

NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

**6240 VERNER AVE.
SACRAMENTO, CA 95841
916-348-6997**

AGONIA[©] STUDENT'S MANUAL

DOUGLAS AND SITA SHEARER • AUTHORS AND FOUNDERS

SEXUAL INTIMACY

“SEXUAL INTIMACY” IS THE SEVENTH OF EIGHT SEPARATE MANUALS WHICH TOGETHER CONSTITUTE THE ENTIRE COURSE

JULY 14, 1999 EDITION

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Special Note: This manual is meant only for students enrolled in properly certified Agonias. The changes it presses cannot be effected by single individuals or by counselors attempting one-on-one therapy. A small group setting is essential - overseen by instructors who have been properly trained. This manual is meant to build the church of our Savior Jesus Christ and bring peace and joy into the homes of the saints for whom he died.

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SEXUAL INTIMACY[®]
CHAPTER 1
SEXUAL PURITY AND IDOLATRY
WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK OF _____

	Prayer Items	When Answered How Answered
Day #1	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #2	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #3	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #4	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #5	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #6	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #7	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

DAILY MONITORING FORM

Week _____

Instructions for scoring have been provided by your instructors. However, a brief description is given below.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5	Column #6	Column #7	Column #8	Column #9	Column #10
	Two Chapters from the Gospels	15 Minutes of Prayer	Prayer Journal	Squabble Rule Violations	Response to Correction	Agonia Contacts	Fruit of the Spirit	Does Not Blame Spouse	Shares Joy with Spouse	Rebuffed Overtures
Day #1				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #2				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #3				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #4				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #5				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #6				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #7				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Average for Week Eliminate the high and low				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	
Totals	Yes or No					Total				Total Attempted____ Total Positives____ Ratio_____

INSTRUCTIONS: (1) The "Three Disciplines," columns 1-3: one "no" for any day for any of the disciplines results in a "no" for the entire week. (2) "Squabble Rules," column 4: keep daily track of (a) how many times you violate the rules and (b) how many times your spouse violates the rules; at the end of the week, eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (3) "Response to Correction," column 5: keep daily track of how often you notice that either you or your spouse does not respond positively to correction and rebuke. The criteria consists of (a) non-defensiveness and (b) attentiveness. Grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (4) "Agonia Contacts," column 6: (a) phone call to an agonia-mate over ten minutes = 1 pt.; (b) personal, face-to-face contact over a half an hour = 3 pts.; (c) Having an agonia couple over for dinner = 5 pts; (d) participate in a meeting of the full Agonia other than the class itself = 5 pts. (5) "Spirituality Indices," columns 7-9: grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and the low for the week and average of the remaining scores. (6) "Overtures," column 10: keep daily track of how often you reach out to your spouse; and also keep track of how often, if at all, your overtures are rebuffed. At the end of the week, list the total overtures you undertook; and compute a ratio of positive responses to the total.

TONIGHT'S LESSON

SEXUAL PURITY AND IDOLATRY

HOMework FROM LAST WEEK

You were asked last week to bring to class this evening the forms you filled out when you were studying the lesson entitled "*Breaking into One Another's Sphere's of Interest.*" Your instructors are going to review them with you.

SEXUAL PURITY AND IDOLATRY ©

by Pastor Douglas Shearer

Figures are sometimes hard to come by - and often, they're not entirely consistent; nevertheless, let me cite some for you - saving the most recent figures for last.

1. **40% of all adolescents will undergo the trauma of witnessing their parents divorce.** And the majority of those divorces involve sexual infidelity; consequently, more and more children are being "cued" to sexual promiscuity by their own parents.
2. **One out every seven teenage girls** becomes pregnant - that's pregnant. We're not speaking here about how many engage in sexual intercourse without becoming pregnant, we're talking about how many actually become pregnant - and that's one out of seven.
3. In late 1993, a survey of 2000 high school students revealed that **19% of the boys and 27% of the girls (more girls than boys) were engaged in regular, on-going sexual intercourse.** Here, we're not including high school students who only occasionally engage in sexual intercourse. The figure for the girls is up from 5% reported in 1970.

Let me provide you with a concrete example to flesh out these figures: just recently in Hempstead, Texas, four of Hempstead High's sixteen member cheerleading squad were found to be pregnant. They were all suspended, not dismissed, from the squad pending the birth of their babies. However, one of the four girls decided to abort and she was reinstated within a week or so following the abortion. There was little moral outrage; just a sort of "let's get this behind us" attitude.

Keep this example in mind.

Now, for the most disturbing of all the surveys - conducted just this last month - and reported on all three of the national networks. It found that three out of ten 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, fully 30%, have engaged in sexual intercourse. **Not high schoolers**, that's 9th through 12th graders, but junior high schoolers, 7th and 8th graders, and even grade schoolers, 6th graders! And what's particularly surprising about this finding is that there were no distinctions pertaining to

1. scholastic achievement,
2. family,
3. financial status, or
4. race.

It didn't matter whether the child

1. was getting good grades or bad grades,
2. was from an intact family or a ruptured family,
3. was financially well off or poverty stricken, or
4. was Black, White, Latino, or Oriental

- the likelihood of his or her having engaged in sexual intercourse was the same - 30%. And, again, we're talking about 6th, 7th, and 8th graders.

In other words, what we're talking about here is not rooted in deprivation; it's not the result of an on-going pattern of discrimination, it's not due to an emotional trauma. It can't be traced back to any kind of hardship.

What does it reflect then? *It's the result of changing ethics.* Frankly put, sexual promiscuity is no longer frowned upon. It's no longer enveloped in shame. Its commission no longer prompts conviction and guilt.

Thirty years ago, or, more likely, forty and fifty years ago, sexual intimacy on the part of anyone who wasn't a married adult - let alone 6th, 7th, and 8th graders - generated *moral outrage*. *Anyone* caught engaging in promiscuous sexual intercourse was ostracized - and if that person was a child, the parents were left bewildered, shocked, and stupefied - and their standing in the community was seriously undermined.

But today, there's almost no sense of moral outrage - that is, there's very little sense of shame - either on the part of the child or on the part of the parents. There's a single prevailing attitude:

1. It's not that the child has behaved shamefully; *it's that the child has behaved stupidly.*
2. It's not that the child is immoral; *it's that the child is not behaving in his own best interests.*

Let me ask you, "what's likely to occur to a child caught today engaging in sexual promiscuity?" He'll be told that

1. he's unaware of the implications of his conduct;
2. that he's not ready to shoulder the responsibilities that an active sexual relationship necessarily entails;
3. that an unwanted pregnancy might result;
4. that, at the very least, a condom should be used - both to prevent a pregnancy and to ward off AIDs or venereal disease.

Then father and son or mother and daughter might have a good cry together. And the whole matter is set aside.

What's avoided at all costs is the *inculcation of guilt*. And without the inculcation of a searing sense of guilt, there can be precious little in the way of actual *repentance*.

The two go hand in hand. No guilt, no repentance - and without repentance, prompted by guilt, there's little likelihood of any lasting change in behavior. Oh, there may be tears, but those tears are not the tears of repentance - however much sorrow might be gripping both parent and child.

Compassion is almost always extended before repentance is proven.

There's a never ending scenario that's played out in my office - again and again. I wish, sometimes, that you could sit in with me. This scenario is played out not just in my office, but in the office of every pastor I know. A man or a woman is caught engaging in sexual promiscuity - sometimes even resulting in a pregnancy. And the very first issue that's raised by that person's friends in the church or by his relatives is **not**

1. guilt, or
 2. shame, or
 3. repentance;
- it's the need to extend compassion.***

And, yes, compassion is a uniquely Christian virtue; but the Bible never encourages extending compassion in the absence of

1. shame,
2. conviction, and
3. repentance.

In fact, the Bible demands not just a *verbal* repentance; its

demands are much more severe than mere words can evidence; it demands that we *prove* our repentance *with deeds*. And then compassion can be *legitimately* conveyed - and restoration and healing can be brought to bear.

Let me remind you of the rebuke Jesus hurled at the Pharisees in Matthew 3:8

...bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance...
Matt. 3:8

And the same point is made by Paul in his conversation with King Agrippa

*...but (I) kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, **performing deeds appropriate to repentance.***
Acts 26:20

No, what we're witnessing today - rampant sexual promiscuity on the part of not only adults but children - is **not** the result of material hardship or emotional trauma, *it's the result of changed ethical standards*. Sexual promiscuity is no longer considered truly evil. There's no appeal made to moral outrage. There's no genuine sense of guilt and shame.

Sexual promiscuity is still considered to be unwise - and even stupid - and most certainly dangerous; but it's no longer cloaked in evil. And what that means is that the conscience has been **deactivated**. *The moral energy of the conscience is left untapped.*

Our children - and I do mean "*children*" - are being assaulted by a media that hypes up sex - that appeals brazenly to their developing sexual drives - sexual drives that they only barely understand but feel keenly; *and, inadvertently, we've stripped them of their best defense - the moral energy of an acutely sensitive conscience*. The conscience can no longer be enlisted in their struggle against sexual promiscuity - because sexual promiscuity is no longer cast in the guise of **sin** - *and all in the name of compassion*.

Sexual temptations have assaulted every generation, but our children, unlike past generations of children, have been left defenseless - because we've *deactivated* their consciences. And that's why there's such an increase today in sexual promiscuity.

But let's not blame *only* our schools - or the federal government - or Hillary Clinton - or Molly Yard - or the National Organization of Women - or the American Civil Liberties Union. That's too easy. And, furthermore, it's not right.

The church has played a *major* role. Let me give you a concrete example - drawn from a church right here in Sacramento. A good church. A Bible believing church. And it's an example that's repeated scores of times each month throughout the Sacramento area. Several years ago a person was caught engaging in on-going sexual promiscuity. Not once did that person truly repent - bringing forth evidence of changed behavior. The immorality continued. Oh, there were tears; but there was no change. Eventually the person simply ceased attending church - and withdrew from all fellowship. And what happened? Again and again, the pastors of the church were condemned by an influential segment of the

congregation for lack of compassion. And several families left the church as a result.

What do we have here? It's the same dynamic that's at work among the unsaved:

1. the press to extend compassion without requiring repentance;
2. the same refusal to allow searing conviction to finish its course.

Whenever the church seeks to protect a sinner from the pain of conviction in the name of compassion, she strips believers of perhaps their single most powerful defensive mechanism - an acutely sensitive conscience.

My first point this morning, then, is that we must recover our sense of moral outrage.

I'm not countenancing cruelty or malice. I'm not encouraging you to form sin patrols to ferret out sexual promiscuity in the church. All I'm asking you to do is

1. call sexual promiscuity "*sin*," not just an addiction or a disease, *but sin*. It offends God - and it puts the sinner in jeopardy of judgement.
2. Resist the temptation to dampen too quickly the pain of conviction afflicting the conscience of a person caught in sexual immorality; let the Holy Spirit finish His work. Even if that person is your best friend or your own child! Don't seek to dampen the pain of conviction too quickly.
3. Do not extend the right hand of fellowship to anyone who claims to be a brother or sister, but who excuses sexual immorality in his or her own life - and refuses to acknowledge that it's a moral outrage. I'm not asking you to shun such a person; but you are not to treat that person as a fellow Christian. That's the real meaning of 1 Corinthians 5:11.

Clearly, once conviction has run its course and genuine repentance is evidenced, then compassion, healing, and full restoration should be extended quickly. And, furthermore, the person must be accepted back into fellowship not as a second-class citizen, but as a true born, first class citizen.

Now, building upon this insight, let's move on to my second point this morning: that what sexual intercourse is meant to be is far different from what you've probably been taught. ***It's not only an act, it's actually a special language.***

Let me begin with a passage of scripture you may be familiar with, but perhaps you've never really fully understood. It's Revelation 2, verse 14:

Now we're going to have to get a bit technical here; it's unavoidable. What I'm trying to do this morning is not simply shout at you that sexual promiscuity is sinful, but to explain to you **why** it's so dangerous morally. And that's going to require that we delve into some technical issues. So, bear with me - and let's get started.

Now, remember, we're going to get technical here; but I'm sure you'll agree when we're finished that it was well worth your effort. For perhaps the very first time you will understand **why** you should avoid sexual intercourse before marriage - from a

moral point of view. Not just that you might get AIDs, or gonorrhea, or syphilis - but why it's so reprehensible morally.

OK, let's turn now to Revelation 2:14

But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Rev. 2:14

There are several terms and phrases I want you to take note of here in this verse:

1. The first is the phrase "hold the doctrine of Balaam" - or, a better translation would be "cling to the teaching of Balaam." What's that?
2. The second is the word "stumblingblock."
3. The third is "things sacrificed to idols."
4. And the fourth and last term is "fornication."

It's apparent from the verse that all four terms and phrases are linked. But how? You can pick up the story of Balak and Balaam in the Old Testament; more specifically, in the Book of Numbers - beginning with chapter 20 and extending through chapter 25.

But let me sum it up for you here briefly: Balak was the King of Moab, a country which butted up against the boundaries of Canaan, just east of the Dead Sea. He was King of Moab at the time Israel, under Moses, was passing through the Wilderness into the Promised Land. Balak was fearful of Israel - and didn't want Israel to take possession of Canaan. So, he hired the prophet Balaam, from Midian, to curse Israel - hoping that in so doing he would destroy Israel - and keep her from taking possession of the land. But God prevented Balaam from cursing Israel; and each time Balaam sought to pronounce a curse, God forced him to utter a blessing.

But Balaam wasn't finished. His first strategy - to curse Israel - had failed; but he hit upon a second strategy that ultimately proved to be successful. He advised Balak, King of Moab, to send out the women of Moab into the camp of Israel - enticing the men of Israel to commit fornication. And we read about that in Numbers 25.

And Israel abode in Shittim, (which is part of Moab just opposite of Jericho on the Jordan planes) and the people (i.e., the men of Israel) began to commit whoredom (i.e., fornication) with the daughters of Moab.

And they (i.e., the women of Moab) called the people (i.e., the men of Israel) unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor (i.e., the god of the Moabites): and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.

Num. 25:1-3

So, Numbers 25:1-3 give us much of the meaning pertaining to the terms and phrases we noted in Revelation 2:14

1. The phrase "the teaching of Balaam," found in Revelation 2:14, is Balaam's advice to Balak, King of Moab.

2. The stumblingblock - is, of course, fornication. The word "stumblingblock" translates the Greek word "skandalon" - from which we derive our word "scandal." And it means a "trap," or more accurately, "the bait used in a trap." **Fornication is bait for a trap.** That's its meaning here in Revelation 2:14.

3. But the trap itself is idolatry, not fornication. **Fornication is the bait; idolatry is the trap.**

At this point, we've unraveled much of the meaning of Revelation 2:14; but we still aren't quite there yet; and that's because most of us don't really understand the meaning of "idolatry." That term has lost its meaning to our 20th century minds. When we think of an idol, we imagine a statue of some kind - a stone statue or a carved image. For me, almost inevitably, what pops into my mind is a Buddha - with his legs crossed - in a Japanese garden.

But that image does nothing to convey the real meaning of idolatry.

Let's turn to the Bible again - and read several verses in Isaiah and the Psalms. And it may be that from these verses we can begin to catch the meaning of "idolatry" or the "principle of idolatry" - because that's what we're talking about here - a principle - a spiritual principle.

For the Lord is a great God, And a great King above all gods...

Ps. 95:3

For Thou art the Lord Most High over all the earth; Thou art exalted far above all gods.

Ps. 97:9

To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

Is. 40:25

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.

Is. 44:6

To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?

Is. 46:5

Do you catch now the principle of idolatry? Each of the verses we've just read stresses the utter transcendence of God. He is unique - so utterly unique that He's **incomparable**. That's His nature. There is none like Him. Indeed, it's sinful to even attempt comparisons with God. The very act of comparison **profanes** God. Do you know what it means to "profane" God? Do you understand the technical meaning of the word "profane"?

Let me read two more passages of scripture with you:

...for My own sake, I will (vindicate myself); For how can My name be profaned? And My glory be given to another?

Is. 48:11

As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord God, Go, serve everyone his idols; but later, you will surely

listen to Me, and My holy name you will profane no longer with your gifts and with your idols.
Ezek. 20:39

Do you see how the word “*profane*” is used in conjunction with idolatry?

That’s because idolatry is an act of profanity. And profanity simply means to “*make common.*” That’s its technical meaning. The very act of comparing God profanes Him - because it reduces God to the level of the item to which He’s being compared.

Let me say it again: idolatry is an act of profanity. It profanes God. That’s because God is incomparable - beyond comparison. And any attempt to compare Him reduces His majesty.

All of us know the Ten Commandments, right? How many of you are aware that four of the ten commandments are geared toward warning mankind against profaning God - reducing His majesty? And those four commandments are the ***first*** four.

Turn with me to Deuteronomy, chapter five.

Thou shalt have none other gods before me.
Deut. 5:7

Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth...
Deut. 5:8

So the first two commandments essentially forbid comparison. God will not tolerate being brought alongside other gods. Nor will He tolerate anyone making a statue of Him or an image of Him - because that *presumes* comparison.

The third commandment is like the first two - in that it prohibits another form of profanity - blasphemy - taking the Lord’s name in vain - which drags down the name of God to a common level - and serves, therefore, to undermine its utter transcendence. ***Idolatry profanes God Himself; and blasphemy profanes the name of God. Both are acts of profanity.***

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.
Deut. 5:11

And even the fourth is akin to the first three - in that it’s designed to set aside one day of the week to remember to worship God - and call to mind His utter uniqueness - His transcendent nature.

Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.
Deut. 5:12

Let’s go over this very carefully - because it’s an important key to solving our riddle. Idolatry puts God on a par with other gods. It reduces God’s uniqueness. The principle of idolatry does not aim at *replacing* the worship of Jehovah with the worship of another god. All it aims at is to include the worship of other gods alongside the worship of Jehovah -

1. Jehovah worshipped alongside Baal,

2. alongside Bel,
 3. alongside Ashtaroth,
 4. alongside Istar,
 5. alongside a whole pantheon of other gods - the gods of the heathen.
- And in putting Jehovah alongside the gods of the heathen, it drags Him down to their level. It profanes Him.

True worship - the kind of worship that God sanctions and accepts - is, therefore, ***exclusive.*** Worship not only expresses adoration and praise, but, in addition, it promises God ***exclusive*** adoration and praise. ***The act of worship is an act of exclusion; it’s an act which declares total commitment.***

Worship is not just an act of passion - an act of adoration and praise; it’s in addition a declaration - a declaration of total commitment. ***It’s both an act and a declaration. And for the act to be meaningful and acceptable, the declaration must be authentic and truthful.***

How important is idolatry in the Old Testament? In many respects, it’s the story of the Old Testament. The children of Israel never quite seemed to “catch on.” God would not allow Himself to be worshipped alongside the gods of the heathen. It’s the story of the Book of Judges. It’s the story of Elijah at Mount Carmel. Not even Solomon, with all his wisdom, caught on - and at the close of his reign, idolatry was rampant. The specific sin that called forth God’s judgement upon the Northern Kingdom was idolatry. And, likewise, the specific sin that led to Judah’s demise a century later was idolatry. It was the sin the prophets most singled out and warned against.

But how does all this fit into sexual promiscuity? Well, let’s go back to Revelation 2:14. We’ve already established that fornication is the bait that the devil uses to draw believers into idolatry - the act of profaning God. But how are fornication and idolatry related? What’s the link? How does fornication bait the trap?

Ask yourself, “*What do fornication and idolatry have in common?*”

We’ve already made the point that worship is not just an act of adoration and ecstatic praise - drawing God and His people into oneness, but, in addition, it’s a ***declaration*** of total commitment. ***Worship is not just an act; it’s a declaration.*** And for the act to be meaningful, the declaration must be authentic and truthful.

And that’s true of sexual intercourse as well. Sexual intercourse, like worship, is not just an act; it’s a declaration. And for the act to be meaningful, the declaration must be authentic and truthful. ***If the declaration of total commitment and exclusivity can’t be made in truth, the act loses its meaning.***

Let me put it another way. We’ve been taught that sexual intercourse - and all that leads up to sexual intercourse - is merely pleasurable. That it’s an act that gives pleasure. ***But sexual intercourse is not first an act which gives pleasure; it’s first and foremost a language that speaks of total and exclusive commitment. And then it’s an act that gives pleasure.*** Just as worship is not first and foremost an act of adoration and praise, it’s first and foremost a declaration of total and exclusive commitment.

And if you’re a fornicator you cannot speak the language of

love. Sexual intercourse loses its meaning. Because you've profaned it. The words it speaks come out garbled. If you've engaged in repeated acts of fornication, you've profaned sexual intercourse - and you can no longer use it to declare love to your spouse. It's become a garbled language.

And that's the tragedy of fornication. We have a whole generation of men and woman for whom sexual intercourse is not the pure language of love it was meant to be. **Spouses can no longer use it to declare love to one another.** It's been profaned. It's been made common. That's what fornication does: it makes common what was meant to be sanctified and pure - set aside for one person only. When you make love to your spouse, you can no longer authentically declare to your spouse, *"I am declaring to you that I belong to you alone. I share this joy with you alone. I belong to no one else. I have reserved myself for you only."* And if that declaration can't be made, the act loses its meaning - and the pleasure becomes very elusive.

Let me repeat myself: we've been taught that sexual intercourse is merely an act which arouses pleasure. But that's wrong. Of course, it should produce an ecstatic joy - that's God's intention; but it's meant first and foremost to be a declaration of total and exclusive commitment. And if it can no longer speak that message, the passion and joy it's meant to convey are likely to vanish as well.

Again, I wish that some of you could sit in my office and hear what I hear - so many husbands and wives who find no real joy in sexual intimacy. I remember when I was young - around 18 or 19 - I couldn't figure out why husbands and wives didn't spend all 24 hours a day in bed with one another. To me - at 18 - sexual intimacy was merely an act that promised unending ecstasy and passion. But later I discovered that it's meant to be a language. **And the pleasure of the act depends upon the purity of the language.**

I have counseled with some married couples who engage in sexual intercourse no more than once or twice a year. That's not common; but it's not as uncommon as you might imagine. More frequently, I've counseled with married couples who engage in sexual intercourse no more than once a month. And though certainly better than once a year, it's still far from God's intention. Why the infrequency? Because for most of them, they've never been taught that intercourse is first and foremost a language; and only secondarily an act; consequently, they haven't worked hard to keep it pure. **Keep the language pure, and you'll keep the act pleasurable.**

Anything that profanes sexual intercourse jeopardizes its long-term pleasure - anything at all - not just fornication and adultery, but rape and incest as well. Sins a person suffers at the hands of others can be even more damaging.

It's not that sexual intercourse, once defiled, can't be recovered and sanctified. God is more than able to cleanse whatever stains have tarnished it; however, it can't be "swept under the rug" and ignored.

Once again, sexual intercourse and worship are inextricably linked. And that's why fornication baits the trap that leads to idolatry.

Both idolatry and fornication are acts of profanity. And once

you've engaged in profanity at any level, it spills over onto all other levels. Fornication always leads to idolatry. Balaam knew that principle - and that's why he advised Balak to entice the men of Israel to commit fornication with the woman of Moab - because he knew that profanity at one level always leads to profanity at all levels. He knew that fornication would lead to idolatry. And it did.

And this is one of Satan's master plans for the Last Days. Fornication not only ruins marriage; but, in addition, it turns hearts away from God. What a master strategy! One thing the devil isn't. And that's dumb.

Now, I'm not through yet. I want to conclude my warning today with a few principles concerning dating. Let's turn to 1 Corinthians 7:5. Here Paul is speaking to married couples - and, specifically, he's speaking about sexual intercourse.

Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

1 Cor. 7:5

This is another passage of scripture which, like Revelation 2:14, is so much more than it appears. It's a package of dynamite. Now, the verse here is specifically addressed to married couples, not singles; but there's a principle here that we can apply to singles - and which will shed light on what kind of behavior should be avoided in dating.

I want you to take special note of the word *"defraud."* It translates the Greek word *"apostereo."* Some translations substitute the word *"deprive"* for the word *"defraud."* And that's accurate up to a certain point. We've lost the meaning of the word *"defraud"* - and *"deprive"* seems to come closer to what Paul is conveying here. But the word *"defraud"* implies deceit as well as deprivation - which the word *"deprive"* doesn't. And that's the problem with the word *"deprive"* - it misses the element of deceit. Here's the point in a nutshell - it's very simple and straightforward: **marriage incorporates by its very nature the expectation of sexual intercourse.**

Everyone who gets married looks forward to sexual intercourse. Marriage establishes that expectation. It certainly did for me. It certainly did for Sita. Didn't it for you? Of course it did. In light of that expectation, then, don't deprive one another. Indeed, such a deprivation is more than merely an act of holding back, it's fraud. Why is it fraud? **Because the expectation is so clearly established.**

And that's the principle I want to draw out here. **Any setting which establishes the expectation of sexual intimacy - and then fails to provide it is fraud. And fraud is a sin.**

Marriage is not the only setting that can establish the expectation of sexual intimacy. It's the only *legitimate* setting; but it's certainly not the only one. And singles dating one another over an extended period of time - spending a great deal of time alone with one another - encounter those settings again and again. They reach a point of profound emotional intimacy - and that emotional intimacy presses inevitably - almost inexorably - toward sexual intimacy.

Just about every moment alone becomes a setting which

establishes the expectation of sexual intimacy. And they find themselves defrauding one another again and again and again. Now, are we going to kid ourselves at this point?

Singles who have been dating one another for a long time and who have established a profound emotional intimacy with one another become trapped between two sins: fornication on the one hand and fraud on the other. If fornication is avoided, fraud is committed. And if fraud is avoided, fornication is committed. They find themselves bouncing back and forth between these two sins. Soon, their whole relationship turns sour. What should be done?

1. Get married, doggone it. Or
2. back off.

But don't continue simply dating one another. A boyfriend/girlfriend relationship cannot endure indefinitely. It's merely transitional in nature. I'm amazed at how often singles attempt to prolong a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship. Too many men these days are outright whimps. They want an emotional relationship with a woman, but they don't want to pay the price for it - marriage. And too many women these days are succors: they'll continue indefinitely with a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship with hardly a murmur of protest.

Listen, ladies, throw the bum out. Drop him. He's a chicken. He doesn't deserve you. Don't play the fool for him. If he's not willing to marry you, send him packing. Is he a real man? Then he'll buy you a ring; if not a wedding ring, then, at the very least, an engagement ring.

And if he does buy you an engagement ring, make sure that with the ring he gives you a definite date for marriage. The point is stop playing the fool. So many times I hear the excuse: "We just don't have the money to get married." Sita and I got married with hardly a dime to our names. Yes, it was tough. But we managed it. The lack of money is just an excuse. And what does it excuse? Does it excuse fornication, ladies? Does it excuse fraud? A boyfriend/girlfriend relationship is going in one of three different directions:

1. courtship and marriage;
2. fraud; or
3. fornication.

Men, come to grips with what you want. If you want the emotional intimacy a woman can provide, then marry her. And if you're unwilling to marry her, stop dating her.

All this business of prolonging boyfriend/girlfriend relationships is morally wrong. And nowhere in the Bible is it countenanced. In fact there are many passages which warn against it. Let me give you a couple:

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

2 Tim. 2:22

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Rom. 13:14

There are too many men who attempt to establish an emotional intimacy with women whom they have no intention of

marrying. The almost inevitable result is either fornication on the one hand or fraud on the other.

And you married men - never look to establish profound emotional intimacy with a woman other than your own wife. Emotional intimacy always leads to the press toward sexual intimacy - *always*. Stop lying to yourself. And you married woman, I have the same advice for you. I have only one woman with whom I share any kind of profound emotional intimacy - and that's my wife, Sita. And that's because with her, that emotional intimacy can and, indeed, *should* lead to sexual intimacy.

Now what about those of you in junior high school and high school? Am I suggesting that you don't date? Not necessarily. It depends on what you mean by "dating." If by dating you mean a bunch of guys going out with a bunch of girls, then the answer is "no." I don't want to discourage that. Not at all. But if you mean *going steady* - spending a lot of time alone together - to the point that girls are drawn away from their girl friends and guys are drawn away from their guy friends, then the answer is "yes." Don't date. Serious dating is meant to lead to courtship. If you're in junior high school or high school, you have no business thinking about marriage.

I know of too many young men and woman who feel almost destitute unless they're going steady. And that sense reaches down to the grade schools. Don't cheat yourself like that! It's a delusion. Girls, spend your time learning how to make good girl friends. If you can't establish intimate friendships with other girls, you won't be able to establish an intimate relationship in marriage. The one lays the foundation for the other. And the same holds true for you guys. Loners and introverts don't make good marriage partners. What you learn in making friends throughout your childhood and teen years carries over into marriage. Marriage is not a cure-all for loneliness. Indeed, it only exacerbates loneliness for the lonely.

You say I'm being a prude. Oh no I'm not. If you sat where I sit, you'd think that maybe I'm not being sufficiently prudish. The devastation the devil has perpetrated on your generation is too awful for words. He's spoiling your generation for marriage. He's ruining your relationship with God. He's getting you to profane life itself. And that's his master plan.

Your generation scares the devil more than mine does. Your generation may well be the generation that God has raised to take the devil out. That would certainly explain why he's working so hard at spoiling you. **Keep yourself pure. You'll never regret it.**

Now, let's review the main eight points:

1. We have got to recover our sense of moral outrage. Sexual promiscuity is evil. We must reactivate our consciences.
2. We must not seek to dampen the pain of conviction in the lives of those who have engaged in sexual promiscuity. We must allow the Holy Spirit to complete His work.
3. We must not allow ourselves to extend compassion before shame, conviction, and repentance are manifested.
4. Do not extend the right hand of fellowship to anyone who claims to be a brother or sister, but who excuses sexual immorality in his or her own life.
5. Worship and sexual intercourse are not just acts which lead to ecstasy and passion, they are declarations of total

commitment. And if the declaration loses its authenticity, then the act loses its meaning - and the pleasure of both soon diminishes. Keep the declarations pure, and the acts will always retain both their meaning and their pleasure. Both for worship and for sexual intercourse!

6. Fornication always leads to idolatry. Profanity cannot be contained. If it's committed on one level, it always spills over to the other level.
7. Any setting which establishes the expectation of sexual intimacy - and then fails to provide it is fraud. The only legitimate setting is marriage.
8. Any two persons who have dated one another for a long period of time inevitably find themselves bouncing back and

forth between two sins: either fornication on the one hand, or fraud on the other. If fornication is avoided, fraud is committed; and if fraud is avoided, then fornication is committed. There are only two ways out of this dilemma: either break off the relationship or get married.

Take these eight principles and begin to apply them in your lives - and we will enjoy a degree of spiritual health we've never before known - as individuals, as married couples, and as a church family.

May God bless all of you.

HOMEWORK

You will be tested on this week's lesson next week.

SEXUAL INTIMACY[®]

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW AND TESTING

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK OF _____

	Prayer Items	When Answered How Answered
Day #1	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #2	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #3	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #4	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #6	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #7	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

DAILY MONITORING FORM

Week _____

Instructions for scoring have been provided by your instructors. However, a brief description is given below.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5	Column #6	Column #7	Column #8	Column #9	Column #10
	Two Chapters from the Gospels	15 Minutes of Prayer	Prayer Journal	Squabble Rule Violations	Response to Correction	Agonia Contacts	Fruit of the Spirit	Does Not Blame Spouse	Shares Joy with Spouse	Rebuffed Overtures
Day #1				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #2				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #3				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #4				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #5				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #6				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #7				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Average for Week Eliminate the high and low				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	
Totals	Yes or No					Total				Total Attempted____ Total Positives____ Ratio_____

INSTRUCTIONS: (1) The "Three Disciplines," columns 1-3: one "no" for any day for any of the disciplines results in a "no" for the entire week. (2) "Squabble Rules," column 4: keep daily track of (a) how many times you violate the rules and (b) how many times your spouse violates the rules; at the end of the week, eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (3) "Response to Correction," column 5: keep daily track of how often you notice that either you or your spouse does not respond positively to correction and rebuke. The criteria consists of (a) non-defensiveness and (b) attentiveness. Grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (4) "Agonia Contacts," column 6: (a) phone call to an agonia-mate over ten minutes = 1 pt.; (b) personal, face-to-face contact over a half an hour = 3 pts.; (c) Having an agonia couple over for dinner = 5 pts; (d) participate in a meeting of the full Agonia other than the class itself = 5 pts. (5) "Spirituality Indices," columns 7-9: grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and the low for the week and average of the remaining scores. (6) "Overtures," column 10: keep daily track of how often you reach out to your spouse; and also keep track of how often, if at all, your overtures are rebuffed. At the end of the week, list the total overtures you undertook; and compute a ratio of positive responses to the total.

TONIGHT'S LESSON

SEXUAL INTIMACY

Please close your manuals for the test this evening.

QUESTIONS

Remember Revelation 2:14 - and keep it in mind throughout this evening's lesson.

Rev. 2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

1. Who is Balac?

Answer:

Balac was the King of Moab, a country which butted up against the boundaries of Canaan just east of the Dead Sea. He was King of Moab at the time Israel, under Moses, was passing through the Wilderness into the Promised Land. Balac was fearful of Israel - and didn't want Israel to take possession of Canaan.

2. Who is Balaam?

Answer:

Balaam was the linchpin of Balac's plan to keep Israel from conquering Canaan. He was a prophet from Midian whom Balac hired.

3. Where is the story of Balac and Balaam found in the Bible.

Answer:

You can pick up the story of Balac and Balaam in the Book of Numbers - beginning with chapter 20 and extending through chapter 25.

4. What was the first plan and how did it fail?

Answer:

Balac told Balaam to curse Israel. The dynamic of warfare outlined in the Old Testament scriptures is quite intriguing. It was a settled principle that the key to warfare lay not so much in the technical or numerical superiority of one nation vis a vis another, but, rather, in the supremacy of one nation's gods vis a vis another nation's - and the willingness of those gods to protect and defend their supplicants. Balaam was thought to be on intimate terms with the God of Israel; therefore, if Balaam could be induced to turn God away from Israel and keep him from casting his mantle of protection over her, she would be helpless before Balac's armies. But God prevented Balaam from cursing Israel; and each time Balaam sought to pronounce a curse, God forced him to utter a blessing. Balac's plan failed.

5. What did Balaam advise Balac to do after his first plan failed?

Answer:

He advised Balac to send out the women of Moab into the camp of Israel - enticing the men of Israel to commit fornication. We read about that in Numbers 25.

And Israel abode in Shittim, (which is part of Moab just opposite of Jericho on the Jordan plains) and the people (i.e., the men of Israel) began to commit whoredom (i.e., fornication) with the daughters of Moab.

And they (i.e., the women of Moab) called the people (i.e., the men of Israel) unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to **their** gods.

And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor (i.e., the god of the Moabites): and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.

Num. 25:1-3

6. What, then, is the "doctrine" or "teaching" of Balaam?

Answer:

Both idolatry and fornication are acts of profanity. And once you've engaged in profanity at any level, it spills over onto all other levels. *Fornication always leads to idolatry.* Balaam knew that principle - and that's why he advised Balac to entice the men of Israel to commit fornication with the woman of Moab - because he knew that profanity at one level always leads to profanity at all levels. He knew that fornication would lead to idolatry - and that Israel's idolatry would kindle God's anger. And it did... That, then, is the "teaching" or "doctrine" of Balaam.

7. The word "stumblingblock" - what Greek word does it translate - and what does it mean?

Answer:

The word "*stumblingblock*" translates the Greek word "*skandalon*" - from which we derive our word "*scandal*." And it means a "*trap*," or more accurately, "*the bait used in a trap*." ***Fornication is bait for a trap.*** That's its meaning in Revelation 2:14.

8. What is the meaning of profanity?

Answer:

It means "*to make common*."

9. How is profanity linked to idolatry?

Answer:

Idolatry is an act of profanity - because profanity simply means to "*make common*." That's its technical meaning. The very act of comparing God profanes Him - because it reduces God to the level of the item to which He's being compared. God is utterly transcendent - utterly unique - beyond comparison.

Isaiah 46:5 To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?

Isaiah 48:11 ...for My own sake, I will (vindicate myself); For how can My name be **profaned**? And My glory be given to another?

10. How important is idolatry in the Old Testament?

Answer:

In many respects, it's the story of the Old Testament. The children of Israel never quite seemed to "catch on." God would not allow Himself to be worshipped alongside the gods of the heathen. It's the story of the Book of Judges. It's the story of Elijah at Mount Carmel. Not even Solomon, with all his wisdom, caught on - and at the close of his reign, idolatry was rampant. The specific sin that called forth God's judgement upon the Northern Kingdom was idolatry. And, likewise, the specific sin that led to Judah's demise a century later was idolatry. It was the sin the prophets most singled out and warned against.

11. What do fornication and idolatry have in common?

Answer:

Both are acts of profanity. Fornication profanes sexual intimacy; and idolatry profanes worship.

12. Why does fornication always lead to idolatry?

Answer:

Profanity engaged on one level always leads to profanity on all levels. Fornication, therefore, always leads to idolatry.

12. "Fornication" and "idolatry" - which is the bait and which is the trap?

Answer:

Fornication is the bait; idolatry is the trap.

13. What is worship first and foremost?

Answer:

Worship is not just an act of passion - an act of adoration and praise; it is, in addition, a declaration of *total and exclusive* commitment - and it's that first and foremost. ***It's both a declaration and an act. And for the act to be meaningful and real, the declaration must be authentic and truthful.***

14. What is sexual intercourse first and foremost?

Answer:

Sexual intercourse, like worship, is first and foremost a declaration of *total and exclusive* commitment. ***It is first a declaration; and only secondarily an act of passion. And for the act to be filled with genuine passion, the declaration must be authentic and truthful.***

15. What does sexual intercourse declare?

Answer:

Total and exclusive commitment. Sexual intercourse, therefore, is a kind of language.

16. What happens to sexual passion when intercourse can't be used to declare total and exclusive commitment - when a person becomes sexually promiscuous?

Answer:

The passion begins to dissipate because the language becomes garbled. Sexual intercourse can't be used any longer to declare total and exclusive commitment.

17. What does the word "defraud" mean in 1 Corinthians 7:5?

1 Cor. 7:5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

Answer:

It translates the Greek word "*apostereo*." Some translations substitute the word "*deprive*" for the word "*defraud*." And that's accurate up to a certain point. We've lost the meaning of the word "*defraud*" - and "*deprive*" seems to come closer to what Paul is conveying here. But the word "*defraud*" implies deceit as well as deprivation - which the word "*deprive*" doesn't. And that's the problem with the word "*deprive*" - it misses the element of deceit.

18. What basic principle can be inferred from 1 Corinthians 7:5?

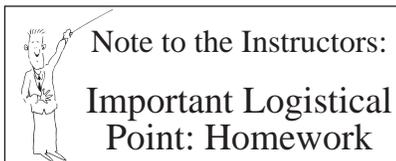
Answer:

Marriage incorporates by its very nature the **expectation** of sexual intercourse. Everyone who gets married looks forward to sexual intercourse. *Marriage establishes that expectation.* In light of that expectation, then, don't deprive one another. Indeed, such a deprivation is more than merely an act of holding back, it's fraud. Why is it fraud? ***Because the expectation is so clearly established.***

19. What other corollaries can you deduce from that basic principle?

Answer:

Marriage is not the only setting that can establish the expectation of sexual intimacy. It's the only *legitimate* setting; but it's certainly not the only one. And singles dating one another over an extended period of time - spending a great deal of time alone with one another - encounter those settings again and again. They reach a point of profound emotional intimacy - and that emotional intimacy presses inevitably - almost inexorably - toward sexual intimacy. Singles who have been dating one another for a long time and who have established a profound emotional intimacy with one another become trapped between two sins: fornication on the one hand and fraud on the other. If fornication is avoided, fraud is committed. And if fraud is avoided, fornication is committed. They find themselves bouncing back and forth between these two sins. Soon, their whole relationship turns sour.



1. Please read the *Chapter 2 - Review and Testing.* It includes the questions that we posed this evening - along with all the correct answers.
2. Please also read the *Chapter 3 - Marriage Can Be Justified on the Basis of the sexual drive Alone.* However, ignore the forms at the end of the lesson; we'll be bringing them into use during our next class.

SEXUAL INTIMACY[®]
CHAPTER 3
MARRIAGE CAN BE JUSTIFIED ON THE BASIS OF THE
SEXUAL DRIVE ALONE

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK OF _____

	Prayer Items	When Answered How Answered
Day #1	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #2	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #3	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #4	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #5	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #6	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #7	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

DAILY MONITORING FORM

Week _____

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Day #3				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #4				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #5				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #6				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #7				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Average for Week Eliminate the high and low				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	
Totals	Yes or No					Total				Total Attempted____ Total Positives____ Ratio_____

INSTRUCTIONS: (1) The "Three Disciplines," columns 1-3: one "no" for any day for any of the disciplines results in a "no" for the entire week. (2) "Squabble Rules," column 4: keep daily track of (a) how many times you violate the rules and (b) how many times your spouse violates the rules; at the end of the week, eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (3) "Response to Correction," column 5: keep daily track of how often you notice that either you or your spouse does not respond positively to correction and rebuke. The criteria consists of (a) non-defensiveness and (b) attentiveness. Grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (4) "Agonia Contacts," column 6: (a) phone call to an agonia-mate over ten minutes = 1 pt.; (b) personal, face-to-face contact over a half an hour = 3 pts.; (c) Having an agonia couple over for dinner = 5 pts; (d) participate in a meeting of the full Agonia other than the class itself = 5 pts. (5) "Spirituality Indices," columns 7-9: grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and the low for the week and average of the remaining scores. (6) "Overtures," column 10: keep daily track of how often you reach out to your spouse; and also keep track of how often, if at all, your overtures are rebuffed. At the end of the week, list the total overtures you undertook; and compute a ratio of positive responses to the total.

TONIGHT'S LESSON

MARRIAGE CAN BE JUSTIFIED ON THE BASIS OF THE SEXUAL DRIVE ALONE

FACE IT - IT'S A DRIVE - AND IT'S HARD TO SUPPRESS

Let's revisit 1 Corinthians 7:5¹...

1 Cor. 7:5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency.

This time, however, let's focus our attention on the last phrase: "...*that Satan tempt you not your incontinency.*"

Yes, sexual gratification should occur within a setting of profound emotional intimacy. And, yes, it's meant to be the "*language of love*" - the hallmark of married life - its consummation. That's a goal toward which all married couples should be pressing; nevertheless, the desire for sexual gratification is very powerful - and is not easily limited to that purpose alone. It's not just a means of expressing intimacy; it's also *a hard to ignore drive*. That's what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians 7:5. In fact, Paul points out unambiguously that not many persons are able to control² their sexual appetites - and, if so, it's often only because God has imparted the grace to do so.

1 Cor. 7:7 Yet I would that all men were even as I myself (i.e., celibate). *Howbeit each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that.*

Marriage, Paul declares, can be justified on that basis alone.

1 Cor. 7:2 But, *because of fornications*, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

The same point is made in verse 9.

1 Cor. 7:9 But if they cannot contain (bridle their passion), let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn (with a passion that can't be ignored).

ALIENATION SHOULD SELDOM ASSUME THE FORM OF WITHHOLDING SEXUAL GRATIFICATION

Because our sexual appetites are ordinarily so compelling *and* because marriage can be justified on that basis alone (1 Cor. 7:2), sexual gratification should seldom, if ever, be withheld. It's true that unrepentant sin on

FOOTNOTES

1. This passage was examined in detail in the essay, "Sexual Purity and Idolatry." However, the focus there was "fraud."
2. Paul is not suggesting that unless we're married we inevitably lapse into fornication; he's simply saying that the drive can't be ignored; it's always a nettlesome presence.

the part of your spouse provides legitimate grounds for alienation - carefully measured - and always non-vindictive in nature; but it should not - except in the most egregious cases¹ - assume the form of withholding sexual gratification.

Recall the point we made in an earlier lesson: *to withhold sexual gratification from your spouse is fraudulent*². Why? Because marriage so clearly establishes the basis for its legitimate expectation - you're withholding what marriage has given your spouse every right to expect. And that's a sin.

NOT A MANIPULATIVE PLOY

Sexual gratification should never become a manipulative ploy. Don't turn it into a "*bargaining chip*." If it's profaned - reduced to serving selfish, petty, and base purposes - it becomes a garbled language² - and, can't therefore serve the purpose God intended. And transforming it into a *bargaining chip* does precisely that.

MARRIAGE IMPOSES AN OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE SEXUAL GRATIFICATION

Finally, let's examine two additional verses taken from the same passage of scripture.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1 Cor. 7:3 | Let the husband render unto the wife <i>her due</i> : and likewise also the wife unto the husband. |
| 1 Cor. 7:4 | The wife hath not power (ἐξουσία) over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power (ἐξουσία) over his own body, but the wife. |

Verse 3 indicates rather pointedly that gratifying your spouse is not always a matter of "*being in the right mood*." Here, sexual gratification is cast in the guise of a *duty* - an *obligation* - which is the meaning of the Greek word translated "due" (οφειλῆν - ophelén). The word conveys the sense of being bound - of being obligated - of being in debt - of having relinquished one's rights.

IN MARRIAGE OUR RIGHT TO DETERMINE OUR OWN BODY'S USE IS SURRENDERED

Verse 4 is even more conclusive. The word "power" there is actually the Greek word "exousia" (ἐξουσία) - and it implies the *right to determine disposition and use*. What the verse is declaring is quite startling - especially when set against the backdrop of contemporary cultural norms: *in marriage, your sole and personal right to determine the disposition and use of your own body is surrendered*. At the very least, it's to be shared with your spouse. And, indeed, Paul's wording seems actually to imply more: *that your spouse's claim is primary*. Note carefully that Paul is imposing a serious limitation on a husband's overall authority: *his general authority cannot be invoked to set aside his wife's claim to sexual gratification*.

FOOTNOTES

1. Certainly, adultery constitutes legitimate grounds for withholding sexual gratification - up to a point. It's also grounds for divorce. If, however, the marriage is continued, the aggrieved spouse must eventually resume his/her obligation to provide sexual gratification. It's sinful to continue the marriage while at the same time withholding sexual gratification.
2. See essay entitled "Sexual Purity and Idolatry."

The same point is made in the Song of Solomon:

Song of Sol 4:16 Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

Song of Sol 5:1 I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

The Song of Solomon is divided into five canticles. The first describes the wedding day musings of Solomon and the Shulamite maiden betrothed to him; the second describes their courtship; the third describes the wedding procession and the actual wedding night itself; the fourth, sexual adjustments following marriage; and the fifth, a visit to Galilee.

Chapter 4, verse 16 is part of the third canticle, a lyrical account of the wedding night. The entire book is filled with erotic symbolism - and verse 16 is no exception. Much of the symbolism is not unique to the Old Testament or to Jewish literature in general; it's common to the literature of the entire ancient Middle East.

The word "garden" symbolizes the Shulamite's body. The phrase "*Let my beloved come into his garden...*" is the poetic equivalent of 1 Corinthians 7:3-4; specifically, her body belongs to him. The Shulamite maiden is telling Solomon to enjoy her body - "*eat its pleasant fruits...*" She acknowledges *his ownership of it*. It's *his* garden. And all its delicacies are for him to enjoy. The next verse, Chapter 5, verse 1, describes Solomon's response to her invitation. It speaks unabashedly of sexual intercourse - "*I am come into my garden...*" The next three phrases are figures of speech - each one is meant to suggest an erotic delight: (1) I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; (2) I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; and (3) I have drunk my wine with my milk. His garden is his wife's body - and its erotic pleasures are his to enjoy.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED - NOT JUST SPONTANEOUS

Children and/or a crowded schedule can impinge upon sexual intimacy. Therefore, *plans* should be made for regular sexual gratification. *It should be scheduled*. It should not be left to spontaneity alone. Spontaneity should be *added* to what's been scheduled, not substituted for it.

The children need to be put to bed early on certain predetermined evenings. A special dinner should be prepared - or arrangements made to dine out. Both husband and wife should be looking their best. The television needs to be turned off and kept off - even following sexual intercourse. Likewise, the telephone should be unplugged - or the answering machine turned on with the volume put on the lowest possible setting so that the "ring" can't be heard. The bedroom needs to be put in order during the day and arranged so that sexual intimacy is encouraged. Every couple should see to it that the bedroom door is equipped with a lock. *Little should be left to chance*.

Sexual intimacy doesn't just happen. It's anticipated and prepared for. It never ceases to amaze me how couples will make elaborate preparations for dinner parties, shopping trips, the children's soccer practice, etc., but will make no preparations at all for sexual intimacy. It's an afterthought. It's tacked on at the end of the day - *if convenient*. Little or no thought is given to it.

The frequency of sexual intercourse is also important. There's little justification for engaging in sexual intercourse just once per week. That's far too infrequent. Most couples should make plans for at least two "*liaisons*" per week - minimum. For younger couples it should be more frequent. Infrequent sexual intercourse indicates spiritual and emotional tension - usually an underlying alienation that hasn't been resolved.

You must bear in mind that sexual intimacy is no different from any other dimension of a believer's life - it too must be pursued *in faith*. Remind yourself and your agonia-mates of this truth again and again. It may well be that you haven't enjoyed sexual intimacy in a long while - that the whole notion of sexual intimacy is fraught with pain - perhaps a terrible sense of rejection, despair, and anger. There's only *one* way out: **faith**. *Faith alone will secure the victory you're looking for.*

You may find it necessary to reengage yourself sexually apart from any emotional inclination to do so. *You can't wait until you "feel" like it.*

Finally, remember that whatever you do in faith can't be done perfunctorily or mechanically. Call to mind Colossians 3:22-23¹. What you do in faith should be done...

Col. 3:22	...in singleness of heart, fearing God:
Col. 3:23	...(and)...heartily, <i>as to the Lord...</i>

In other words, you must reengage with your whole heart and mind; faith is not simply a matter of gritting your teeth and dragging yourself through a "horrendous ordeal." It must be done "*as unto the Lord.*"

STAY FOCUSED ON PLEASING YOUR SPOUSE

In reengaging yourself sexually, don't focus on what you can "*get out of it.*" Keep yourself focused on pleasing your spouse. Otherwise "*making love*" is reduced to little more than an act of selfishness - and that defiles it.

It's especially important for husbands to learn how to bring their wives to an orgasm. It can't be one way. *Be patient; be gentle; be encouraging; take your time. Don't let yourself become discouraged!* Remember, husbands, in all likelihood, your wife needs considerably more time set aside for sexual intimacy than you do.

A WORD OF CAUTION TO HUSBANDS

Listen up, husbands! It may indeed be true that your wife's body belongs to you - that it's her "duty" to surrender herself to you¹ (1 Cor. 7:3-4). But Ephesians 5:25 is just as compelling - and perhaps even more so.

Eph. 5: 25	Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...
------------	---

Husbands, *you're commanded to love your wife - and love should constrain you from always demanding your "due."* It may be too much for your wife to reengage herself sexually *as often as you might like*. If that's the case, love should keep you from insisting on it. Treat your wife with respect; don't reduce her to an object -

FOOTNOTE

1. C.f. page 16 of the section on Faith. It was Wendel Miller himself who - in an extended telephone conversation - pointed out to me the importance of these two verses in achieving a full understanding of what faith actually "looks like" in practice.

whose sole purpose is to serve your needs. That's not love. The same holds true for wives whose need for sexual intimacy exceeds their husbands. Remember: a good rule of thumb is a minimum of two times/week.

DON'T FORGET

1. Sexual intimacy is a fine, carefully drawn balance between love and respect on the one hand and obligation on the other. Make sure that you find that balance - with both husband and wife working hard to identify it.
2. Don't ever make sexual intimacy perfunctory or mechanical - even when it's being pursued only in faith. Stay focused - and put your whole mind and heart into it. Focus your attention on pleasing one another. Stop looking for "*what's in it for me.*" That's an attitude that always defiles sex.

DEVELOPING A CHECK LIST FOR SEXUAL INTIMACY

Your instructors told you last week to ignore the forms at the end of this lesson. That was so they could go over these forms with you in class tonight. Fill out each form - and then fill out the very last form - and place it somewhere hidden but easily accessible.

A checklist for sexual intimacy? The very idea seems odd to most couples; but it's very effective. And those who ridicule it out of hand are, nine times of out ten, the very ones most in need of it - the ones who *don't* enjoy a passionate, fulfilling sexual relationship. Again, sexual intimacy is *not a "happening."* The "*Song of Solomon*" proves that.

FIRST ITEM - SCHEDULED FREQUENCY

The first item that needs to be determined by each couple is *scheduled frequency*. It's important to schedule a minimum of two times/week for each couple. If that can't be managed, *you need to probe for "free-floating anger."* There's probably an underlying alienation that's going undetected. The other possibility is a medical disorder. If you suspect a medical disorder, you must (not "should") arrange for a thorough medical examination. Very often you'll find that infrequent sexual intercourse is little more than a ruse - often unconsciously perpetrated; but, nevertheless, a ruse. In most cases, the "disorder" clears up once emotional intimacy is reestablished.

Please fill out the chart below; take only about five or ten minutes to jot down a tentative commitment. Jotting it down *in class* will help you overcome whatever inertia that might be holding you back. You can modify it later.

FOOTNOTE

1. Just as it's the husband's "duty" to surrender his body to his wife.

The third item is a good, sturdy lock on the bedroom door. It's surprising how many couples don't provide for locks on their bedroom doors. They want to give their children almost unlimited access to their bedroom. *That's nonsense.* Children can be taught to knock on a locked door. The fear of an emergency shouldn't be permitted to disrupt sexual intimacy. In all likelihood, it's nothing more than a coping device unconsciously manufactured to perpetuate alienation.

My wife and I raised four wonderful children; and for most of the time they were at home with us, we saw to it that our bedroom door was equipped with a lock. And - how amazing - there was no emotional scaring! No spiritual traumas were inflicted! The very thought is utter rubbish! Even when children are quite small, a couple of hours alone in the bedroom with the door closed and locked is hardly a threat to their emotional equilibrium. And it's certainly not life-threatening. In the long run, the enhanced intimacy between mom and dad will redound to the benefit of the children. What reasonable person can deny it?

Please fill out the chart below; take only about five or ten minutes to jot down a tentative commitment. Jotting it down *in class* will help you overcome whatever inertia that might be holding you back. You can modify it later.

LOCK ON BEDROOM DOOR

Is there a lock on the bedroom door? Check one
√
Yes_____ No_____

If not, what steps are being taken to install one? Specify a deadline for the installation.

FOURTH ITEM - PREPARING ONESELF

It's important to prepare yourself emotionally and spiritually on the day you've scheduled sexual intercourse. Don't wait until a mere half an hour before you and your spouse are alone together. It's also important to take time during the day to make sure that any potential distractions have been anticipated and resolved. On the next page is a checklist you can use to prepare yourself. Go over it in class. That's right - in class. Chuckle all you want; but after you're finished chuckling, use it.

THE DAY'S CHECKLIST

Check Off
√

- It's important to think about your spouse sexually during the day - to remember the joy sexual intimacy provides. Consequently, am I consciously looking forward to this evening? Yes____ No____
- Have special arrangements been made for dinner? Yes____ No____
- Have arrangements been made to keep the children from distracting us? Yes____ No____
- Is the bedroom clean and well appointed? Yes____ No____
- Am I looking my best? Yes____ No____
- Is the TV off and the telephone unplugged? Yes____ No____

FILL OUT THE FORM ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE FOR NEXT WEEK'S CLASS

The chart on the next page is meant for any modifications you might want to make after this evening's class. Filling out the forms on the previous pages should have helped you to break free from inertia. Bring this final form to class this next week. Think of it as a commitment - not just a plan, but a promise. This is what you're promising to follow through on. Keep it handy - out of sight - for your eyes only, but within easy reach. It's a vow you're making to one another as husband and wife.

PREPARING FOR SEXUAL INTIMACY

FREQUENCY OF SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

Both spouses need to determine the frequency of sexual intercourse - and then stick to it. It's important to remember that a schedule is meant to be kept, not habitually transgressed. *Holding to a schedule is a matter of keeping your word* - and that's important. It builds trust. Specify the days and times you want to set aside for sexual intimacy on the graphic to the left. Two times/week is a minimum - even for middle age couples.

	Check Day of Week √	Specify Time of Day
Monday	_____	_____
Tuesday	_____	_____
Wednesday	_____	_____
Thursday	_____	_____
Friday	_____	_____
Saturday	_____	_____
Sunday	_____	_____

THE BEDROOM DECOR

It's important to pay close attention to your bedroom's decor. If it's not aesthetically pleasing, you need to upgrade it.

Are both spouses pleased with the bedroom decor?

Check one
√
Yes_____ No_____

If not, what steps are being taken to make improvements? Specify a deadline for the improvements to be completed. Provide an estimated cost; and don't forget: *the wife's opinion prevails*.

A BEDROOM LOCK

Is there a lock on the bedroom door?

Check one
√
Yes_____ No_____

If not, what steps are being taken to install one? Specify a deadline for the installation.

PREPARATION ON THE DAY YOU'VE SCHEDULED SEXUAL INTIMACY

Don't wait until the last moment to begin preparing for sexual intimacy. Prepare for it throughout the entire day it's scheduled.

- It's important to think about your spouse sexually during the day - to remember the joy sexual intimacy provides. Consequently, am I consciously looking forward to this evening?
- Have special arrangements been made for dinner?
- Have arrangements been made to keep the children from distracting us?
- Is the bedroom clean and well appointed?
- Am I looking my best?
- Is the TV off and the telephone unplugged?

Check Off
√
Yes_____ No_____

Yes_____ No_____

Yes_____ No_____

Yes_____ No_____

Yes_____ No_____

Yes_____ No_____

HOMEWORK

1. Turn back to the manual on faith - and reread it entirely. And don't simply skim it; read slowly and carefully.
2. Be sure to bring your final "Sexual Intimacy" forms this next week. The instructors want to make sure that you've completed it - and done so correctly.
3. Next week, you'll be tested on tonight's lesson.

SEXUAL INTIMACY[®]

CHAPTER 4

REVIEW AND TESTING

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK OF _____

	Prayer Items	When Answered How Answered
Day #1	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #2	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #3	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #4	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #6	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #7	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

DAILY MONITORING FORM

Week _____

Instructions for scoring have been provided by your instructors. However, a brief description is given below.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5	Column #6	Column #7	Column #8	Column #9	Column #10
	Two Chapters from the Gospels	15 Minutes of Prayer	Prayer Journal	Squabble Rule Violations	Response to Correction	Agonia Contacts	Fruit of the Spirit	Does Not Blame Spouse	Shares Joy with Spouse	Rebuffed Overtures
Day #1				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #2				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #3				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #4				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #5				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #6				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #7				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Average for Week Eliminate the high and low				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	
Totals	Yes or No					Total				Total Attempted____ Total Positives____ Ratio_____

INSTRUCTIONS: (1) The "Three Disciplines," columns 1-3: one "no" for any day for any of the disciplines results in a "no" for the entire week. (2) "Squabble Rules," column 4: keep daily track of (a) how many times you violate the rules and (b) how many times your spouse violates the rules; at the end of the week, eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (3) "Response to Correction," column 5: keep daily track of how often you notice that either you or your spouse does not respond positively to correction and rebuke. The criteria consists of (a) non-defensiveness and (b) attentiveness. Grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (4) "Agonia Contacts," column 6: (a) phone call to an agonia-mate over ten minutes = 1 pt.; (b) personal, face-to-face contact over a half an hour = 3 pts.; (c) Having an agonia couple over for dinner = 5 pts; (d) participate in a meeting of the full Agonia other than the class itself = 5 pts. (5) "Spirituality Indices," columns 7-9: grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and the low for the week and average of the remaining scores. (6) "Overtures," column 10: keep daily track of how often you reach out to your spouse; and also keep track of how often, if at all, your overtures are rebuffed. At the end of the week, list the total overtures you undertook; and compute a ratio of positive responses to the total.

QUESTIONS

Please close their manuals.

Keep in mind 1 Corinthians 7:5.

1 Cor. 7:5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency.

1. The phrase "*that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency*" - what truth does it highlight?

Answer:

That sex is not just a means of expressing intimacy; it's also a *hard to ignore drive*.

2. Turn to 1 Corinthians 7:2 and 7:9. What truth is clearly underscored here?

1 Cor. 7:2 But, *because of fornications*, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

1 Cor. 7:9 But if they cannot contain (bridle their passion), let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn (with a passion that can't be ignored).

Answer:

That marriage can be justified on the basis of the sexual drive alone.

3. Why should withholding sex seldom if ever be used to express alienation?

Answer:

Because (1) our sexual appetites are ordinarily so compelling **and** because (2) marriage can be justified on that basis alone. It's true that unrepentant sin on the part of your spouse provides legitimate grounds for alienation - carefully measured - and always non-vindictive in nature; but it should not - except in the most egregious cases (e.g., adultery) - assume the form of withholding sexual gratification.

Recall the point we made in an earlier lesson: to withhold sexual gratification from your spouse is fraudulent. Why? Because marriage so clearly establishes the basis for its legitimate expectation - you're withholding what marriage has given your spouse every right to expect. And that's a sin.

Finally, sexual gratification should never become a manipulative ploy. Don't turn it into a "*bargaining chip*." If it's profaned - reduced to serving selfish, petty, and base purposes - it becomes a garbled language - and, can't therefore serve the purpose God intended. And transforming it into a *bargaining chip* does precisely that.

4. Let's turn to 1 Corinthians 7:3 and 7:4?

- 1 Cor. 7:3 Let the husband render unto the wife **her due**: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.
- 1 Cor. 7:4 The wife hath not **power** (ἐξουσία) over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not **power** (ἐξουσία) over his own body, but the wife.

What remarkable truth is reflected here?

Answer:

Verse 3 indicates rather pointedly that gratifying your spouse is not always a matter of "*being in the right mood.*" Here, sexual gratification is cast in the guise of a *duty* - an *obligation* - which is the meaning of the Greek word translated "due" (οφειλην - ophelén). The word conveys the sense of being bound - of being obligated - of being in debt - of having relinquished one's rights.

The word "power" in verse 4 is actually the Greek word "exousia" (ἐξουσία) - and it implies the right to determine disposition and use. The point here is that in marriage, your sole and personal right to determine the disposition and use of your own body is surrendered. Paul's wording seems to suggest that it's not just a matter of sharing with your spouse authority over your body, but that your spouse's claim is actually primary. Note carefully that Paul is imposing a serious limitation on a husband's overall authority: *his general authority cannot be invoked to set aside his wife's claim to sexual gratification: his body belongs to her.*

5. Turn to the Song of Solomon 4:16 and 5:1.

- Song of Sol 4:16 Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.
- Song of Sol 5:1 I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

What truth is being declared here?

Answer:

It's the same point that Paul makes in 1 Corinthians 7:3 and 7:4. The word "garden" symbolizes the Shulamite's body; the phrase "*Let my beloved come into his garden...*" is the poetic equivalent of 1 Corinthians 7:3-4. The Shulamite maiden is telling Solomon to enjoy her body - "*eat its pleasant fruits...*" She acknowledges *his ownership of it*. It's **his** garden. It belongs to him. And all its delicacies are for him to enjoy. The next verse, Chapter 5, verse 1, describes Solomon's response to her invitation. It speaks unabashedly of sexual intercourse - "*I am come into my garden...*" The next three phrases are figures of speech - each one is meant to suggest an erotic delight: (1) I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; (2) I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; and (3) I have drunk my wine with my milk. His garden is his wife's body - and its erotic pleasures are his to enjoy.

HOMEWORK

1. Please read *Chapter 4 - Review and Testing.*" It includes the questions that you were posed this evening - along with all the correct answers.
2. Please also read *Chapter 5 - Cleaning up the Past and Keeping It Clean.*" Make sure you study this lesson very carefully.

SEXUAL INTIMACY[®]
CHAPTER 5
CLEANING UP THE PAST AND KEEPING IT CLEAN
WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK OF _____

	Prayer Items	When Answered How Answered
Day #1	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #2	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #3	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #4	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #5	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #6	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #7	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

DAILY MONITORING FORM

Week _____

Instructions for scoring have been provided by your instructors. However, a brief description is given below.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5	Column #6	Column #7	Column #8	Column #9	Column #10
	Two Chapters from the Gospels	15 Minutes of Prayer	Prayer Journal	Squabble Rule Violations	Response to Correction	Agonia Contacts	Fruit of the Spirit	Does Not Blame Spouse	Shares Joy with Spouse	Rebuffed Overtures
Day #1				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #2				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #3				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #4				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #5				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #6				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #7				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Average for Week Eliminate the high and low				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	
Totals	Yes or No					Total				Total Attempted____ Total Positives____ Ratio_____

INSTRUCTIONS: (1) The "Three Disciplines," columns 1-3: one "no" for any day for any of the disciplines results in a "no" for the entire week. (2) "Squabble Rules," column 4: keep daily track of (a) how many times you violate the rules and (b) how many times your spouse violates the rules; at the end of the week, eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (3) "Response to Correction," column 5: keep daily track of how often you notice that either you or your spouse does not respond positively to correction and rebuke. The criteria consists of (a) non-defensiveness and (b) attentiveness. Grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (4) "Agonia Contacts," column 6: (a) phone call to an agonia-mate over ten minutes = 1 pt.; (b) personal, face-to-face contact over a half an hour = 3 pts.; (c) Having an agonia couple over for dinner = 5 pts; (d) participate in a meeting of the full Agonia other than the class itself = 5 pts. (5) "Spirituality Indices," columns 7-9: grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and the low for the week and average of the remaining scores. (6) "Overtures," column 10: keep daily track of how often you reach out to your spouse; and also keep track of how often, if at all, your overtures are rebuffed. At the end of the week, list the total overtures you undertook; and compute a ratio of positive responses to the total.

TONIGHT'S LESSON

CLEANING UP THE PAST AND KEEPING IT CLEAN

Each one of you needs to come to grips with your *past* attitudes and conduct. Whatever sexual misbehavior has occurred needs to be brought before the Lord - confessed and repented of. It's especially important that there be no lingering guilt and self-condemnation. Turn to 1 John 1:9.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Turn now to Isaiah 1:18.

Isa. 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

You need to know with certainty that God forgives immorality - and extends to us the opportunity to begin anew.

2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Meditate and pray over 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

1 Cor. 6:9 ...neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
1 Cor. 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.
1 Cor. 6:11 *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

You have been washed from your sins; you have been justified - declared righteous in the name of Jesus Christ - and through the Holy Spirit.

A GARDEN ENCLOSED

Let's return to the Song of Solomon - this time to chapter 4, verse 12.

Song of Solomon 4:12 A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

Remember, the Song of Solomon is filled with "figures of speech" - many of which convey an erotic meaning. Remember also that the symbolism used is common to Jewish literature - and to Middle Eastern literature in general. The word "*garden*" here in verse 12 conveys the same meaning it does in verse 16: *the Shulamite's body*. Her body is "*enclosed*" - meaning it's reserved for only one person - her betrothed. He

alone is permitted access - no one else. The next two phrases, "*a spring shut up*" and "*a fountain sealed*," point to her virginity - and indicate that she has kept herself pure; that only her betrothed can open up her "*spring*" and initiate her into the joy of erotic pleasures.

The principle that's so clearly elucidated here applies not only to women, but to men as well. It's the same principle we examined in the essay "Sexual Purity and Idolatry": *absolute exclusivity!* Our bodies are "*enclosed*" - reserved - fenced about - with only one person given the key! The lesson is simple and straight forward: ***build back your fence - repair it - enclose once again your garden.*** God will honor any confession of past sins and indiscretions - and will cleanse your garden of its stain. The cleansing is his job - and will be thorough. There's no need on your part to doubt either his willingness or his competence. There will be no soiled blemishes left. His job is to cleanse it; your job is to keep it clean - *and that depends on just how high you build the fence around your garden.* Build it high; lay a good foundation; make it sturdy. Erotic joy occurs only within a *cleansed and enclosed* garden - both husband and wife.

ON-GOING COMPROMISES

What about on-going "*compromises*"? And here I don't mean fornication or adultery itself, but the concessions we're all so prone to make - concessions that pave the way to flagrant sinfulness. Those too need to be confessed and renounced. If it continues unchecked, there's no possibility that you can sanctify sexual intimacy - and use it to speak the language of love. Whatever *profanes* sex must be repudiated - whatever reduces its transcendent glory and makes it common: vulgarity, pornography, filthy jokes, masturbation, fantasizing, lewd suggestions, the "second look," daydreaming, trashy romantic novels, television soap-operas, etc. - all must be forsaken. Sweep the house clean. Get radical!

LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR THOUGHT LIFE

We *aren't* slaves to whatever thoughts cry out to us; we *can* govern what we think and dwell upon. Philippians 4:8 is conclusive.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Paul is telling us here to *control our thoughts*. And he puts it to us in the form of a command. *Just do it!* It's part of God's enablement - it's found in the renewed human nature we've been given in Christ - and that the Holy Spirit stands ever ready to minister to us.

James makes essentially the same point in chapter one, verses 14 and 15. Here James pleads with us to *control our thoughts*.

James 1:14 ...every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.
James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The two words "*every man*" is a single Greek word "εκαστος" ("hekastos") - and it's used here to stress ***personal responsibility*** - not mankind in general, but each and every *specific individual*. The verb "*drawn away*" is the Greek word "εξελκομενος" ("exelkomenos") - and it's often used to convey the sense of "*being drawn out from hiding*" - just as a baited hook draws a fish from out of its protected sanctuary among the underwater rocks. The word "*enticed*" is the Greek word "δελεαζομενος" ("deleazomenos") - and it's derived from a verb meaning to "*hunt with snares.*"

The devil fishes for us with bait - and hunts for us with snares. He's forever trying to draw us away from the sanctuary God provides for us in his presence. The bait he uses assumes the form of a thought - what verse 14 terms a "*lust*" - a mental image. The thought itself doesn't make us sinful - as long as it's quickly renounced and not "*toyed with*." It becomes a sin only if we "*take the hook into our mouth*." Only if we *step into* the snare. And if we do, *it's our fault*; because there's **no** overwhelming compulsion to do so. The lust becomes overwhelming only when we harbor it - only when we "toy with it" - only when we draw it into our hearts and hold it there.

Verse 15 shifts metaphors - from "*fishing with bait*" and "*hunting with snares*" to conception and pregnancy. The point verse 15 makes is simple and straightforward: whenever we harbor a lust - turning it over in our mind rather than renouncing it - sin is *conceived* in our hearts. We become "impregnated." It's at that point, not before, that the lust assumes a *life of its own - and seems to become almost irresistible*.

The metaphor of a pregnancy implies that there may be a "gestation period" - extending from the moment the lust impregnates us to the moment it breaks forth into actual sin. The sin itself, of course, produces death.

Don't permit your mind to fantasize - because that's what *empowers* a lust. Until we draw a lust into our hearts and mull it over in our minds, ***it can be resisted with relative ease***.

Again, the emphasis here is on personal responsibility. Don't blame the devil for your sinfulness; don't blame it on a demonic assault. *It's your fault* - and until you begin to acknowledge that fact, you'll find no deliverance. Remember, a lust - James uses the Greek word "*επιθυμια*" ("*epithumia*") - acquires its compulsive dynamic only because you're "*feeding it*" - only because you're "*toying with it*" - to the point that it impregnates you.

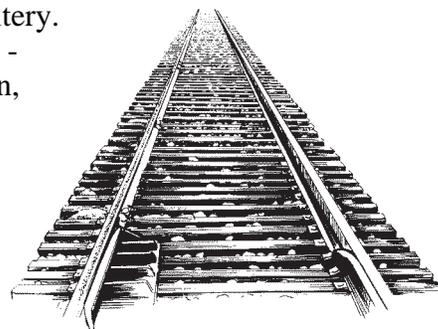
And it's certainly true that once a lust impregnates someone, it does indeed transmutate - it undergoes a qualitative change. It can still be resisted; but not very easily. The person impregnated has already laid out "sin tracks" - he has already established a pattern of capitulation. It was sinful for him to have "turned it over in his mind" at all. Jesus makes precisely this point in the "Sermon on the Mount."

Matt. 5:28

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

God warns us again and again in scripture to resist the devil long before we've sat down on a bar stool and ordered a drink. If we suffer from alcoholism, the time to mount our resistance is when the thought first crosses our mind, not on the bar stool with a drink in our hand.

No one simply turns over in bed one morning and decides to commit adultery. The "*track has been laid out*" for the train to travel along over many days - perhaps many weeks and months - fantasizing, pornography, masturbation, uncontrolled anger, despondancy, bitterness, trashy romantic novels, television soap-operas, late night drives alone, consciously turning down the wrong street. What began as a simple thought *you've empowered* - that's right, you're responsible for the compulsive dynamic it's acquired. You're to blame for the "spell" it casts. Don't say, "*The devil made me do it*." That's a lie. All the devil can do is set out the bait; you're the fool who bites into it.



**"Sin Tracks" are laid out
way ahead of time**

Romans 13:14 highlights the need on our part to begin resisting the devil immediately - not to toy with the lust he dangles before us - not to "take the bait."

Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

The word "lusts" is the same word James uses - "επιθυμια" ("epithumia"). The word "fulfill" is not in the original Greek. It's added to give the sense of the Greek word "προνοιαν" ("pronoian") - which actually means "forethought," not "provision" - though, clearly, the forethought is directed toward *making provision*. But "forethought" is better because it points to the mind's role. It's the same warning that James makes: *don't allow a lust to "hang around."* Don't "converse" with it.

2 Timothy 2:22 minces no words: we're not simply to walk away from a lust; we're to *flee* from a lust.

2 Tim. 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Here again the word "lust" is "επιθυμια" ("epithumia"). The word "flee" is "φευγε" ("pheuge") - and it means "run away." It's often used to convey the sense of "escaping." It incorporates a note of strident urgency. *Get away! Because you're being stalked - you're being hunted!* The verb assumes the form of an imperative. And it's in the present active tense - meaning that it's on-going - assuming the nature of an attitude. You're to be constantly on guard - always vigilant. Peter sums up the stance we're to adopt.

1 Pet. 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour...

Note also the stress in 2 Timothy 2:22 to *stay close* to your fellow-believers. Don't allow yourself to become isolated and cut off. The word "pursue" conveys the same sense of strident urgency. It too means to "run" - only this time "run after," not "run from." Paul has linked "run from" to "run after" in exactly the same way that he links "put off" with "put on" in Ephesians 4:22-24.

Eph. 4:22 That ye *put off* concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Eph. 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Eph. 4:24 And that ye *put on* the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

It's a favorite technique of his. And what it means is that "running from a lust" is *completed and effectuated* in "running after" righteousness, faith, charity, and peace - just as "putting off the old man" is *completed and effectuated* in "putting on the new man."

It's not simply a matter of renouncing the lust; *that's only the starting point*; resistance is finalized and perfected in "running after" righteousness - and not just alone, but with others. Resisting immorality, then, consists of three basic steps - each of which is inextricably linked to the other two and is useless by itself. ***In a sense, the three steps should be merged into one continuous act.***

1. ***Run from*** lust - renounce it immediately; refuse to "toy with it;" don't wrap your thoughts around it.
2. ***Run after*** righteousness, faith, charity, and peace.
3. But don't pursue righteousness alone; do it with others. Righteousness can't be secured in isolation; sanctification is a ***corporate*** pursuit.

Anyone who is not pursuing righteousness is not renouncing unrighteousness. And anyone who is not pursuing righteousness *corporately* will find that he's not able to sustain his pursuit or direct it accurately.

YOUR SPOUSE SHOULD BE YOUR ONLY "FRIEND" WHO'S OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

Emotional intimacy inevitably generates a press toward sexual intimacy. Please, let's not kid ourselves here. It's nonsense to think otherwise. I'm not suggesting that you shun other women if you're a man; or other men if you're a woman. But don't become too closely linked to them - especially in any kind of a setting that promotes intimate conversations or extended time alone. Don't do it! You might think that you can control it; but it's not wise to even try. Remember the warning Paul gives in Romans 13:14.

Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

We're to be constantly on alert - always on guard. Some of the finest men of God have succumbed to immorality - and all because they put themselves in a setting that promoted emotional intimacy with "another" woman. They never intended to commit adultery or fornication; but they failed to consider carefully just how dangerous it is to *"fly too close to the flame."*

Billy Graham has set an example for each of us to ponder and emulate. Early in his ministry, before the 1949 Los Angeles Crusade that launched him into national prominence, he was called to Modesto, California, to preach a city-wide revival. While there, he and his friends, Bev Shea, Cliff Barrows, and Grady Wilson, began discussing the dangers that so often plague evangelists - and not only evangelists, but pastors as well - anyone who's seeking to serve God. Immorality was one of the dangers at the top of their list. Here, in Billy Graham's own words, is what they resolved to do:

We pledged among ourselves to avoid any situation that would have even the appearance of compromise or suspicion. From that day on, I did not travel, meet, or eat alone with a woman other than my wife. We determined that the Apostle Paul's mandate to the young pastor Timothy would be ours as well: "Flee...youthful lusts."

Does that seem too radical? Well, it's not! And it accounts for much of Billy Graham's success. God honors us when we honor him - and take seriously the warnings and admonitions he's taken the trouble to insert in the scriptures.

I don't want to arouse undue fear - and, most certainly, I don't want to stir up paranoia. Nevertheless, we do well to remember *that we're being stalked; that we're being hunted.* And that the devil takes no prisoners! He's not restricting himself to merely injuring us - smacking us around a little; he wants to devour us. Once again, let's examine 1 Peter 5:8.

1 Pet. 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour...

The two words "walketh about" translates a single Greek word "περιπατει" ("peripate") - and here it conveys the sense of "being on the prowl" - hard at work looking for victims. The word "devour" is "καταπιειν" ("katapien") - and it means to "swallow down whole."

Don't try to outsmart the devil! You can't! He'll trap you in your own cleverness! Heed God's warnings - and keep yourself safe - and keep sexual intimacy sanctified.

FINALLY - DON'T USE SEX AS A BARGAINING CHIP

We touched on this point already. Sexual intimacy is far too precious and its meaning far too transcendent to allow it to serve any petty purposes. You know how to properly resolve an offense. You need to rigorously apply the principles you've learned - and in so doing keep sexual intimacy sanctified. Remember, it's especially defiling to use sex to inflict punishment - either by forcing it or withholding it.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

But it's not just misconduct *on your part* that can defile sex; tragically, there's more to it than just that: *if you've suffered sexual assault at the hands of others*, that too can warp and twist your perception of sex - making *sexual* intimacy with your spouse very difficult to achieve - and leading thereby to the diminution of *emotional* intimacy as well. It's almost inevitable. Rape and incest are no doubt among the worst traumas that can be inflicted. Let's take a look:

RAPE

Rape inflicts at least five heart wrenching traumas:

1. The woman raped is almost always overwhelmed with a sense of powerlessness. And that sense can reach "*cosmic proportions*" - extending into every sphere of her life. Control becomes an overriding concern - making intimacy, as we've learned, very difficult to achieve.
2. She's likely to feel that she has been reduced to nothing more than a mere *object* - that her *subjective being* has been rendered meaningless and worthless - that her basic humanity has been stolen - that who she is, what she wants, and what she values doesn't count.
3. If the perpetrator is not swiftly brought to account, the victim is likely to sense that no one cares - that *injustice* is part of the "*human condition*" - an inescapable "*fact of life.*" Inevitably, that leaves her feeling cut off and alienated - cast back on herself.
4. She's likely to suffer a haunting sense of grief - that what was meant to be sanctified and used to beautify life has now been forever defiled - and that it can't be reclaimed.
5. And, finally, she's likely to suffer a nagging sense of guilt - that what happened to her was, in some sense, deserved.

INCEST

Incest is even worse - because the perpetrator is *always* a person she should have been able to trust - a father, a grandfather, a stepfather, an uncle, a brother, a stepbrother, a brother in law - someone she should have been able to count on to nurture and protect her - to guard her from being exploited and violated.

Moreover, unlike rape, incest is not ordinarily a onetime event; it's usually on-going - quite often extending over many years. It's difficult to conceive of a trauma more profound than incest. It's hard to imagine the mistrust that's injected into the hearts and minds of individuals who become the victims of incest. What desperation and hopelessness grip them! What a paralyzing sense of betrayal comes to cast its shadow over their entire lives!

Rape and incest are ordinarily traumas inflicted on young girls and women; however, it's not that uncommon anymore for young boys and men to suffer rape and incest as well. It has followed in the wake of far-reaching changes in the cultural norms governing homosexuality.

WHAT TO DO

It does no good to ignore rape or incest. That's a surefire recipe for disaster! It won't go away. It may not - over time - generate the intense grief and horror it did initially - and it may eventually cease being a conscious day-to-day presence; but - nine times out ten - all *that* indicates is that the trauma has simply been driven underground - where it continues to fester - producing a deep-seated bitterness that tarnishes and defiles every relationship that comprises the existential framework of the victim's life - every one. No relationship escapes its perverting impact. What, then, should be done?

1. It's a mistake to treat rape and incest differently from other offenses - to set rape and incest off in a special category that calls for unique spiritual therapies. The impact of rape and incest can be more devastating than other sins, but the treatment is basically the same.
2. Begin to discuss the rape or incest you've suffered - with, at the very least, one of your instructors. Don't sit on it. Open up and begin talking about it. Your instructor can put you in touch with others in the church who have suffered the same trauma - *and who have overcome it*. It's vital that you begin talking about the ordeal you've undergone - *even if you feel that the pain has subsided and that it's now manageable*.
3. Next, try talking to your agonia-mates. Let them know about what you've undergone. The more you can get it out into the open, the more the light of God will dispel the darkness that has obstructed healing. I'm not suggesting that discretion isn't important. You're not being asked here to share what you've suffered with every "Tom, Dick, and Harry." But neither can it be kept a secret. "*Keeping secrets*" is a powerful dynamic that drives almost all dysfunctional families. It serves to bind the family together around an incident that perpetuates trauma.
4. Realize that the trauma induced by the rape or incest is likely to have produced "free-floating anger." You know what that is and how to resolve it. Now, follow through on what you've learned. Make use of the "Post Offense Closure Form."
5. Go back over the whole section on "Faith." You're going to have to "*walk out intimacy*" without at first feeling yourself emotionally able to do so - *and the only way to do that is by faith*. I can't overstress the importance of faith. You must understand thoroughly how it works and what it entails.
6. It's especially important to keep in mind the importance of exhortation: you can't do without it - which is one more reason for opening up to others. Remember how important exhortation is to faith.
7. Finally, begin to pray for the person who assaulted you. When you reach the point in prayer that you've become more concerned about your assailant's salvation than about his punishment, you can be sure that you're well along the road to recovery - that you're making good progress toward ridding yourself of the bitterness his sin has inflicted upon you. You'll know that you've actually given up trying to "*get even*" - which is what's at the heart of vengeance.¹ It's not that he shouldn't be punished - or that you shouldn't press charges against him; that's not what I'm saying. *It's that his salvation has become just as important to you.*

FOOTNOTE

1. Wendel Miller, in a personal telephone conversation, insisted on this point. It's critical, in Miller's opinion, that a rape victim begins praying just as soon as possible for her assailant. Otherwise, bitterness begins to inject its terrible poison.

HOMEWORK

For next week, please fill out the form on the following page.

RAPE AND INCEST

If you've suffered rape or incest, please remember to tell one of your instructors about it. If you know that your spouse has suffered rape or incest, please encourage him/her to bring it to the attention of your instructors.

SEXUAL INTIMACY[®]

CHAPTER 6

REVIEW AND TESTING

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK OF _____

	Prayer Items	When Answered How Answered
Day #1	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #2	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #3	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #4	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #6	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Day #7	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

DAILY MONITORING FORM

Week _____

Instructions for scoring have been provided by your instructors. However, a brief description is given below.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5	Column #6	Column #7	Column #8	Column #9	Column #10
	Two Chapters from the Gospels	15 Minutes of Prayer	Prayer Journal	Squabble Rule Violations	Response to Correction	Agonia Contacts	Fruit of the Spirit	Does Not Blame Spouse	Shares Joy with Spouse	Rebuffed Overtures
Day #1				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #2				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #3				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #4				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #5				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #6				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #7				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Average for Week Eliminate the high and low				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	
Totals	Yes or No					Total				Total Attempted____ Total Positives____ Ratio_____

INSTRUCTIONS: (1) The "Three Disciplines," columns 1-3: one "no" for any day for any of the disciplines results in a "no" for the entire week. (2) "Squabble Rules," column 4: keep daily track of (a) how many times you violate the rules and (b) how many times your spouse violates the rules; at the end of the week, eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (3) "Response to Correction," column 5: keep daily track of how often you notice that either you or your spouse does not respond positively to correction and rebuke. The criteria consists of (a) non-defensiveness and (b) attentiveness. Grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (4) "Agonia Contacts," column 6: (a) phone call to an agonia-mate over ten minutes = 1 pt.; (b) personal, face-to-face contact over a half an hour = 3 pts.; (c) Having an agonia couple over for dinner = 5 pts; (d) participate in a meeting of the full Agonia other than the class itself = 5 pts. (5) "Spirituality Indices," columns 7-9: grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and the low for the week and average of the remaining scores. (6) "Overtures," column 10: keep daily track of how often you reach out to your spouse; and also keep track of how often, if at all, your overtures are rebuffed. At the end of the week, list the total overtures you undertook; and compute a ratio of positive responses to the total.

TONIGHT'S LESSON

CLEANING UP THE PAST AND KEEPING IT CLEAN

Following the quiz, your instructors will have you read aloud the forms you filled out this last week.

QUESTIONS

Please close your manuals.

1. If we've been sexually promiscuous, can God enable us to recover the purity of sexual intimacy? Can we "de-garble" the "language of love"?

Answer:

Of course! 1 John 1:9 is unambiguous.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

It's very important here, though, to walk by faith - and not to capitulate to self-condemnation. The *Accuser of the Brethren* stands always ready to beat us down - and weaken us with his steady barrage of slanderous allegations.

2. Let's turn to Song of Solomon 4:12.

Song of Solomon 4:12 A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

What does this verse tell us about recovering sexual purity?

Answer:

The principle that's so clearly elucidated here applies not only to women, but to men as well. It's the same principle we examined in the essay "Sexual Purity and Idolatry": *absolute exclusivity!* Our bodies are "*enclosed*" - reserved - fenced about - with only one person given the key! The lesson is simple and straight forward: ***build back your fence - repair it - enclose once again your garden.*** God will honor any confession of past sins and indiscretions - and will cleanse your garden of its stain. The cleansing is his job - and will be thorough. There's no need on your part to doubt either his willingness or his competence. There will be no soiled blemishes left. His job is to cleanse it; your job is to keep it clean - *and that depends on just how high you build the fence around your garden.* Build it high; lay a good foundation; make it sturdy. And remember, how high and how sturdy your fence is depends on how much you've learned to control your thoughts.

3. Erotic joy occurs only under what circumstances?

Answer:

Erotic joy occurs only within a *cleansed and enclosed* garden - both husband and wife.

4. Turn to Philippians 4:8.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

What does this verse tell us?

Answer:

Paul is telling us here to *control our thoughts*. And he puts it to us in the form of a command. *Just do it*. It's part of God's enablement - it's found in the renewed human nature we've been given in Christ - and that the Holy Spirit stands ever ready to minister to us.

5. Turn to James 1:14 and 15.

James 1:14 ...every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.
James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The two words "*every man*" are a translation of a single Greek word; and that word emphasizes what spiritual principle?

Answer:

Personal responsibility.

6. The word "drawn away" translates the Greek word "*exelkomenos*" - and it means what?

Answer:

It conveys the sense of "*being drawn out from hiding*."

7. Hiding where?

Answer:

In the presence of God.

8. The word "enticed" translates the Greek word "*deleazomenos*" - and it means what?

Answer:

To hunt with snares.

9. Verse 15 shifts metaphors. From what to what?

Answer:

From fishing with bait and hunting with snares to conception and pregnancy.

10. Is it difficult to resist a lust?

Answer:

It's relatively easy to resist a lust - until *we empower it* - until we turn it over in our minds and wrap our thoughts around it.

11. Does anyone simply commit adultery - turn over in bed one morning and give in to a lust?

Answer:

No one simply turns over in bed one morning and decides to commit adultery. The *"track has been laid out"* over many days - perhaps many weeks and months - fantasizing, pornography, masturbation, uncontrolled anger, despondency bitterness, trashy romantic novels, television soap-operas, late night drives alone, consciously turning down the wrong street. What began as a simple thought *you've empowered* - that's right, you're responsible for the compulsive dynamic it's acquired. You're to blame for the "spell" it casts. Don't say, *"The devil made me do it."* That's a lie. All the devil can do is set out the bait; you're the fool who bites into it.

12. Turn to Romans 13:14.

Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

This verse is well known among Christians; however, the actual Greek text is making a point that the English translations misses. What is it about this verse that points to the importance of controlling our thoughts?

Answer:

The word "lusts" is the same word James uses - "επιθυμια" ("epithumia"). The word "fulfill" is not in the original Greek. It's added to give the sense of the Greek word "προνοιαν" ("pronoian") - which actually means *"forethought,"* not *"provision"* - though, clearly, the forethought is directed toward *making provision*. But *"forethought"* is better because it points to the mind's role. It's the same warning that James issues: *don't allow a lust to "hang around."* *Don't "converse" with it.*

13. Turn to 2 Timothy 2:22. Here again we're being warned to "make no provision for the flesh" - not to toy with lust - not to wrap our thoughts around it or get too close to "its flame."

2 Tim. 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

How is this verse similar to Ephesians 4:22-24? And what does that similarity tell us in terms of how to resist temptation?

Eph. 4:22 That ye **put off** concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Eph. 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Eph. 4:24 And that ye **put on** the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Answer:

The word "flee" is "φευγε" ("pheuge") - and it means "run away." It's often used to convey the sense of "escaping." It incorporates a note of strident urgency. *Get away! Because you're being stalked - you're being hunted.* The word "pursue" or "follow" conveys the same sense of strident

urgency. It too means to "run" - only this time "run after," not "run from." Paul has linked "*run from*" to "*run after*" in exactly the same way that he links "*put off*" with "*put on*" in Ephesians 4:22-24. It's a favorite technique of his. And what it means is that "running from a lust" is *completed and effectuated* in "running after" righteousness, faith, charity, and peace - just as "putting off the old man" is *completed and effectuated* in "putting on the new man."

It's not simply a matter of renouncing the lust; that's only the starting point; resistance is finalized and perfected in "running after" righteousness - and not just alone, but with others. Resisting immorality, then, consists of three basic steps - each of which is inextricably linked to the other two and is useless by itself. ***In a sense, the three steps should be merged into one continuous act.***

1. ***Run from*** lust - renounce it immediately; refuse to "toy with it;" don't wrap your thoughts around it.
2. ***Run after*** righteousness, faith, charity, and peace.
3. But don't pursue righteousness alone; do it with others. Righteousness can't be secured in isolation; sanctification is a ***corporate*** pursuit.

Anyone who is not pursuing righteousness is not renouncing unrighteousness. And anyone who is not pursuing righteousness *corporately* will find that he's not able to sustain his pursuit or direct it accurately.

14. Should a man or a woman have a good friend of the opposite sex other than his/her spouse?

Answer:

Emotional intimacy inevitably generates a press toward sexual intimacy. Are we going to kid ourselves here? It's nonsense to think otherwise. I'm not suggesting that you shun other women if you're a man; or other men if you're a woman. But don't become too closely linked to them - especially in any kind of a setting that promotes intimate conversations or extended time alone. Don't do it. You might think that you can control it; but it's not wise to even try. Remember the warning Paul gives in Romans 13:14.

Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

We're to be constantly on alert - always on guard. Some of the finest men of God have succumbed to immorality - and all because they put themselves in settings that promoted emotional intimacy with "another" woman. They never intended to commit adultery or fornication; but they failed to consider carefully just how dangerous it is to "*fly too close to the flame.*"

15. What has been Billy Graham's governing rule concerning "other women"?

Answer:

While in Modesto, California, just before his 1949 Los Angeles Crusade, he and his friends, Bev Shea, Cliff Barrows, and Grady Wilson, began discussing the dangers that so often plague evangelists - and not only evangelists, but pastors as well - anyone who's seeking to serve God. Immorality was one of the dangers at the top of their list. Here, in Billy Graham's own words, is what they resolved to do:

We pledged among ourselves to avoid any situation that would have even the appearance of compromise or suspicion. From that day on, I did not travel, meet, or eat alone with a woman other than my wife. We determined that the Apostle Paul's mandate to the young pastor Timothy would be ours as well: "Flee...youthful lusts."

Now, please read aloud the forms you filled out this last week. Afterwards, please fill out the form on the next page - and please do so *in class*. It's a melded list. Read the directions at the top of the form. The directions are very self-explanatory

COMPROMISES THAT I'M PRONE TO MAKE

My spouse and I have compiled a list of compromises that I'm prone to make. It melds the list I've drawn-up of myself and the one he/she has drawn-up of me.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

My acknowledgment:

I acknowledge that these compromises are sinful and that my spouse has every right to process an offense against me any time I commit one of them. I want to recover the sanctity and, hence, the joy of sex.

My signature: _____ Dated: _____

My Spouse's Promise:

I pledge not to ignore these compromises - and to process an offense any time my spouse commits one of them. I want to help my spouse recover the sanctity and, hence, the joy of sex.

My spouse's signature: _____ Dated: _____

A Further Acknowledgment and Pledge:

I acknowledge that I should share emotional intimacy with no person of the opposite sex other than my wife and close blood relatives. And I pledge not to do so.

My signature: _____ Dated: _____

HOMEWORK FOR NEXT WEEK

1. Bring your list of coping devices to class this next week. It's been a long time since we've reviewed your progress. You'll be required to read aloud your list before the entire Agonia - and then evaluate how much progress you've made dismantling them since last time this review was undertaken. Your list, of course, should include the modifications occasioned by your spouse's input. Then, your spouse will be called upon to give his/her opinion. If your coping devices remain pretty much intact - with little or no "*compulsive dynamic*" drained from any of them - ***that's a pretty good indication that the forgiveness principles are not being applied conscientiously.*** And remember, the blame is shared equally between husband and wife. It's not just that the husband is being recalcitrant; it's probably just as true that the wife is not doing her part - that, instead, she's still playing the role of "victim" - she's still attempting to appease and placate him instead of pressing all the way through with her offenses. And visa versa. Needless to say, it's time to press yourselves very hard; it's time to get stinky with yourself and with anyone else who's not making good progress. There's no excuse for any recalcitrance at this juncture.
2. Fill out the Progress Form on the next page. I want you and your spouse jointly to decide the level you've reached on the "Strategy Sheet." If you differ on your assessment, the lower level should be recorded, not the higher level. Save this assessment. We will be using it later. ***Compare this assessment with the your last one.***
3. Read over *Chapter 6 - Review and Testing.*" It includes the questions that we posed this evening - along with all the correct answers.

Personal Evaluation

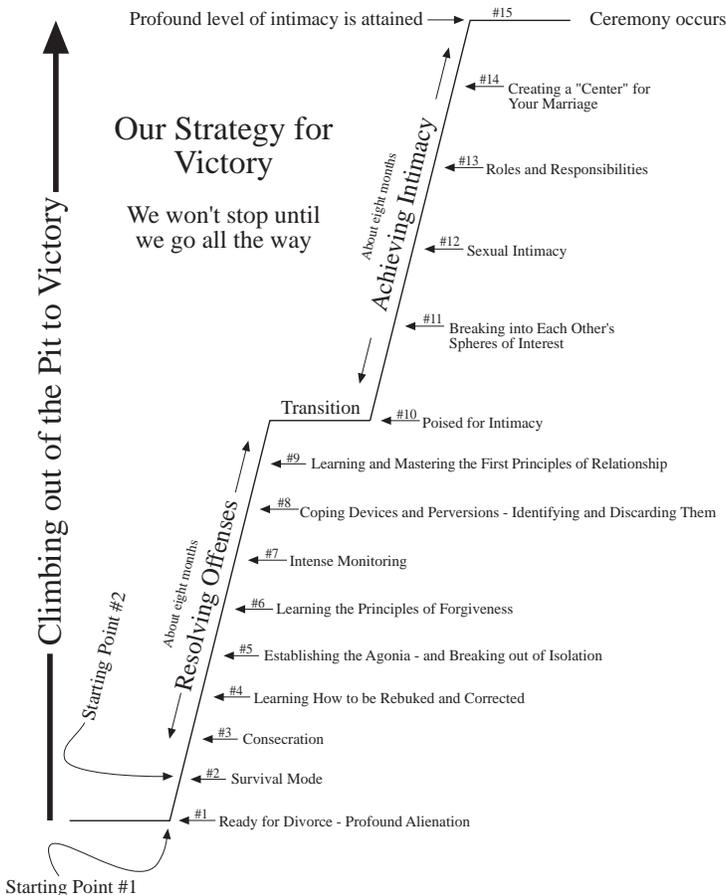
Name: _____ Date: _____

Agonia #: _____

Instructions: You and your spouse should indicate which level you've attained. If there's a conflict, the lower level should be recorded, not the higher.

Level we've **now** attained: _____ Level **last** recorded: _____

Please write in the space provided below a brief essay explaining your assessment. Indicate which principles, if any, you find difficult to implement.



Continue on next page

SEXUAL INTIMACY[®]
CHAPTER 7
REVIEW COPING DEVICES
FOR THE SAKE OF GREATER SEXUAL INTIMACY

WEEKLY PRAYER JOURNAL

WEEK OF _____

	Prayer Items	When Answered How Answered
Day #1	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #2	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #3	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #4	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #5	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #6	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Day #7	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

DAILY MONITORING FORM

Week _____

Instructions for scoring have been provided by your instructors. However, a brief description is given below.

	Column #1	Column #2	Column #3	Column #4	Column #5	Column #6	Column #7	Column #8	Column #9	Column #10
	Two Chapters from the Gospels	15 Minutes of Prayer	Prayer Journal	Squabble Rule Violations	Response to Correction	Agonia Contacts	Fruit of the Spirit	Does Not Blame Spouse	Shares Joy with Spouse	Rebuffed Overtures
Day #1				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #2				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #3				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #4				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #5				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #6				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Day #7				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Overtures Attempted Positive Responses
Average for Week Eliminate the high and low				Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse		Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	Your's Your Spouse	
Totals	Yes or No					Total				Total Attempted____ Total Positives____ Ratio_____

INSTRUCTIONS: (1) The "Three Disciplines," columns 1-3: one "no" for any day for any of the disciplines results in a "no" for the entire week. (2) "Squabble Rules," column 4: keep daily track of (a) how many times you violate the rules and (b) how many times your spouse violates the rules; at the end of the week, eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (3) "Response to Correction," column 5: keep daily track of how often you notice that either you or your spouse does not respond positively to correction and rebuke. The criteria consists of (a) non-defensiveness and (b) attentiveness. Grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and low and average the remaining scores. (4) "Agonia Contacts," column 6: (a) phone call to an agonia-mate over ten minutes = 1 pt.; (b) personal, face-to-face contact over a half an hour = 3 pts.; (c) Having an agonia couple over for dinner = 5 pts; (d) participate in a meeting of the full Agonia other than the class itself = 5 pts. (5) "Spirituality Indices," columns 7-9: grade yourself on a scale of 1-10 - with "10" an A+, "1" an abysmal failure, and "5" middling. Eliminate the high and the low for the week and average of the remaining scores. (6) "Overtures," column 10: keep daily track of how often you reach out to your spouse; and also keep track of how often, if at all, your overtures are rebuffed. At the end of the week, list the total overtures you undertook; and compute a ratio of positive responses to the total.

TONIGHT'S LESSON

REVIEW COPING DEVICES

FOR THE SAKE OF GREATER SEXUAL INTIMACY

Sexual intimacy is meant to be a *passionate* expression of love. "*Feeling*," therefore, is vital. But to the extent that any of you still harbors *intact and operable* coping devices, "feeling" - let alone passion - is virtually impossible. Remember what a coping device does by its very nature: it "*deadens*" the emotions. Why? Because emotions, to "live," must be *invested in other persons - actual flesh and blood people*. Emotions come alive only within a medium composed of intimate interpersonal relationships; but a coping device is designed to *prevent* that kind of emotional investment - all for the sake of protecting a person from being hurt.

The forgiveness principles enable persons to "resolve" their disappointments without recourse to coping devices. Therefore, if you have been conscientiously applying the forgiveness principles, you have, ipso facto, been dismantling your coping devices. If your coping devices remain pretty much intact, you can be fairly certain that you haven't been rigorously and conscientiously applying the forgiveness principles.

THIS EVENING

You need to spend this entire evening assessing how well each of you and all your Agonia-mates have dismantled and discarded your coping devices. Start with one of the husbands. Have him read aloud the list of coping devices he compiled six to eight weeks ago. Have him comment on how he has dismantled and discarded each one - the progress he has made. Then have his wife provide her assessment of his progress. No fudging here! No attempt to protect him from exposure! The straight truth! If the two assessments don't match, press the issue; don't let it just lie there. Pick it up - and press it hard. We want change - actual behavioral change. Be loving with one another, but be hard and relentless as well. No "tip-toeing" around. Get it all out in the open - and press for full disclosure and accountability. And then insist on change. Profound sexual intimacy is *not* going to occur until all coping devices have been dismantled and discarded.

Next, it's the wife's turn - and so on through the entire Agonia.

HOMEWORK

1. Please read *Chapter 1 of the Authority Manual - "Authority - How It's Used to Develop Relationship."* This is a tough lesson. It will be important for you to set aside sufficient time alone to get through it all. You will have to spend a lot of time thinking about what you're reading. The ramifications are very significant.
2. ***Start compiling a list of your spiritual gifts.*** If you don't know what spiritual gifts God has imparted to you, schedule an appointment right away with Pastor Richard Paradise to be tested. Either Pastor Richard can administer the test - or an appropriately designated individual in the home fellowship you attend. You need to know your spiritual gifts in preparation for a future lesson.

