. The consummation of the royal couple's love (4:1-5:1) is greatly fragranced by the perfumes of the bride. She calls on the winds to blow upon her "garden" so that her lover may experience the perfumes as he is sexually satisfied (4:16). In 4:10, the bride's own "oils" give off a fragrance that exceeds all spices. The scent of her garment is like the scent of Lebanon (4:11). Her hands are perfumed as she rises to open the door for him (5:5). She compares his cheeks to a garden terrace of balsam, a raised bed of perfumes (5:13). Again, she speaks of her lover as going to his garden, a bed of balsam (6:2). Mandrakes, an aphrodisiac in the ancient world, give off their scent (7:13) to the lovers.

The tasting of food and drink was a pleasurable experience for the lovers. Many times their comparisons are to the wines of

celebration (7:9). The words "taste," "eat," "drink," and "feed" are used metaphorically to mean "experience" or to "fill one's self with the delightful pleasures" (4:16; 5:1; 6:3; 8:2, etc.). In 2:5, she asks to be strengthened with "raisin cakes" and "apricots" (apples), which were considered to be aphrodisiacs. Solomon, while making love, says, "Honey and milk are under your tongue" (4:11). Both lovers describe each other's mouth as the essence of "sweetness" and "like a good wine" (5:16; 7:9).

(5) **Expression of the emotions.** This short love song is filled with expressions like happy, rejoice, delight, awe-inspiring, longing and lovesick. The expression "lovesick" appears twice and is used to describe the woman's passion to be sexually satisfied (2:5; 5:8). The bride expresses her excitement at his voice (5:6) and the delightfulness of his mouth (5:16). He expresses his refreshment with his sexual activities with her (4:15). In 7:9, he compares her mouth with good wine which goes down smoothly, gliding over sleeping lips. This might have reference to the satisfaction of a lover who is falling off to sleep. Dillow writes, "As wine causes the body to relax and drift into sleep, so their love has left them sweetly exhausted, and they fall asleep in one another's arms."⁷² Love's strength is described at some length in 8:6-7:

Put me as a signet ring upon your heart,
 As a signet ring upon your arm.
 For love is as strong as death;
 Ardent love is as fierce as Sheol:
 Its flames are the flames of the fire of Yahweh.
 Much water will not be able to extinguish love
 And rivers will not overflow it.
 If a man gives all the wealth of his house for love,
 They will surely despise him.

In Song of Solomon 8:6, she requests to be placed as a seal on her husband's heart--the place of his affection. She wants to be placed like a seal on his arm--the place of strength. Thus, this bride recognizes the intensity and exclusiveness of true love and wants to be near her husband's heart and under his protection.

This beautiful woman compares Solomon's love to "flashes of fire, the very flame of God" (8:6),⁷³ unquenchable and invaluable. Marital love like this is selfless and is freely given. Hocking writes of the commitment that the bride requests: "(1) It is an intimate

commitment. (2) It is an intense commitment. (3) It is an indestructible commitment. (4) It is an invaluable commitment."⁷⁴ Marital love affects the entire personality of each mate. It is volitional (will), emotional (feelings), and intellectual (mind). Where this kind of love burns, there is acceptance, mutuality, identity, loyalty, honesty and security. Emotions are to be a significant part of marital love. Marital intimacy means more than emotions, but when emotions are lacking, there is also a lack of righteous thinking and behavior.

(6) Spending time together. The closeness of the lovers is manifested by the amount and quality of time they spend together. In their courtship days, Solomon visits her in Lebanon in the spring of the year (2:8-14). During times together and alone, they are concerned enough to discuss things which could hurt their love--her physical appearance (1:6), his time spent with responsibilities (1:7-8), the little foxes which spoil the vines (2:15), selfishness which refuses sexual advances in married life (5:2-8), knowing where her lover is (3:1-3), her turning away from those who alarm him⁷⁵ (6:5), interruptions during sexual relations (2:7; 3:5; 8:4), trying to buy love (8:7) and need for communication (2:8-10, 14; 5:2-6; 8:13-14), when and where to take vacation or times to be away alone together (4:8; 8:5-7) and need for his affection and protection (8:6). They certainly spend time together sexually--in the marriage chamber (1:4-2:7; 4:1-5:1), in her mother's house in her dream (3:4), in the palace bedroom (6:2-7:10), in the fields, the villages and vineyards (7:11-13), and in her mother's house on vacation (8:2-5). As a loving couple, they spend time at home (1:4, 17; 2:3; 3:1; 5:1-6), in royal transportation (3:7, 9), on vacation (4:8; 8:5-7), in the country (7:12-14), at relatives' homes (3:4; 8:2, 5) and at work (1:7-8). The new bride says, "Draw me after you and let us run together" (1:4). This is the pattern for intimates.

(7) Preparing one's self and places for lovemaking. On their wedding night, the royal couple go to the bedroom which he has provided and prepared, the marriage chamber (1:4, 12, 16-17; 4:1-5:1). In her dream and later in real life, she takes him to her mother's house (3:4; 8:5-7). On vacation the place of lovemaking is in a romantic place in the country or in the security of a relative's home (7:11, 12; 8:2). She prepares her bedroom for lovemaking by wearing perfumes (4:13-14; 5:5, etc.), nude dancing for him (6:13), planning for no interruptions (2:7; 3:5; 8:4), wearing jewelry (1:10-

11; 4:9), wearing a veil (4:1; 6:7), keeping her hair attractive (1:10-11; 4:1; 6:5; 7:6), keeping her mouth pleasant (4:3, 11; 7:9), making sure she is clean in bed (5:3) and keeping herself attractive physically for him (1:9-10, 15; 4:1-5:7; 6:4-7; 7:2-9). He prepares for lovemaking by wearing cologne (perfume) (1:3, 12), having a sweet mouth (5:13, 16), providing and preparing the bedroom (1:16-17), providing aphrodisiac food (2:5) and keeping himself in good physical condition (5:10-16).

(8) Summary. The behavior patterns modeled by Solomon and his wife which are recorded under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit involve seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, expression of the emotions in righteous ways, spending time together, and preparing themselves and places for lovemaking. It should be noted that the five senses with which men and women have been endowed by God are to be used by couples in marriage to endear themselves to their mates and to enhance the intimacy in their marriage. The use of the five senses as modeled by Solomon and his wife not only increases sexual intimacy, but also advances all other aspects of marital intimacy.

The intensity of married love is compared to the flames of the fire of Yahweh (8:6). Could it be that God is speaking the last two quotes of Song of Solomon 5:1? "Eat friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers." If God is speaking and not the husband or wife, then He is encouraging the sexual behavior of this newly married couple and wants them to find their sexual satisfaction in their mate. This agrees with Genesis 2:24-25, Hebrews 13:4, I Corinthians 7:1-5 and especially Proverbs 5:15-21 where God also views the married man who is satisfied and intoxicated by his wife's lovemaking.

New Testament Revelation

Jesus Christ Himself approved of sexual relations in marriage by His quotation of Genesis 2:24 which includes sex in the one-flesh concept (Matt 19:5-6; Mark 10:8), by His condemnation of adultery both in act and thought (Matt 5:27-28), by the performance of His first miracle at a wedding at the beginning of His ministry (John 2:1-11) and by the use of the marriage analogy to His relationship with the Church (Eph 5:23; Rev 19:7-9; 22:17).

The Apostle Paul gives the most revelation and the clearest instructions on sex in marital relations found in the New Testament. He stresses the importance of moral purity and self-control in sexual

matters (I Thess 4:3-7), in sexual abstinence of unmarried people (I Cor 7:7-9), and in the approval of God on sexual relations in marriage (I Tim 4:3; Heb 13:4). False prophets who were forbidding marriage were declared to be wrong. A clear approval by God of sex in marriage as revealed by Paul is set forth in Hebrews 13:4 which reads: "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge." The verse begins with *timios* ("precious," "valuable," "held in honor")⁷⁶ which stresses the honorableness of marriage (*gamos*). The word "bed" (*koite*) is a euphemism for sexual intercourse⁷⁷ and is the word from which the word "coitus" originates. Sexual relations in marriage are pure and undefiled in a religious and moral sense (*amiantos*).⁷⁸ In contrast to marriage partners who are involved in honorable and pure sexual activity, there are fornicators and adulterers who will be judged by God.

Paul's most detailed explanation of marital sex is given in I Corinthians 7:1-5 which reads:

Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

The principles from this passage which relate to selfless sexual relations in marriage are concisely stated by Adams:

1. Sexual relations within marriage are holy and good. God encourages relations and warns against their cessation.
2. Pleasure in sexual relations is not sinful but assumed (the bodies of both parties belong to each other). See also the Song of Solomon and Proverbs 5:18, 19.
3. Sexual pleasure is to be regulated by the principle that one's sexuality is not to be self-oriented but other-oriented ("rights" over one's body are given in marriage to the other party). All homosexuality and masturbation are out of accord with

this fundamental principle. The idea here, as elsewhere, is that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

4. Sexual relations are to be regular and continuous. No exact number of times per week is advised, but the principle is that both parties are to provide such adequate sexual satisfaction that both "burning" (sexual desire) and temptation to find satisfaction elsewhere are avoided.
5. The principle of satisfaction means that each party is to provide sexual enjoyment (which is "due" him or her in marriage) as frequently as the other party requires. But, of course, other biblical principles (moderation, seeking to please another rather than oneself, etc.) also come into play. Consideration for one's mate is to regulate one's requests for sexual relations. But this must not be used as an excuse for failing to meet genuine needs. On the other hand, requests for sexual satisfaction may not be governed by an idolatrous lust.
6. In accordance with the principle of "rights," there is to be no sexual bargaining between married persons ("I'll not have relations unless you . . ."). Neither party has the right to make such bargains.
7. Sexual relationships are equal and reciprocal. Paul does not give the man superior rights to the woman. It is clear, then, that mutual stimulation and mutual initiation of relations are legitimate. Indeed, the doctrine of mutual rights involves also the obligation of mutual responsibility. This means, among other things, mutual active participation in the act of intercourse.⁷⁹

As in all relationships, in marriage a Christian couple are to be loving each other in selfless ways. Sexual relations with the marriage companion is a reaffirmation of their marriage covenant and should be the consummation of all aspects of intimacy in the marriage.

Aspects of Marital Intimacy Revealed

Marital intimacy is a oneness between a man and a woman who have committed themselves to each other before God in marriage. Three aspects included in marital intimacy are cognitive intimacy, emotional intimacy, and behavioral intimacy (social, work-related, spiritual, sexual). This understanding of intimacy is based on the

truth that man was created in the image of God with a personality composed of intellect, emotion and will (Gen 1:26-27). By the exercise of the will, man chooses to behave. His intellect and emotions are vitally involved in the decision-making process that leads to an exercise of his will.

Man's behavior is divided into categories of social, work-related, spiritual and sexual because of the way in which God endowed him. Man was created a social being who needs to relate to avoid loneliness and to accomplish God's purposes (Gen 2:18). He was also created as a telic being with motivation toward completion of goals (Gen 1:28). God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it (Gen 2:15). Eve was made to be a "helper" for Adam (Gen 2:18). This telic nature of man leads couples to work-related activities to provide for their needs and wants and to allow them to have a sense of accomplishment or satisfaction.⁸⁰ Being an ontological duality, man has two parts or aspects to his existence--body and soul/spirit. There is an overarching unity between these two parts (Heb 4:12). Thus, man has a material aspect and a non-material aspect to his nature. The non-material aspect is man's spirit. As a spirit, man will live forever with or without God (Rev 20:5, 11-15). He will either worship the God who created him or will exalt false gods (Rom 1:21-32; John 4:24).

Christian couples have regenerated natures and are each indwelt by the Spirit of God. They can have a oneness of spirit in all their activities: work-related, social, sexual, or God-related. Man was also created a sexual being who is able to experience physical oneness with his wife. This allows him to experience the deepest level of companionship and to propagate the human race (Gen 1:27-28; 2:18, 24-25). All of these aspects of marital intimacy come from the nature of man as intellectual, emotional, volitional, social, telic, spiritual (religious) and sexual.

Cognitive Intimacy

Cognitive intimacy is the experience of sharing thoughts. This would include memories, experiences, dreams, imaginations, feelings, traditions, rationale, interests, opinions, and impressions. Willingness and the ability to communicate are necessary if this is to take place. Wright, the author of numerous books on communication, writes:

Communication is a process (either verbal or nonverbal) of sharing information with another person in such a way that he understands what you are saying. Talking and listening and understanding are all involved in the process of communication.⁸¹

With two different lifestyles, catalogues of experience, and personal histories being blended along with cognitive differences and interests, the couple seeking cognitive intimacy must lovingly and patiently communicate. Love leads to openness and it builds trust which encourages more openness. With mutual trust and openness, the couple will frankly and courageously share their thoughts and feelings. Each mate needs to know how the other feels because how he/she feels will affect their thinking and behavior. Cognitive intimacy does not mean that each mate will think exactly like the other at all times, since each has their own identity, personality, interests, ways of viewing ideas, institutions, objects and people, and hobbies. It does mean that each mate will understand the other from the sharing of their thoughts about their life and feelings. There will be a oneness of mind about major goals and plans to reach them (Amos 3:3). There are many Scriptures which set forth principles for communication and thinking. However, this study is limited to marital intimacy and has dealt only with passages in which married partners are mentioned. The Scriptures which fit the category of cognitive intimacy are as follows: Genesis 2:24-25; 3:1-10, 16; 12:13; 20:2, 9, 12-13; 26:7, 10; 27:46; 28:1-3, 7; I Kings 11:4; Proverbs 12:4; 14:1; 18:22; 19:13-14; 21:9, 19; 25:24; 27:15-16; 30:21-23; 31:10-12, 30; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Jeremiah 2:32; Amos 3:3; I Corinthians 7:5, 9; II Corinthians 6:14, 16; Ephesians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:18-19; and I Peter 3:1-7.

Emotional Intimacy

Emotional intimacy is experiencing a closeness of feelings. Tolstedt and Stokes call this affective intimacy. It is "the perception of closeness and emotional bonding, including intensity of liking, moral support, and ability to tolerate flaws in the other."⁸² One has defined it thus:

Emotional intimacy is the in-depth awareness and sharing of important and valued feelings and attitudes about life. This type of intimacy is the basis for all other forms of intimacy and is the highest form. When a couple can learn to share on this level,

when they can understand and experience one another's feelings, they have achieved intimacy.⁸³

Husbands and wives need to share their feelings with each other. It is done with the motive of love in a loving manner. When they withhold, it is usually out of fear of making themselves vulnerable to the other. It reveals a pride and lack of trust. Many times to hide deep feelings of inadequacy, people talk about surface issues or blameshift. Empathy means to "feel into." When a couple empathize, they see where the other mate is and then put themselves in the mate's place (feeling what he feels and thinking what he thinks).⁸⁴ Bower states:

Reflecting a mate's feelings is very helpful in creating an atmosphere favorable to conversation. Phoniness, artificiality, and all that lacks genuineness, however, should be avoided. There must be a true desire to help the other person by mirroring his emotions and moods.⁸⁵

The Apostle Paul describes this as "rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep" (Rom 12:15). One important way of communicating feelings is by touching. This is needed by babies at birth for their emotional and physical well-being.⁸⁶ Because of yielding to cultural pressures, parents stop touching children shortly after the child is six years old.⁸⁷ This lack of touching with adults is contributing to lack of emotional intimacy. Wheat writes:

Psychologists believe that American preoccupation with sex these days is really a longing for the emotionally supportive physical affection that every human craves, but which has been in short supply in our culture.⁸⁸

Atwater, a sociologist at Seton Hall University, says that women have extramarital affairs mainly because they want deeper emotional intimacy.⁸⁹ Emotional intimacy is experiencing closeness of feeling and is possible with openness and honesty. As God reacts feelingly to the facts and relations of life, so man has that ability and can be a real in-depth companion to his mate. Scriptures which relate to emotional intimacy include: Genesis 18:12; 23:2; 35:20; Deuteronomy 24:5; 28:56; Ruth 3:1; I Samuel 1:8; 30:3-6; II Samuel 3:16; Psalm 19:5; 45:15; 113:9; Proverbs 5:18; 31:25; Ecclesiastes 9:9;

Song of Solomon 4:9; 5:4; 7:10; 8:6; Isaiah 49:18; 61:10; 62:5; Jeremiah 2:2; 7:34; 16:9; 25:10; John 3:29; I Corinthians 7:34; II Corinthians 11:2; Colossians 3:19; I Timothy 4:3; Titus 2:4; I Peter 3:7-8; and Revelation 19:7.

Behavioral Intimacy

Behavioral intimacy is experiencing closeness in conduct together. There are four kinds of behavioral intimacy: social intimacy, work-related intimacy, spiritual intimacy and sexual intimacy.

Social intimacy. Social intimacy is the experience of having common friends and similarities in social activities. God created man for communion with Himself and with other humans (Gen 3:8). Sin caused alienation and loneliness. By faith and repentance (conversion), the sinner can be forgiven and cleansed. Relationship is immediately established with God with the person being indwelt by the Spirit and having a new nature (II Cor 5:17). Rapport also exists between believers because of their nature and the Spirit (Rom 8:13-17).

A Christian couple who are walking with the Lord are two regenerate social beings who are in the social relationship which can return the greatest satisfactions. God saw man's need for a person who corresponded to him (Gen 2:18). Adam recognized that they came from a common source and truly shared a sense of unity (Gen 2:23). Johnston writes, "The Bible has in mind a social and relational unit of two people who belong to each other in such a way that without each other they are less than themselves; the unity cannot be broken without damage to both partners in it."⁹⁰ In a Christian couple's sharing of common friends and common social activities, they develop pleasant memories, common knowledge and emotional experiences which can bind them together.

Some sociologists would distinguish between recreational intimacy and aesthetic intimacy. Recreational intimacy is the shared experiences of interests, hobbies, participating in sporting events and creating things together. Aesthetic intimacy is the sharing of experiences of beauty, such as music, art and observation of nature. It is the writer's view that these two types of intimacy should be included in social intimacy because their value for intimacy is in two social beings experiencing these things together. One warns against the practice of encouraging one's mate to enjoy recreational activities without him/her. He says, "spending recreational time with his wife

is second only to sex for the typical husband."⁹¹ Many mates who enjoy recreational activities with people other than their mate expose themselves to developing an intimacy with someone of the opposite sex. This does not forbid an occasional hunting or fishing trip or a concert with a friend of the same sex, but it is warning against the danger of developing an intimacy with someone other than your mate. Many of the Christian couples' social activities revolve around their local church and their children's school activities. Even the social activities other than these are done most of the time with other Christian couples from the church. Business, aesthetic, recreational and evangelistic activities move Christians into contact with unregenerate people who need the witness of a loving Christian couple who have intimacy in their marriage. The Scriptures which relate to social intimacy are: Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18, 23-25; 3:6-8, 16-17, 20; 12:13; 18:6-8; 20:2, 13, 16; 26:7, 10; Deuteronomy 13:6; Ruth 1:9; 3:1, 11; I Samuel 1:5, 8; II Samuel 1:26; Proverbs 11:16; 12:4; 14:1; 18:22; 19:13-14; 21:9, 19; 25:24; 27:25-26; 31:21-23, 30; Ecclesiastes 9:9; Esther 1:10, 12, 22; 5:4ff; 7:1ff; Song of Solomon 1:9, 15; 2:2, 10, 13; 3:6-11; 4:1, 7; 5:2, 16; 6:4; John 3:29; I Corinthians 7:1-5, 39; II Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:25, 28, 33; Colossians 3:19 and I Peter 3:1-7.

Work-related intimacy. Work-related intimacy is the experience of shared work either cognitively or actually. Man was made a telic being with motivation toward completion of goals or the accomplishment of that which is productive (Gen 1:28). Eve was created as a "helper" (Gen 2:18) for Adam. He was assigned the cultivation of the garden (Gen 2:15). Even after man's fall into sin, he was to work six days and rest one (Exod 20:9-11). The work of each would be more difficult, but man could still have the satisfaction of accomplishment by completing the work. Trimble defines "work intimacy" as "the feeling of closeness derived from joint efforts in mutual tasks."⁹² It may be refinishing furniture, painting the house, mowing the yard, writing and typing a dissertation, getting a meal together or any number of work-related activities.

Also, work-related intimacy can be experienced cognitively. This is the sharing of one's experiences and feelings about his or her work with the mate. An empathetic mate can share one's frustrations and joys which are related to work. The virtuous woman in Proverbs 31:10-31 does her husband good (31:12) so that he sits in a place of leadership (31:23). Likewise, he praises her for her

"doings" (31:29), her fear of the Lord (31:30), "the products of her hands" (31:31) and "her works" (31:31). He should encourage his wife with her responsibility of household management (I Tim 5:14; Titus 2:4-5). She should encourage him in his work which supports the family financially. Work attempted together by a Christian couple who are controlled by the Holy Spirit will produce conversation, memories, a shared joy of accomplishment and appreciation for the assistance by the mate. The Scriptures which touch on the subject of work-related intimacy are Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15, 18, 21-22; 3:17-19; 18:6-8; Proverbs 12:4; 14:1; 18:22; 19:14; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 9:9; Acts 18:2-3, 18, 26; Romans 16:3; I Corinthians 7:34; Ephesians 4:28; I Thessalonians 4:11-12; II Thessalonians 3:10; I Timothy 5:8; 6:6-8; I Peter 3:3, 6 and Revelation 19:7; 21:2.

Spiritual intimacy. Spiritual intimacy is the experience of sharing relatedness to God and to other believers, a similar sense of meaning in life, spiritual goals, evangelistic activities, edification ministries, congregational and personal worship and prayer and Bible reading. Olson, of the University of Minnesota, defines spiritual intimacy as "the experience of showing ultimate concerns, a similar sense of meaning in life, and/or religious faith."⁹³ Secular studies on the happiness of marriage have consistently found the most significant factor to be "religiosity."⁹⁴ "Religiosity" as measured by the social sciences usually refers to a variety of factors such as church attendance and opinions about the importance of faith in one's life.⁹⁵ Thus, a significant religious experience has a vital relation to experiencing a fulfilling marriage.

A married Christian couple who each know the Lord by faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross and who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5) should have a vital, intimate relationship with the Lord (Rom 12:1-2). Small writes, "The quality of love in marriage will reflect the quality of the spiritual lives of husband and wife, and especially will reflect the growth of love for the Lord of all."⁹⁶ The husband is responsible for exerting leadership in spiritual activities with the wife and family. As Christ provides that which will lead to maturity in the way of spiritual nourishment and provides love and tender care, so husbands are to do so for their wives (Eph 5:29). Peter and Paul wrote that a married couple should pray together (I Cor 7:5; I Pet 3:7). "Praying together especially reduces the sense of competitiveness in

marriage and at the same time enhances the sense of complementarity and completeness."⁹⁷ A married Christian couple are to regularly worship together (Heb 10:25). Family devotional time should be a regular part of every Christian home (Deut 6:6-7; Ps 78:5; Prov 1:8). A spiritual activity of every Christian couple is the asking for and the granting of forgiveness of sin against the other (Eph 4:31-32; Col 3:13). "It's that kind of ultimate willingness to forgive even before forgiveness is sought that is the mark of covenant love."⁹⁸ The road to deep marital intimacy involves learning to share one's spiritual life with one's mate. How a person relates to God will determine how they relate to their mate. Tertullian, the second-century church father, described spiritual intimacy in marriage:

How beautiful is the marriage of two Christians, two who are one in hope, one in desire, one in the way of life they follow, one in the religion they practice. . . . Nothing divides them, either in flesh or spirit. They pray together, they worship together, they fast together; instructing one another, encouraging one another, strengthening one another. Side by side they visit God's Church and partake of God's Banquet; side by side they face difficulties and persecution, share their consolations. They have no secrets from one another; they never shun each other's company; they never bring sorrow to each other's hearts. They visit the sick and assist the needy. Psalms and hymns they sing to one another, striving to see which of them will chant more beautifully the praises of their Lord. Hearing and seeing this, Christ rejoices. To such as these He gives His peace.⁹⁹

The Scriptures relating to spiritual intimacy in marriage include: Genesis 3:8, 21; 7:7; 35:2-4; I Samuel 1:3, 8; Job 1:5; 2:9-10; Proverbs 31:20, 30; Luke 2:22-24, 41; Acts 18:2-3, 18, 26; Romans 16:3; I Corinthians 7:5; 16:19; Ephesians 5:26-29; Hebrews 10:25; and I Peter 3:1-7.

Sexual intimacy. Sexual intimacy is the experience of sharing affection and/or sexual activity. Trimble defines sexual intimacy as "the feeling of closeness derived from the fusing or merging of persons through sexuality."¹⁰⁰ Sexual intimacy is more than sexual intercourse. The sex act is not a step that establishes deep intimacy, but one which presupposes it.¹⁰¹ Small states:

There cannot be estrangement of heart and mind and still be oneness and satisfaction in the sexual union. Expressing sexual oneness becomes a fraud when there is no longer a total personal oneness to express through it.¹⁰²

Sexual relations should be the culmination of all the aspects of intimacy because one complete person is joined with another complete person. One has succinctly said:

During the actual physical joining, the couple's oneness in other areas is being fused. It is as if the sexual connection is a channel through which flows their mutual feeling, appreciation, and understanding. The flowing back and forth is sensual, but also emotional, intellectual, spiritual--involving the total person.¹⁰³

Through sexual union, which flows from love and intimacies in other facets of life, come ways of knowing each other and sharing with each other that are not available in other modes of communication.¹⁰⁴ Sexual intimacy communicates commitment, faithfulness, responsibility and allows self-understanding. Sexual intimacy in marriage confirms the rightness of sensual pleasure with the exercise of the five senses---taste, touch, hear, see and smell. Transcendence, satisfaction, completion and peace should be products of sexual intimacy. Howell states:

When sexual experience itself becomes a witness to the mutually rewarding acceptance of each other's essential nature as male and female, it symbolizes the language of love in a profound way. As such, it can relieve tension, offer a time for playfulness and communicate acceptance.¹⁰⁵

God's purposes for sexuality in the lives of married people are companionship, satisfaction of the sexual appetite, pleasure and procreation. Sell declares:

Sex in marriage is for creating oneness. The intimacy experienced in the union of bodies and emotional responses in this act is unmatched in human experience. "Love is as strong as death," says the Song of Songs, indicating how powerful the sensual bond can be (8:6). It is not merely that the sexual embrace is itself a union; rather, it is that the sexual union is a channel and symbol of the union.¹⁰⁶

There is no loneliness problem when the intimacies of a married Christian couple culminate in sexual intimacy (Gen 2:18). Miles, a Christian sociologist, points out that Christian principles are conducive to sexual intimacy:

In human interpersonal relationships, Christianity teaches (1) that worth and values reside in persons . . . , (2) that we should have respect for the rights of all persons, (3) that we should be characterized by unselfish sacrifice, (4) that we should show kindness and understanding towards others, (5) that we should be tolerant, slow to judge or criticize, (6) that we should be concerned about the happiness and well-being of others, (7) that we should bear one another's burdens, and (8) that we should practice self-discipline and self-control. It is immediately obvious that these Christian concepts are the foundation principles necessary for good sexual adjustment.

On the other hand, there are certain human traits that tend to block good sex life, such as (1) selfishness, (2) impatience, (3) unconcern for the needs and rights of others, (4) quickness to blame or to condemn (5) unwillingness to learn, and (6) the determination to satisfy the desires of the moment. It is immediately obvious that these are non-Christian traits. Truly it can be said that basic Christian ideals are the key to both a happy marriage and a satisfying sex life.¹⁰⁷

If there are problems in a Christian couple's sex life, it does not normally have physiological roots. Truman Esau, a medical doctor declares:

I am convinced that God designed the intimacy of the sexual relationship as an accurate gauge of how the rest of the relationship is going. Are there problems in bed? Ninety-nine percent of the time they have been brought to bed from the relationship itself.¹⁰⁸

When communication diminishes and trust erodes, sexual intimacy is lost. "The sexual bond grows from spiritual unity, reinforced mutual prayer and sharing."¹⁰⁹ The foundation for sexual intimacy is cognitive intimacy, emotional intimacy, social intimacy, work-related intimacy and spiritual intimacy. Scriptures which teach about or set forth models for sexual intimacy are as follows: Genesis 1:27-28; 2:24-25; 4:1, 17, 25; 16:1ff; 18:12; 24:67; 26:8; 29:21, 23, 30; 30:15-

16; Leviticus 15:18; Deuteronomy 24:5; Ruth 3:9, 14; 4:13; Proverbs 5:15-21; Song of Solomon; Ezekiel 16:8, 37; Malachi 2:15; Matthew 19:5-6; I Corinthians 7:1-5; Ephesians 5:31; and Hebrews 13:4.

Summary

Marital intimacy occurs when a married Christian couple follow God's model and message. To love according to God's message on marital intimacy, the husband and wife need to know and understand God's commands and commendations for behavior which lead to marital oneness. The commands and commendations fall into the following categories: a permanent one-flesh union, a covenant of companionship, fulfilling role responsibilities, communication with the companion, dwelling with the mate, understanding the mate, social and restful activities together, honoring the marriage partner, bearing and rearing children with the mate, spiritual activities with the mate, and sexual relations with the marriage companion. These commands and commendations of Scripture relate to three aspects of marital intimacy: cognitive intimacy, emotional intimacy and behavioral intimacy. Behavioral intimacy may be divided into social intimacy, work-related intimacy, spiritual intimacy and sexual intimacy. By following God's model and message for marital intimacy, a Christian couple can experience it in all of its aspects and facets.

Notes:

¹ Compare "A Biblical Approach to Establishing Marital Intimacy, Part II: God in the Marriage Motif in Scripture," *CBTJ* (Spring 1989) 43-62

² Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis* (Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, 1978) 145 and John P Lange, "Genesis-Leviticus," *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1960) 209

³ C F Keil and F Delitzsch, "The Pentateuch," *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1949) 1:90

⁴ William Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976) 617

- 5 Wayne Mack, *Strengthening Your Marriage* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977) 2
- 6 Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951) 199
- 7 Earl S Kalland, "dabam," *TWOT*, L R Harris, G L Archer, and B K Waltke eds (Chicago: Moody, 1980) 1:399
- 8 Kyle M Yates, "Genesis," *Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1962) 6
- 9 Bruce Vawter, *On Genesis: A New Reading* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977) 75
- 10 Jay Adams, *Solving Marriage Problems* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1983) 31
- 11 H C Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1942) 1:137
- 12 Mack, *Strengthening Your Marriage*, 4
- 13 A Carr, *The Gospel According to St Matthew*, (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1906) 227
- 14 Ibid
- 15 William F Arndt and F W Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University Press, 1957) 783
- 16 A T Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville: Broadman, 1930) 1:154
- 17 J Horst, "melos," *TDNT*, Gerhard Kittel, ed (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967) 4:565
- 18 Robert G Gromacki, *Called to Be Saints* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977) 82-83
- 19 Koehler, *Lexicon*, 52
- 20 Adams, *Solving Marriage Problems*, 21
- 21 T T Perowne, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1916) 50
- 22 Weston W Fields, "Solomon's Most Excellent Song: A Linguistic, Hermeneutical, Historical and Philological Dissertation on the Hebrew Love Poetry of the Song of Solomon," (ThD dissertation, Grace Theological Seminary, 1979) 386
- 23 W E Vine, Merrill F Unger, and William White, Jr, *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1984) 69
- 24 Francis Brown, S R Driver, and Charles A Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955) 288
- 25 Adams, *Solving Marriage Problems*, 21
- 26 Burton L Goddard, "Malachi," *Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1962) 916
- 27 Compare Susan T Foh, "What is the Woman's Desire?" *WTJ* (Spring, 1975) 376-383 for a thorough exegesis of this passage.
- 28 Mack, *Strengthening Your Marriage*, 28-29
- 29 If this passage is not teaching the responsibility of providing physical needs, others such as Ephesians 4:28; I Thessalonians 4:11-12; II Thessalonians 3:10-12; I Timothy 5:8; 6:8 clearly do.
- 30 James Boyer, *For a World Like Ours: Studies in I Corinthians* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1971) 104
- 31 Mack, *Strengthening Your Marriage*, 14-15
- 32 Ibid, 46

- 33 For the application of communication principles to a Christian couples' lives compare Mack, *Strengthening Your Marriage*, 46-47.
- 34 Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, 69
- 35 Jay Adams, *Trust and Obey* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1978) 94
- 36 Alan M Stibbs, "The First Epistle General of Peter," *Tyndale NT Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959) 125
- 37 Arndt, *Lexicon*, 796
- 38 Jay Adams, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1980) 47
- 39 Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, 322
- 40 Merrill F Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody, 1981) 1:1096-1097
- 41 Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, 628
- 42 Ralph Wardlaw, *Lectures on the Book of Proverbs* (Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, reprint 1981) 1:311
- 43 Unger, *Commentary*, 1:1008
- 44 Gordon Lovik, *Training in the Home* (Minneapolis: Central Press, nd) 7
- 45 Koehler, *Lexicon*, 315
- 46 Homer, Kent, Jr, *Ephesians: The Glory of the Church* (Chicago: Moody, 1971) 109
- 47 Charles R Smith, "Nou-the-tic Counseling," *Spire* (Fall, 1979) 10
- 48 Kent, *Ephesians*, 109
- 49 Chester K Lehman, *Biblical Theology* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1971) 1:66
- 50 Arndt, *Lexicon*, 805
- 51 R C H Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistles of St Peter, St John and St Jude* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961) 137
- 52 Diana S R and David E Garland, *Beyond Companionship—Christians in Marriage* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 146
- 53 Flavius Josephus, *Josephus: Complete Works*, William Whiston transl (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1960) 632
- 54 Stanley J Grentz, "What is Sex For?" *CT* (June 12, 1987) 23
- 55 Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Committed Marriage* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976) 164
- 56 John P Baker, "Biblical Attitudes to Romantic Love," *TB* (1984) 101
- 57 Mack, *Strengthening Your Marriage*, 97
- 58 Baker, "Biblical Attitudes," 102
- 59 Brown, *Lexicon*, 993
- 60 Baker, "Biblical Attitudes," 108
- 61 Compare Weston Fields, "Solomon's Most Excellent Song," 134-31 for a history of the interpretations and a critique of each. Also, see Cornelius Kuswanto, "A Reformed Interpretation Of The Song Of Songs In Light Of The History Of Interpretation" (ThM dissertation, Calvin Theological Seminary, 1984) and E J Young, *An Introduction To The Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) 333-336.
- 62 Joseph Dillow, *Solomon on Sex* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1977) 8
- 63 H H Rowley, "The Meaning of 'The Shulammité'," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* (January, 1939) 89

- ⁶⁴ David and Carole Hocking, *Romantic Lovers* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1986) 11-12
- ⁶⁵ Rowley, "The Meaning of 'The Shulammite'," 84-89
- ⁶⁶ Baker, "Biblical Attitudes," 111
- ⁶⁷ Walter C Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978) 180
- ⁶⁸ Fields, "Solomon's Most Excellent Song," 387
- ⁶⁹ Dillow, *Solomon on Sex*, 137
- ⁷⁰ Ed Wheat, *Love Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980) 183-184
- ⁷¹ Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 45
- ⁷² Dillow, *Solomon on Sex*, 136
- ⁷³ Compare Psalm 79:5; Nahum 1:6; Zephaniah 1:18; 3:8.
- ⁷⁴ Hocking, *Romantic Lovers*, 178-180
- ⁷⁵ Fields thinks this may be an allusion to the "little foxes" ("Solomon's Most Excellent Song," 403).
- ⁷⁶ Arndt, *Lexicon*, 825
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 440
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 45
- ⁷⁹ Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973) 392
- ⁸⁰ Edward T Welch, "Human Personality," (unpublished classroom notes, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1983) 11
- ⁸¹ Norman H Wright, *Communication: Key to Your Marriage* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1974) 52
- ⁸² Garland, *Beyond Companionship*, quoting Tolstedt and Stokes, 147
- ⁸³ H Norman Wright, *Into the High Country* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1979) 44
- ⁸⁴ Ed and Carol Neuenschwander, *Two Friends in Love* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1986) 78
- ⁸⁵ Robert Bower, *Solving Problems in Marriage* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972) 70
- ⁸⁶ Alan Loy McGinnis, *The Friendship Factor* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1979) 86
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid*
- ⁸⁸ Wheat, *Love Life*, 136
- ⁸⁹ Josh McDowell, *The Secret of Loving* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life, 1985) 37. Also see Willard Harley, Jr, *His Needs, Her Needs* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1986) 27-39.
- ⁹⁰ O R Johnston, *Who Needs the Family?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979) 64
- ⁹¹ Harley, *His Needs, Her Needs*, 74
- ⁹² John T Trimble, *Intimacy in Marriage* (Nashville:Broadman, 1978) 77
- ⁹³ Mark T Schaefer and David H Olson, "Assessing Intimacy: The Pair Inventory," *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* (January, 1981) 50
- ⁹⁴ Garland, *Beyond Companionship*, quoting Filsinger and Wilson, 8.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid*
- ⁹⁶ Dwight H Small, *Design for Christian Marriage* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1979) 68
- ⁹⁷ H Norman Wright, *The Pillars of Marriage* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1979) 51
- ⁹⁸ William H Elder, "The Covenant Speaks to Families," *The Theological Educator* (Spring, 1983) 55

- ⁹⁹ William J McRae, "The Church's Role in Marriage Enrichment," *BS* (July-September, 1987) 330
- ¹⁰⁰ Trimble, *Intimacy in Marriage*, 77
- ¹⁰¹ Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1985) 66
- ¹⁰² Dwight H Small, *Your Marriage God's Affair* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1979) 74
- ¹⁰³ Charles M Sell, *Achieving the Impossible: Intimate Marriage* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1982) 89
- ¹⁰⁴ Garland, *Beyond Companionship*, 135
- ¹⁰⁵ John C Howell, *Equality and Submission in Marriage* (Nashville: Broadman, 1975) 45
- ¹⁰⁶ Sell, *Achieving the Impossible*, 88-89
- ¹⁰⁷ Herbert J Miles, *Sexual Understanding Before Marriage* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971) 76
- ¹⁰⁸ Truman Esau with Beverly Burch, *Partners in Process* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1986) 124
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*