

## The Power of Sex

### **ANSWERING THE QUESTION:**

1 Corinthians 7:1-9, Song of Songs 4-8, Proverbs 5:15-23, Hebrews 13:4

Singleness is not just good, it's better.

But some folks just can't cut it.

The solution is regular intimacy in marriage.

### **WHAT THE TEXT SAYS:**

1 Corinthians 7:1-9, Genesis 1:27-31, 2:24-25

Singleness and marriage are both gifts.

Intimacy is an important part of marriage.

When we deny intimacy we are cheating the marriage.

### **WHAT THE TEXT *DOESN'T* SAY:**

1 Corinthians 7:1-9, 1 Peter 3:1-12, Ephesians 5:21-33

Get married just for sex.

Our desires are more important than our spouse's comfort zone.

All singleness is a gift.

All marriages without sex are dead.

### **HOW TO TAKE THIS HOME:**

God will give you what you need for your giftedness.

Remember, submission is mutual.

Expectations unsaid will always go unmet.

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 4, 2009

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## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Looking at your experience, personality, and strengths, what job do you think you wouldn't be very good at? Why did you pick that job?

2. How people learn about sex varies greatly. Growing up, which two things below were most influential in how you learned about sex?

Parents	Books
TV	School
Movies	Internet
Friends	Other _____

If you were asked to summarize what you learned about sex from these influences, what would you say?

3. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching on *The Power of Sex*, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. Because we use the word "love" to mean so many things (we say we love a person and we love pizza), there is the real possibility for confusion about what we mean when we use it. In the language the Old Testament was originally written in (Hebrew), there are at least three different words translated by our one English word "love." Read the following verses to see how they are used in the Song of Songs.

Song of Songs 2:10 – "*raya*" – **Friendship** – love for a friend or companion

### Song 2:10

*My lover spoke and said to me,*

*"Arise, my darling,  
my beautiful one, and come with me. [NIV]*

Song of Songs 8:6-7 – “ahava” – **Commitment** – making a choice to love

**Song 8:6-7**

*Place me like a seal over your heart,  
like a seal on your arm;  
for love is as strong as death,  
its jealousy unyielding as the grave.  
It burns like blazing fire,  
like a mighty flame.  
[7] Many waters cannot quench love;  
rivers cannot wash it away.  
If one were to give  
all the wealth of his house for love,  
it would be utterly scorned. [NIV]*

Song of Songs 1:2 – “dod” – **Sexual passion** – the sexual element of a relationship

**Song 1:2**

*Beloved  
Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth--  
for your love is more delightful than wine. [NIV]*

God’s design is for marriage to be the perfect place for the expression of all three of these loves. Can you think of any consequences in people’s personal lives or in our society in general from separating sexual passion from the friendship and commitment loves?

Looking back on what Chris shared this weekend, what could you share with a friend who came to you and said, “What’s the big deal about sex outside of marriage? I don’t see anything wrong with it as long as no one gets hurt.”

2. Good communication is one ingredient in a healthy sexual relationship with a spouse. It is also an important part of all other relationships. What principles about communication do you learn from each of the following passages?

**Proverbs 15:23**

*A man finds joy in giving an apt reply--  
and how good is a timely word! [NIV]*

**Ephesians 4:29**

*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. [NIV]*

**James 1:19**

*My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, [NIV]*

**James 3:3-12**

*When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. [4] Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. [5] Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. [6] The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

*[7] All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, [8] but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.*

*[9] With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. [10] Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. [11] Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? [12] My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. [NIV]*

Take a minute and think about your pattern of communication with a spouse, family member or friend. What would it look like for you to apply any of the principles you jotted down above in that relationship?

3. Like sexual intimacy, spiritual and emotional intimacy in all of our relationships thrives in an environment of love. And love is more than a feeling; it's a choice we make to behave in helpful and encouraging ways towards others. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 and make two lists of the words used to describe love in these verses. One list should be the words that are primarily emotions, and the other list should be the words that are primarily actions we can choose to take. What do you notice about each list?

**1 Corinthians 13:4-6**

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. [5] It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. [6] Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. [NIV]*

How can the following verses help us further understand what it means to choose to love others?

**Romans 12:9-10**

*Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. [10] Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. [NIV]*

**1 John 3:18**

*Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. [NIV]*

**Ephesians 4:32**

*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. [NIV]*

## TAKING IT HOME

Is there anything from the sermon or the homework for which you'd like prayer?

### FOR ADDITIONAL THOUGHT

*The following questions are intended for personal use only. You may want to answer them on a separate sheet of paper. You **will not** be asked to share your answers to these questions at your Growth Group.*

#### **For Married People**

*Chris shared how important it is for couples to talk about their expectations for marital intimacy. The following questions are provided as a help for you to talk about your expectations. In discussing these, please remember the principles of communication and love you looked at in this homework.*

- *Where have I become slack in my efforts to make you feel important?*
- *Men, ask your wife to complete this sentence: I think it's romantic when you\_\_\_\_\_.*
- *Women, ask your husband to complete this sentence: I feel the most appreciated and respected when you\_\_\_\_\_.*
- *What would make our sexual intimacy better for you?*

#### **For Singles**

- *Are there any situations in your life in which you need to make changes in order to maintain your sexual purity?*
- *If you are dating someone, is your level of physical involvement with that person consistent with what the Bible says?*
- *What needs to change so that the Lord will be pleased?*