

Why Christians Make the Best Lovers

Eight Reasons God Designed Sex for Christians

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In the late 1970s sexologists coined a new phrase to describe the number-one sexual problem in America today: "inhibited sexual desire" on the part of either the husband or the wife, or both. These researchers not only claimed that 50 percent of all marriages suffer from sexual difficulties, but that the percentage of misery continues to increase. However, the number-one problem often isn't orgasm or erection failures—rather simply inhibited sexual desire which *often leads* to inhibited pleasure such as premature ejaculation, impotence, pain, unsatisfying orgasms, avoidance of sexual intercourse, and frigidity. Doctors estimate only 10 percent of sexual problems stem from an organic or medical problem. (Don Luftig, "The Sex Test," Condensed from a WNBC-TV Feature, *[Reader's Digest*, Sept. 1977], pp. 78-80.)

While researchers realize inhibitions in the mind cause the majority of sexual problems, they also acknowledge changing attitudes is the hardest of all problems for them to solve. Dr. Helen Kaplan, one of the most widely respected authors and researchers of modern times, states mechanical problems are still much easier to treat than mental ones. She lists "symbolic meaning of sex, homosexuality, and hostility toward the mate" as the main causes of these failures. (Helen Singer Kaplan, M.D., Ph.D., *Disorders of Sexual Desire* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979], pp. Xvi-xvii.)

A special *Redbook* survey in 1981 re-questioned people who indicated a sexual problem when they filled out a questionnaire in 1980. The purpose of this survey was to determine the number-one sexual problem. The survey found a "lack of desire for sex" in either the husband or the wife caused the most problems. Not only that, no other problem even came close to the number of cases reporting a lack of desire. (Lorna and Philip Sarrel, "Sex Problems We Don't Talk About-and Should," *[Redbook*, Feb. 1981], pp. 142-145.)

Thirteen years later, a new survey in 1994 conducted by *Parade Magazine* continued to show inhibited sexual desire still ranks as a major problem for both men and women of all ages. (Mark Clements, "Sex in America Today," *Parade Magazine* [Aug. 7, 1994], p. 6.) Most modern literature recognizes men as having as frequent a problem with inhibited sexual desire and pleasure as women experience.

Yet the Bible, one of the oldest, still most widely-used books, addresses the problem of "inhibited sexual desire" and pleasure in more detail and solves more problems when applied, than modern-day sex therapy. It teaches about the proper symbolic meaning of sex, homosexuality, and emphasizes the role of bitterness in numbing physical sensations. Plus, it teaches other essential aspects of the sexual union mankind often ignores. The scriptures teach more about the sexual relationship from both a positive view (how to give and receive mental and physical pleasure) and a negative view (how to avoid heartache and misery) than any other area of marriage. A person who ignores God's sexual teaching rejects a part of marriage that God obviously treats as very important.

Eight Reasons God Designed Sex for Christians

Understanding some of the benefits God expects Christians to reap from the sexual relationship shows how important God considers lovemaking for His people. God designed sexual coupling to benefit his people all their lives.

1. Sexual Love Makes Babies

Gen. 4:1: "Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, 'I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord' "

The miracle of a baby being created within the womb has always fascinated men and women. In the days of old, David exclaimed, "For Thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Thy works, And my soul knows it very well" (Ps. 139:13-14).

The writer of Ecclesiastes marveled at the mystery of creation saying, "Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things" (Eccl. 11:5).

Even today with sensitive X-rays, photography equipment, and laboratory tests, doctors still haven't unraveled all the mysteries of birth. The birth process captivates more people than ever as expectant parents pour over pre-natal diagrams, pictures, and instructions. Many

women campaign for the right to enjoy the wonders of natural childbirth. Even fathers who won't change a messy diaper ignore their squeamish stomachs to take childbirth classes. Not only do they participate in the birth, many fathers proudly take pictures.

Adam may have helped deliver Cain since no other people were around to assist Eve. Or perhaps Eve, being a perfect creation, didn't need help, but simply presented Adam with his son. At any rate, both Adam and Eve thrilled at the event, acknowledging God's help. God created the male and the female bodies in a wonderful way that they might reproduce themselves. However, pregnancy is *only one* of many benefits the loving Creator designed for husbands *and wives* to experience through the sexual relationship.

2. Sexual Love Brings Joy

Prov. 5:18-19: "Let your fountain be blessed, rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love."

After exposing the drawbacks of an affair in the first part of Proverbs 5, Solomon tells husbands to delight in the sexual pleasures found with a wife. "Let your fountain be blessed," he recommends.

"Blessed" refers to kneeling in adoration of God or showing appreciation for a benefit from man. Solomon tells a husband to adore and appreciate *what* for its great benefit? Why, lovemaking with his wife, of course!

Solomon doesn't stop there. He continues, "Rejoice in the wife of your youth." "Rejoice" also conveys a pleasant attitude toward sexual intercourse by describing an extremely happy union.

The expression "wife of your youth" refers to the woman a man married when he was young, but now they're older. Since "older" wives are frequently past their childbearing years, giving birth is often a physical impossibility. The truth of the matter? This passage doesn't even mention children as a reason for sexual activity. Instead, God tells husbands to enjoy their older wives sexually for the sake of pleasure alone.

What a remarkable endorsement by God of enjoying the sexual act in later life! "Exhilarated," the best word Solomon found to describe the experience, conveys the idea of being intoxicated or transported somewhere better—a vacation at home. Married intercourse, one of the most enjoyable recreational activities available, is a free gift from God, and it gets better with age for both the husband *and the wife* who serve God.

3. Sexual Love Expresses Affection

Prov. 5:19: "As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love."

Many a wife thinks her husband cares only about her body. Yet if she offers him *only her body*, she won't satisfy him for long. Solomon argues that the wife has much more to give her husband—*her body in love*. Emphasizing this point, Solomon states, "For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress, and embrace the bosom of a foreigner?" (See verse 20.) "Bosom," a plain biological term, contrasts with the wife's "breasts," a word which includes the feeling of love.

Ideally, sexual intercourse beautifully expresses each partner's love for the other. Their coupling bodies transcend the limitations of mere words to speak a beautiful language of love that communicates caring, devotion, and admiration.

"When my husband and I were dating," one woman remembered, "he told me, 'I can't wait until we get married, so I can show you just how much I love you.' I treasure those words now each time we make love."

Thus, the compassionate God of heaven gives husbands and wives a wonderful medium for transmitting deep feelings of love. At the same time, lovemaking cultivates greater capacities for oneness and affection. Truly, in the arms of a cherished spouse, actions do speak louder than words.

4. Sexual Love Educates

Gen. 4:1: "Now, the man had relations with [knew, KJV, ASV; NAS footnote says 'Lit. Knew'] his wife Eve . . . "

Instead of a prudish expression, "knew" conveys a part of the sexual union too many times overlooked: Sexual love provides an opportunity to fully experience the mate's personality as each expresses his or her own uniqueness. The husband and wife share a part of each other's personality no one else experiences—not even their parents or children. As they know each other intimately, they blend into perfect harmony.

However, trouble arises when a person expects the mate to act a certain way rather than accepting the mate at face value. As a result, a person often becomes overwhelmed with feelings of rejection, deprivation, and resentment because sexual intimacy doesn't measure up to expectations.

For instance, many a woman fantasizes about preconceived ideas about what makes a man sexually normal. If her husband approaches her gently, considering her moods and needs, she may believe he's abnormal. After all, her mother convinced her men are "aggressive, demanding beasts." Yet in all likelihood, her mother reached that conclusion because she didn't like any sexual contact. If her husband approached her once every six months, he was too aggressive and demanding.

One woman moaned, "I would give anything if my husband would chase me around the room, toss me onto the bed, and just take me. But he's always so considerate. Even when he wants sex, if I don't, he doesn't push it. He never demands his way with me."

On the other hand, a husband who actively seeks and takes his wife's sexual favors may frighten other wives. Such wives often yearn for a more gentle husband who places their needs above his own.

The gentle husband loves his wife no less than the more aggressive one loves his. Both enjoy their wives the same way they relish all of life—one is calm, collected, and dependable in everything he does while the other actively drives himself and takes charge. The way these husbands love their wives simply reflect their personalities—personalities which appealed to their wives before marriage.

Many a husband, likewise, defends rigid preconceived ideas about a woman's sexual nature. Perhaps a sexually warm, eager, and expressive wife turns him off due to the false belief that nice women don't feel sexual desires. Such a husband may deny himself the privilege of fully knowing and enjoying his wife's warmth and tenderness. Yet her outward display of affection probably attracted him to her in the first place.

All these attributes reflect personality and everyday approach to life. The mate should accept and cherish them, for they portray the genuine partner. A person who expects lovemaking to transform the mate into a different type of person, expects the impossible and fails to "know" the mate no matter how often they make love.

God directed a husband and wife to work together to subdue the earth, fill it with people, and to glorify God. Through the full knowledge of each other, a husband and wife become a marvelous team for accomplishing God's plan for their lives. Over the years as that knowledge of each other increases, so does their trust and confidence in each other. And as their bodies unite, they speak a beautiful language of love that transcends mere spoken words.

5. Sexual Love Relaxes

Song of Sol. 7:9: " . . . 'It goes down smoothly for my beloved, flowing gently through the lips of those who fall asleep.' "

"Flowing gently" means "evenness, i.e. prosperity or concord, also straightness, i.e. rectitude:-agreement, aright, that are equal, equity, (things that are) right (-eously, things), sweetly, upright (-ly, -ness)" Strong, pp. 65-66).

After King Solomon's sensuous plea for her body, the Shulammitte replied that the idea of having sexual contact with him repulsed her. She knew she would enjoy the sexual union *only if she loved the man* who held her. For the maiden, the Shepherd was that man. She revealed her healthy attitude toward lovemaking by ardently promising to entice and seduce the Shepherd after marriage.

The Shulammitte also recognized another equally important feature about the sexual union: The embrace of love would "flow gently through the lips of those who fall asleep." Orgasm affects the adrenal glands of both the husband and the wife, which in turn affect how they handle stress. For these reasons, the union of love would relax the Shulammitte and Shepherd emotionally and physically after a day of hard work.

While God fashioned the human body for hard work, He also built within it a pleasant method of relaxation. Ecstatic lovemaking may be habit forming, but it has none of the harmful side effects of many sleeping pills. It even boasts less calories than raiding the refrigerator!

One wife confessed, "I used to have a problem going to sleep and then I'd feel irritable the next day. Now we make love more often and that problem is gone. We even go to bed earlier so we won't be too tired to enjoy each other. If one of us wakes up in the middle of the night and can't get back to sleep, we know the other is ready for us. We both sleep better as a result of making love."

Unfortunately, many couples do not use sexual love as the Shulammitte and Shepherd planned to. Instead, they allow nervous tensions to rob them of sleep and hamper their ability to work effectively and creatively. A husband and a wife seeking each other to ease strain and stress use sexual tenderness in a godly way. The thoughtful Creator of such a marvelous tranquilizer should be cheerfully thanked by both husbands and wives for His great love for mankind.

6. Sexual Love Motivates

Eccl. 9:9: "Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life, and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun."

Ecclesiastes examines a man's motives for working, such as obtaining wealth, fame, and knowledge. Solomon exposes all of these incentives as folly and vanity of vanities. Again and again, Solomon proves that the most worthwhile goals are to enjoy one's ability to work and put food on the table (Eccl. 2:24; 3:12-13, 22; 5:18-20; 8:15, and 9:7).

In addition, God encourages a man to enjoy life with the woman he loves (sexually or otherwise—Strong) all the days of his life. Sadly, many men fail to realize this major objective of life by not taking the time to enjoy their wives in the pursuit of secular ambitions.

God emphasizes, "*all the days of your fleeting life.*" A man should find his wife rewarding in his young years when he strives to establish himself in business as well as in his middle years when he enjoys the prime of his business career, and even in his retirement years when he lives off the fruits of his labors.

A good sexual relationship energizes and motivates a man to go to work day after day, even to a boring dead-end job. However, a man is not the only one who benefits. Frequent lovemaking stimulates a loving woman to clean house and prepare appetizing meals. Such joyful communication between a husband and a wife clears their minds and soothes their bodies, preparing them for another day of industry in a way no other stimulant can—not even a cup of coffee early in the morning.

Dr. Warren R. Guild, the author of *Vigor for Men Over 30*, says a sports doctor recommends married athletes engage in sexual intercourse the night before an Olympic event. He says both male and female athletes perform better and are less tense. Dr. Guild recommends deliberately using the embrace of love to help one achieve financial prosperity. He says, "Big meeting coming up? Then plan on loving your wife the night before for greater success." (Dr. Warren R. Guild, *Vigor for Men Over 30* [New York: Curtis Brown, Ltd., 1967], p. 176.)

One wife said, "When my husband has an important business deal in the works, I make a special effort to cook his favorite meal the night before. Then I light a candle in the bedroom, perfume the sheets and myself. I lead him to bed and whisper to him to relax and let me show him how much I love him. No matter how preoccupied he is with work, I can always make him forget for a little while. Then when I see that confident glow in his eye the next morning—I know he'll succeed with that important client."

God created men and women to work—to work hard and long in subduing the earth, taking care of their families, and in spiritual service to Him. However, God did not just give men and women a difficult commandment to fulfill. God created men and women to help each other in special ways. One of those choice ways is through the blending of their natures and spirits in the sexual union to make them truly one team. Such a God deserves the esteem and devotion of husbands and wives. Yet God has another special benefit built into the embrace of love:

7. Sexual Love Consoles

Gen. 24:67: "Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her; thus Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

"Comfort" means "sigh, i.e. breathe strongly, be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) pity, console or rue; or (unfavorable) avenge (oneself):-comfort (self), ease (one's self), repent (-er, -ing, self)" (Strong, p. 77).

Rebekah's sexual favors comforted Isaac after his mother's death. Righteous sexual love soothes a person after great heartbreak. Fortunately, men, too, can comfort women with the embrace of love:

II Sam. 12:24: "Then David comforted Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her; and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon."

Like no other activity, lovemaking possesses the ability to cheer up a woman after a tragedy. David comforted Bathsheba after the death of their child with sexual love. Sexual communication helps the mind find tranquillity by strengthening the bond between two allies—husband and wife.

God in His infinite mercy and love for mankind blesses each married couple with a unique, personal way to ease energy-sapping strains on their minds and bodies. God's sexual blessings enable Christians to serve God with greater strength and endurance.

8. Sexual Love Unifies

Gen. 2:24: "For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."

Each time a husband and wife come together, they fulfill God's promise to Adam and Eve of becoming one flesh. Their mutual delight in each other breaks down communication barriers and promotes trust. As a result, the compassionate God of heaven gives husbands and wives a wonderful medium for transmitting deep feelings of love. A happy sexual relationship cultivates greater capacities for oneness and affection.

Truly, a marvel of God is the wonderful way He designed the male and the female bodies to function together. For both the man and the woman, sexual intercourse promises supreme pleasure, increased productivity, calm nerves, clarity of mind, and a sense of well-being and belonging.

The catch? God's rules for a healthy mind must be respected. Then the body is freed from inhibiting attitudes for total physical, mental, and spiritual coupling. God's sexual truths still make Christians the best lovers found anywhere, as the statistics show. However, too many times couples get caught up in the obvious physical pleasure of lovemaking and fail to reap its higher and more lasting benefits. Christians not only can enjoy all that sexual love offers with a clear conscience, which frees their bodies for total sexual liberation, but they should also thank the wonderful Creator of the embrace of love for such a great marital blessing.

Two preachers and their wives show the effect on both the husband and the wife when they fail to work for sexual compatibility and a full one-flesh union. Both preachers worked hard, long hours to study and to preach the gospel. Both wives endured low wages and brethren who did as little as they could while demanding great sacrifices from the preachers and their families. However, the similarities ceased there.

The first preacher was an active lover who always satisfied his wife's needs. Their sexual love served as a buffer between them and the many abuses they suffered. In fact, many women marveled at how the bad circumstances that frequently befell them never seemed to ruffle the wife.

The other preacher was very different. His attitude toward the sexual union combined Victorian morals with crudeness. His wife said they often went six months without sexual contact, and then it was only because she couldn't outwait him any longer. Even then, while he gave her his body, he withheld his mind. This couple faced the same hardships as the first, but over the years the wife lost her sparkle and enthusiasm. Her health broken, she had frequent hospital stays. And she fought bitterness daily.

Their love lives also affected the husbands' abilities to deal with the stresses of their jobs. The first husband became very effective in his work, while the second became discouraged and disillusioned. God designed the sexual embrace to benefit both husbands and wives.

God Teaches About Sexual Love

Sex is so important to God that He was the first to promote sex education for the world. But He left the mechanics of birth control up to mankind's ingenuity. Instead, God focused on the most important part in the eyes of most men and women—sexual pleasure. God's great love and concern for the sexual happiness of both men and women show in His provisions for sex education. For at each stage of mankind's sexual development, from puberty through the golden years, God provides the necessary information to liberate men and women for total sexual enjoyment.

For example, the Song of Solomon provides excellent illustrations for parents to use to teach their children about purity and the beauty of sexual love. It captures the emotions as it teaches about courting love by telling the true story of a young girl's dilemma of who

to marry—rich, powerful King Solomon or the poor shepherd boy. Thus, before a man and a woman marry, God tells them how to choose the right sexual partner to avoid lifelong sexual frustration.

Next, in Proverbs 7, Solomon addresses the special problems a man faces in his youth at the height of his sexual urges when he begins to notice the female body. The chapter also teaches a woman about attitudes that block her sexual responses. Then, in Proverbs 5, Solomon cautions a man about the different, yet equally strong, temptations a man faces as his body slows down through age. Solomon shows how an older wife ravishes her husband in a way that a much younger woman can't compete. At each stage of mankind's sexual development, God provides the keys for a long life filled with sexual enjoyment.

God gave this knowledge to the whole world through Solomon. In Solomon's youth, God said, "Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you" (I Kings 3:12). Solomon's wisdom was "like the sand that is on the seashore" and "surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt" and "his fame was known in all the surrounding nations" (I Kings 4:29-30). Then "men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom," including the queen of Sheba (I Kings 4:34; 10:1). In this way, God's sexual truths spread over the known world.

However, God does not force anyone to reap His great sexual benefits—not even Solomon. In his later years, Solomon turned his back on God's wisdom and allowed a lack of sexual control to ruin his own life. By the time of the Song of Solomon, Solomon had one hundred and forty wives (Song of Sol. 6:8-9). The true story reveals that Solomon was already developing warped attitudes toward women and the sexual relationship. Eventually, Solomon "held fast" to seven hundred wives (free women he married) and princesses and three hundred concubines (slaves he married) "in love" (I Kings 11:1-8).

"Held fast" is the same word translated as "cleave" in Gen. 2:24 where God says, "A man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife." It means "to stick like glue."

"Love" is a common word found throughout Proverbs and means "to love sexually or otherwise."

With access to the most desirable women in the known world from peasants to royalty to slaves, Solomon's sexual urges raged out of control. As God had forewarned, these foreign women turned Solomon's heart away from serving God fully as he built temples of idolatry for his wives. By the time he was old, Solomon presented a picture of sexual, moral, and spiritual decadence.

As Solomon did, the Jewish nation also rejected God's instructions for sexual liberation by marrying foreign women and embracing idolatry along with the accompanying fornication. God then allowed them to be taken into captivity to purge the idolatry from their lives. Afterwards, the Jews came out of slavery ready to serve God once again. However, seventy years of slavery was not enough to fully purge the sexual attraction of foreign women from the Jewish men. They once again started marrying foreign wives and embracing the sexual impurity that went with their idolatry. Fortunately, the priest Ezra prayed to God and admonished the people to repent. The people listened to Ezra and rejected their foreign wives and turned again to serving God whole heartedly (Ezra 9-10).

Then after the death of Christ, mankind's sexual nature took a new turn as the Catholic church fathers degraded marriage and the sexual relationship. But over a hundred years before their war against righteous sexual love began, God prepared His followers for the Catholic apostasy by inspiring I Tim. 4:1-8. Paul warned the young preacher Timothy that some would fall away from the faith and teach doctrines of demons about marriage and the sexual union. Also, in I Thess. 4:1-8 Paul admonished God's followers to learn the truth about their sexual natures—to know how to possess their own vessels unto sanctification and honor.

At each stage of mankind's physical development and unique place in history, God provided the necessary information for sexual happiness. But throughout history, man often ignored God's love. Unfortunately, many modern couples follow in the footsteps of their ancestors and choose ignorance and misery instead of reaching out for full sexual expression through the love and wisdom of God. Yet overwhelming evidence proves that God not only designed sexual love, but also, *the more God's people strive to please Him in their daily lives, the better lovers they become.*

God's People Make the Best Lovers

Not just theory, reliable statistics show that conservative religious people achieve a greater degree of success in their love lives than people who ignore God's principles. While most statistics taken from a random group show that small percentages of women normally experience orgasm, three prominent surveys of Bible-believing women reveal that large percentages of morally conservative women delight in orgasms with their husbands.

For instance, Dr. Herbert Miles, author of *Sexual Happiness in Marriage*, surveyed 151 college-age couples six months to two years after they married. These couples had *strong religious backgrounds* and received marriage counseling concerning God's plan for lovemaking prior to marriage. Dr. Miles found that 96.1 percent of these wives enjoyed orgasm. Even more remarkably, 78.8 percent of these women successfully reached orgasm during their honeymoons. (Herbert J. Miles Ph.D., *Sexual Happiness in Marriage* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1982 (Revised)], p. 180. Used by permission.) These results show that young wives who *commit themselves to following God's principles for lovemaking* free their bodies for total enjoyment of the embrace of their husbands.

In a similar manner, Tim and Beverly LaHaye surveyed 1700 couples from their Family Life Seminars for their book *The Act of Marriage*. This group consisted of couples with a wide age spread and different levels of spiritual maturity. However, 89 percent of the women reported succeeding in love with their husbands. Not only were these couples interested in spiritual matters, but their attendance of the marriage seminars indicated that *both the husbands and wives worked at applying God's principles to their daily lives*. And they enjoyed the results in their bedrooms. (Tim and Beverly LaHaye, *The Act of Marriage* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974], p. 106. Used by permission.)

A *Redbook* survey of 65,000 women also reported on the same subject. This survey found that the "very religious" woman reaped the most from the love embrace. The "slightly religious" woman was the most likely candidate to fail in all areas of her daily life including the sexual embrace. (Claire Safran, "65,000 Women Reveal: How Religion Affects Health, Happiness, Sex, and Politics," *Redbook* [April 1977], p. 217.) Mankind finally discovered for himself what God said two thousand years ago—fulfilling sexual thrills come to those who *commit themselves to serving God with all their mind, soul, and body*.

A *Woman's Day* survey of 50,000 women discovered "surprisingly, traditional values may be today's aphrodisiac. The patient, the pure, and true blue" enjoyed marriages with the most intimacy. These marriages also boasted "the best and most frequent sex." All the answers taken together made "a strong case for tradition: for virginity and monogamy." Thus, modern surveys continue to show that women who practice Bible principles of morality and daily living enjoy stimulating sexual lives. (Claire Safran, "Does Anybody Care About Sex Anymore?" *Woman's Day* [Oct. 25, 1988], pp. 70-78.)

In contrast, *The Hite Report* by Shere Hite surveyed 3019 women of all ages and philosophies of life. Ms. Hite recorded a much lower percentage of success—only 49 percent of the women reached orgasm through sexual intercourse. On the other hand, 78 percent claimed to "regularly and easily" achieve orgasm through self-masturbation. Obviously, the majority of these women failed to find sexual satisfaction with a man. (Shere Hite, "The Hite Report," *Reader's Digest* [June 1977], pp. 121-122.)

What a pity! Women who think they hold the keys to success outside God's word and who look to themselves through masturbation for sexual gratification *get only a 78 percent rate of success*. That seems better than Ms. Hite's random sampling of society which achieved *only a 49 percent rate of success* with a man. Either way, what a lonely, inhibited existence!

Yet those who look to God and their husbands for sexual fulfillment enjoy an *89 to 96.1 percent rate of success*. What a paradox that the failures write the majority of the books that claim to reveal the secrets of a fulfilling sexual life. Dare anyone place their confidence in them? Indeed, the facts show that God's people make the best lovers!

A person whose mind wanders into sin inhibits himself sexually no matter what his body joyfully consents to do. But a person whose mind functions as God intends with a clear conscience liberates his body to respond to the fullest in the embrace of love. Christians don't need the artificial stimulation of smut or masturbation to get turned on to the sexual act. They radiate real love and their bodies show it!

Many people who speak of being uninhibited in love refer to the ability to engage in illicit or questionable acts without being plagued with the pains of a guilty conscience. However, a truly uninhibited person enjoys his spouse to the fullest with the blessings of a clear conscience instead of trying to force sensations onto a seared conscience.

As *The Hite Report* shows, many so-called sexually liberated women fail to enjoy the embrace of love with a man. Being liberated to masturbate or read and tell dirty stories, but being unable to enjoy the embrace of love with a husband is not liberation. Nor is it intelligence. Nor is it a healthy attitude. It is sexual enslavement at its worst!

The man faces the same predicament. Researchers state that many promiscuous men moan, "What happened to sexual pleasure? I thought I'd always see stars and hear sirens. Instead, I'm bored even though I've got a different woman on my arm each week." The facts prove that every sexual union is not necessarily a good experience, even for the man. What goes on in a man's mind determines how his body responds to the embrace of a woman. (Bernie Zilbergeld, Ph.D., *Male Sexuality*, [New York: Bantam, 1978], chapters 1-4.) The harder a man strives to serve God in his family relationships, the greater his physical sensations.

God's Men and Women Sexual Equals

Contrary to popular opinion, Biblical practices turn the embrace of love into a blessing for both the man and the woman. Way ahead of modern civilization, the Bible has always recognized the woman as the man's sexual equal in both desire and the ability to experience pleasure.

For example, God told Eve after the fall that her pain in childbirth wouldn't diminish her sexual drive. She might not want any more children, but she would continue to desire her husband (Gen. 3:16).

Also, the Old Testament forbade a man to deny his wife her sexual rights even if he owned her as a slave (Ex. 21:10). In addition, Deut. 23:9-11 and Lev. 15:16-18, 32-33 considered a man unclean because of a "nocturnal emission." This offered great protection for a young man's budding sexuality by discouraging him from developing *the habit* of self-masturbation. The law of uncleanness encouraged a young man to focus on early marriage and looking to a wife for sexual satisfaction. This, in turn, helped ensure that a husband wouldn't drain off his sexual energies through self-masturbation, thus hampering his ability to satisfy his wife's legitimate sexual needs. Likewise, three thousand years ago, the Song of Solomon portrayed a good wife as one who actively enjoyed lovemaking and even initiated it upon occasion (Song of Sol. 7:10-13).

God guaranteed the wife's right to enjoy lovemaking when He declared, "When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out with the army, nor be charged with any duty; he shall be free at home one year and shall give happiness to his wife whom he has taken" (Deut. 24:5). This prolonged honeymoon helped newlyweds lay a secure foundation of sexual love to support them later during the normal challenges and trials of life they would face together.

The New Testament, more explicit than the Old, warned both men and women not to withhold sexual satisfaction from their mates (I Cor. 7:1-5). Paul even instructed the young preacher Timothy to tell the young widows to get married again so they'd have a sexual partner (I Tim. 5:11-14). Nowhere does God distinguish between the sexual needs or rights of men or women.

God's People Learn About Sexual Love

The Bible not only treats men and women as sexual equals, but it also demands that God's followers educate themselves about sexual matters.

Learn About Sexual Love

I Thess. 4:4: " . . . that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, . . . "

"Know" means "know, find; 1. perceive (with the eyes); 2. perceive by any of the senses; 3. perceive, notice, discern, discover; 4. see (i.e. to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to (anything), pay attention, observe, see about anything, inspect, examine, look at, behold; 5. experience; 6. see i.e. have an interview with, visit" (Thayer, p. 172).

"Possess" means "acquire, get or procure a thing for oneself, possess, i.e. to marry a wife" (Thayer, p. 363).

"Vessel" means "1. vessel; 2. implement, household utensils, domestic gear" (Thayer, p. 577).

God expects more of His followers than a casual acquaintance with the sexual relationship. They must perceive, discover, turn their attention to, pay attention, observe, inspect, examine, experience, interview, etc. how to use their sexual natures—quite a bit more than leaving the happiness of the sexual relationship to nature or chance!

Since "vessel" inherently refers to a tool used for work, it accurately describes the human body—a highly technical and sophisticated machine that the mind and the spirit use to serve God (Acts 9:15, II Tim. 2:21, and I Pet. 3:7). Tools, whether mechanical such as cars, sewing machines, and computers, or human eyes, arms, or legs, require proper treatment for success. So God's command for the Christian to "know how to possess his own vessel" makes sense. The sexual organs function as skillful instruments that God gives to husbands and wives to use for their mutual benefit and blessing. *As a result, righteous lovemaking becomes the servant of the Christian rather than the Christian becoming the servant of lustful passion.*

However, the problem remains of deciding just whose vessel or tool the Christian possesses or learns how to use. Some commentators insist "vessel" refers to the spouse while others claim it refers to the Christian himself. Regardless of who the vessel refers to, the Christian or his spouse, the teaching remains the same.

For example, acting properly toward a spouse demands that a person act properly toward himself. On the other hand, when a person rightly uses his own body, he automatically rightly uses his spouse's body. No matter who "vessel" refers to, God wants the sexual embrace held in sanctification and honor—viewed as better and more precious for those who serve God than for those who deny God in their daily lives.

The most logical conclusion seems to be that Paul discusses how a person controls himself, for a person exercises the greatest influence over his own body. Of necessity, a person masters himself before he begins to treat his spouse correctly. Thus, it is impossible to get away from personal control and discipline. Paul's main point? Every person needs to study about sexual love to make sure he *knows* its proper use so that his sexual life pleases God. Look at the meaning of "know"—a command from God.

A person cannot *just brag*, "Look at me! I never commit fornication or think impure thoughts!" While that's good, God expects more than half truths from people who supposedly walk in the light. People who obey God *know* how to possess their vessels in sanctification and honor. Ignorance fails as a legitimate excuse for improper sexual conduct or thinking.

The godly person says, "I don't commit fornication or think unclean thoughts and I enjoy and use sexual love as God intends." Anything less falls short of pleasing God or representing full knowledge of the truth about the sexual union. So how should a person treat the sexual embrace?

Sanctify Sexual Love

"Sanctification" makes the sexual union holy and good when patterned after God's wisdom. "Holy," the adjective form of "sanctification," means "set apart to the worship of God, hallowed, sacred, worthy of adoration or veneration, spiritually whole, unimpaired innocence or proved virtue, godly" (Webster). Certainly, pure, clean lovemaking is as righteous and holy as partaking of the Lord's supper and singing praises to God. God designed the organs of love for the benefit of His people. Labeling them "sinful" or "shameful" reflects unfavorably on God's morality and denies the sanctification of the sexual relationship.

Commanding modern-day Christians to set the sexual relationship apart as something special and wonderful for serving God, surely seems like a bold statement to many. Imagine the reaction of first-century Christians. Everywhere pagans gaily engaged in open acts of sexual immorality, many too shameful even to mention (Eph. 5:11-12). The natural reaction to such lewdness? Many went to the other extreme by shunning and rejecting even lawful sexual intercourse between husbands and wives.

So Paul cautions God's people (then and now) not to neglect the good while avoiding the bad. Instead, a Christian should set his love-life apart from the common way pagans use the sexual union by viewing it as holy and special. Once the sexual relationship becomes sanctified, the next attitude seems natural:

Honor Sexual Love

"Honor" means "1. a valuing by which the price is fixed, hence the price itself, with a price, i.e. at a great price, thing prized; 2. honor, veneration, deference, reverence, preciousness" (Thayer, p. 624).

With all that *veneration, deference, reverence, and preciousness* contained in "honor," too many Christians miss this spiritual blessing of the sexual act. Not just something to take or leave, righteous, blissful lovemaking stimulates the Christian, strengthens the marriage bond, and serves God as the Creator of the sexual union.

"Veneration" means "respect mingled with awe, excited by dignity, wisdom, or the superiority of a person or thing." Lack of respect for the sexual relationship and the needs of the marriage partner causes many marriage problems and does not honor sexual love.

"Deference" contains "the idea of yielding or submitting to something." Many a person who says he respects the sexual relationship fails to defer to it—to make either physical or emotional time for it. Often a husband or a wife gets too busy and crowds loving thoughts of the spouse out of the mind. Is it any wonder that the body then fails to respond to the loving overtures of the spouse? Being too busy to learn or care about sexual communication with a spouse falls short of honoring sexual love.

"Reverence" adds a new twist to the above words by adding "profound respect mingled with love and awe." Taking the above words one step further, reverence implies tenderness and wonder. Love and sex go together when husbands and wives honor sexual love.

"Preciousness" refers to something "costly and highly esteemed and loved." The sexual relationship originated within the mind of God to bless men and women—to better their lives—not to make them miserable. If the coupling of their bodies isn't precious to a husband and wife, then somehow they are failing to honor sexual love.

Each time a husband and a wife come together, their mutual joy and delight in each other should make them love and admire God more than ever. God not only ordained the embrace of love, but as this passage states, He also demands that His followers *know* how to possess their own vessels in sanctification and honor. Then they not only please Him, but they also enjoy a more abundant love life.

Indeed, the benefits of knowing how to possess the sexual relationship in sanctification and honor are wondrous. Dr. Helen Kaplan states that the "best aphrodisiac," or love potion, known to modern man isn't oysters or vitamin E. *It's love!* Love increases both sexual desire and pleasure. Without love, the sexual organs of both men and women become less sensitive and require more stimulation for arousal to take place. (Kaplan, *Disorders of Sexual Desire*, pp. 13-14 and 61.)

Truly, God loves men and women! Yet for centuries, people, claiming to worship God, denied the beautiful, fulfilling love relationship as a shameful evil. However, the apostle Paul denies that godly lovemaking and wanton acts share the same bed:

Avoid the Pitfalls

I Thess. 4:5: " . . . not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; . . . "

"Lustful" means "desire, craving, longing, specially desire for what is forbidden, lust" (Thayer, p. 238).

"Passion" means "1. whatever befalls one, whether it be sad or joyous; specially a calamity, mishap, evil, affliction; 2. a feeling which the mind suffers, an affection of the mind, emotion, passion; passionate desire, depraved passion, vile passions" (Thayer, p. 472).

Paul says plainly: God wants His people to rejoice in a different and better sexual relationship than the Gentiles who do not know God. The word "know," the same word as in verse four, refers to accurate, precise knowledge about a given subject. People of the world fail to even begin to know the first thing about God or His plan for an abundant life. Not only that, they celebrate as sexual liberation a cheap imitation of good, fulfilling sexual love. Paul warns that *all sexual unions* don't fulfill nor do *all sexual unions* achieve the goals God intends.

Derrick Bailey states in *Sexual Relation in Christian Thought* that sexual purity didn't mean anything to the Greeks, the prominent group of Gentiles. They readily practiced hedonism, the doctrine that pleasure is the sole or chief good in life. Accordingly, they fulfilled their moral duty by the gratification of their pleasure-seeking instincts and dispositions. In other words, they satisfied their sexual appetites any way they wanted to.

The Greeks coupled their sexual indulgences with a low view of women. As a result, both prostitution and homosexuality flourished. Widespread corruption of youths took place as older homosexuals introduced them to the "gay" life. Their licentious sensuality degenerated into "coarse, brutal, and calculated vice." (Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Sexual Relation in Christian Thought* [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959], p. 4.)

Many people lament, "What is the world coming to? This is the most perverse generation yet!" They assume the Bible, a book written thousands of years ago, is out of date and couldn't possibly apply to the present century. However, the description of the Gentiles of that time sounds like the daily newspapers.

Evidently, the Christians who first read Paul's letter lived among the same sexually immoral practices as Christians do today. People change little throughout the centuries. Their means of sinning change, but the sins remain the same. They listened to Plato and Socrates sing about homosexuality at parties. Modern people watch television glorify the same sexual sins in the privacy of their homes. Fornication still includes homosexuality whether sung about by Greek poets or portrayed by actors.

Paul's teaching that the Gentiles do not hold the keys to sexual happiness applies equally today. For example, the famous biologist Dr. Alfred Kinsey, a still quoted and followed pioneer in the field of sex research in the 1940s and 1950s, viewed animal behavior as a model for human sexual behavior. He explained in his Female Report that to be fully liberated sexually, he believed a person should be involved in every type of sexual activity including homosexuality and bestiality. (Dr. Judith A. Reisman and Edward W. Eichel, *Kinsey, Sex and*

Fraud: The Indoctrination of a People [Lafayette, La: Huntington House Publishers, 1990], p. 6.) Indeed, the amount of space in his books promoting homosexuality as normal and desirable far exceeds the limited space devoted to heterosexuality.

To substantiate these prejudices, his research for his first book *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* turned to the scum of society, or the Gentiles who know not God, for data. Kinsey and his research assistants visited prisons scattered over a dozen states to interview 1,400 convicted sex offenders including those guilty of child molestation and rape. (W. B. Pomeroy, *Dr. Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research* [New York: Harper & Row, 1972], pp. 202-203 as quoted by Reisman and Eichel, *Kinsey, Sex and Fraud*, p. 22.)

In both his Male Report and his Female Report, Kinsey's chapters on the sexuality of children used homosexuals who had relations with young boys and pedophiles to generate the data on the sexual responses of children-including infants. The Kinsey team even refused to cooperate with police on apprehending a pedophile who was being sought in regard to a sex murder. Dr. Reisman assumes that the murder victim was a child and that possibly information of a sexual nature was obtained by the killer and subsequently appeared in Kinsey's tables on child sexuality. (Reisman and Eichel, *Kinsey, Sex and Fraud*, p. 53.)

Later when Kinsey researched his second book *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, he continued his practice of interviewing sexually abnormal individuals. He gathered his data on women by analyzing mostly single women with a high portion of them being prostitutes. As a zoologist, he "classified a woman and a hog in the same zoological category. Kinsey could see no reason why a woman's sexual life should not be patterned after that of a hog. A hog has no horrible inhibitions about sex; why should a woman?" To prove his point, he hired prostitutes and other volunteers to come to his laboratory for observation and testing. (S. I. McMillen, M.D., *None of These Diseases* [Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1967], pp. 45-46.)

Kinsey kept well hidden his source of data; and, as a result, his reports started the sexual revolution as he promised no restraints and no frustrations. Society applauded him as the final authority on sexual conduct as his followers zealously applied the various techniques he taught and implied that everybody was doing. But failing to find the magic combination of bodies, men and women went from marriage to marriage. When frequent divorces became too cumbersome, many people simply hopped from bed to bed in live-in relationships.

Later, a new breed of sexologists in the 1970s discovered widespread misery even among people who showed few sexual restraints. Re-examining Kinsey's research methods, they found that he had left out an essential function in his experiments. Kinsey, while focusing on the body's responses in abnormal, masochistic men and women, had completely ignored the role of the mind. (Carol Botwin with Jerome L. Fine, "Is There Sex After Saying 'I Do'?" [*Reader's Digest*, Feb. 1980], p. 91.)

In spite of these glaring flaws in Kinsey's research, his work continues to shape sexual morals in this country. Since such child abuse and sexual molestation that made up his studies is against the law, no other sex researchers have dared to follow Kinsey's example and do actual research on children. As a result, Kinsey's research on children still stands and is widely used today by the Federal Government and other agencies in designing homosexual-oriented sex education for both public schools and universities. (H. Knight, *Dr. Kinsey and the Children of Table 34* [Washington, DC: Family Research Council, 1994], pp. 7-8.)

While many modern researchers add the mind to the physical part of the sexual union, they still leave out the important element of "purity." They say, "Our principles will work whether you're married, single, or homosexual."

Yet all the way through the Bible, God emphasizes purity. Contrary to popular opinion, true marital purity doesn't inhibit either sexual desire or sexual pleasure. Rather, purity, as revealed in the Bible, not man's view of purity, readies the mind for enhanced sexual desire and liberates the body for a truly wondrous union with the marriage partner.

Scientists cannot test the role of purity in the laboratory. Men and women, by consenting to being watched, photographed, probed, and wired while telling all, lose immediately the element of purity before sexual intercourse even begins. By failing to recognize the role of purity in the sexual relationship, modern sexologists still do not have a complete picture of sexual fulfillment.

Thus, modern research *still* lags behind the plain sexual truths of the Bible-truths, which have withstood the tests of time and the laboratories. Who knows what elements of sexual pleasure and fulfillment researchers will discover in the twenty-first century? Sexual love is too important to wait for mankind to catch up with God!

Emphasize the Brain

For thousands of years, the Bible taught what experts only now recognize—that the brain dictates all the responses of the physical body, making it the most important sexual organ of all. *When a person takes care of the mind, the body automatically takes care of its own responses.*

For years, most researchers readily agreed that a person's basic underlying attitudes usually caused such sexual problems as frigidity and impotence. However, doctors now attribute to faulty thinking many cases of premature ejaculation and lack of sensation during orgasm for both males and females. Wrong attitudes and emotions inhibit normal physical responses.

This shows why God's people usually achieve a greater degree of success in the love embrace than unbelievers: Godly people devote their whole lives to freeing their minds from bitterness, hatred, jealousy, envy, selfishness, lack of self-worth, lack of self-control, and guilt-attitudes which hinder true love and block sexual signals and responses. By freeing themselves from these inhibiting personality weaknesses, God's people inherit the ability to love their mates totally-physically, mentally, and spiritually.

A simple test proves this true: The hand, while not thought of as a sexual organ, responds sexually to the attitudes and feelings of the mind. Look at your hand and think about how it felt the last time you indulged in anger toward your mate and he touched your hand. Did your hand automatically squeeze your mate's hand in return, or did it try to jerk away?

Now remember the last time you thought loving and adoring thoughts about your mate and he touched your hand. Did the electrical charge race up your arm, do a leaping somersault to the pit of your stomach only to dance back up along your spine and sparkle out your eyes to fondly caress your mate? All that with a body part not designed primarily for love!

The sensitive organs of love respond even more dramatically to a mind filled with God's principles of daily living and loving standards. Learning the sexual truths of the Bible unlocks the power of the mind to provide fulfilling and enjoyable lovemaking for God's people.

Dr. Helen Kaplan explains in her book *Disorders of Sexual Desire* how the brain controls the body's sexual functions. Doctors have discovered that the part of the brain that affects sexual desire and response has "extensive connections" with all the other areas of the brain. This includes the parts of the brain that store and remember past events. It also connects to the part that analyzes all the experiences of life, whether good or bad. Even subconscious thoughts and feelings affect the sexual impulses of the brain. As a result, *all the thoughts and activities of a person's life* either enhance or inhibit his sexual desires and pleasure. (Kaplan, *Disorders of Sexual Desire*, pp. 10-12.)

At last, science knows what God has always said ever since Adam first "knew" Eve. "Knew" is not a prudish translation but the actual meaning of the original Hebrew word. It indicates a general knowledge about a given matter. Thus, the sexual union is an act of the total person fully experiencing or "knowing" the partner's total personality.

God's Law of Compatibility

God not only created the sexual desires of men and women, but God also provides a righteous source of satisfying those desires. Paul (through inspiration) lays down a concise law of compatibility. When both the husband and the wife follow this law, harmony of frequency and happiness easily results while normal temptations are prevented.

Each Person to Have Own Spouse

I Cor. 7:2: "But because of immoralities [fornication—KJV], let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband."

"Have" means "1. have, hold; 2. own, possess" (Thayer, p. 268).

"Own" means "pertaining to one's self, one's own, what is one's own as opposed to belonging to another, a person who may be said to belong to one, above all others" (Thayer, p. 296-297).

The first logical requirement for sexual happiness is that a husband must *have* his *own* wife and a wife must *have* her *own* husband. Both the words "have" and "own" show ownership-that the husband and the wife possess the sexual favors and benefits of the other. Nowhere in the Bible does God make any distinctions between the physical desires of the husband or the wife or in their abilities for sexual enjoyment-both men and women need and thrive on this relationship in marriage. God wants His people to have a sexual partner who belongs only to them that they do not share with anyone else.

Astrologers claim that only certain signs of the zodiac should marry each other to insure compatibility. Contrary to what the horoscope books say, the only basic requirement for compatibility is a "man" and a "woman." Incompatibility comes from disregarding God's marriage laws, not the signs of the zodiac.

Isaiah says astrologers prey on the gullibility of the youth—the ones who have not yet learned to trust God for leadership. However, as the young followers of astrology grow older, following the signs becomes wearisome and unprofitable for them. By then, they've already wasted their youth following a false guide. Isaiah challenges "Let now the astrologers, those who prophesy by the stars, those who predict by the new moons, stand up and save you from what will come upon you. Behold, they have become like stubble, fire burns them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame" (Isa. 47:12-15). In the end, the astrologers cannot save themselves, let alone anyone else.

Paul teaches in Rom. 1:25 that when someone worships the creature rather than the Creator he practices idolatry. Letting the stars, moon, and sun guide one's life through horoscopes is a modern form of idolatry. When a woman's sign tells her that a Scorpio is strong-willed, she is tempted to excuse her problems with her husband on the grounds that their natures just conflict naturally. This takes away the woman's motivation to go to God's word and find out whether or not she practices true subjection. Likewise, when the horoscopes say that a Libra and a Leo should not marry because they will be sexually incompatible, a man may attribute his wife's sexual coldness to their signs instead of to a failure on his part to truly love his wife as his own body.

Full compatibility requires both a "man" and a "woman" each giving pleasure to the other, rather than using each other in a selfish manner. The Bible nowhere says anything about a Libra marrying a Leo, or Scorpio, or any other sign marrying another sign. When created things guide a couples' love-life instead of the Creator, they have no guarantee of happiness, only an excuse for not following God's wisdom.

God tells the purpose of the sun, moon, and stars in Gen. 1:14. They are to give lights and be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years to regulate time. They are not in the heavens to guide lives and marriages.

Each Person to Fulfill Duty

I Cor. 7:3: "Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband."

"Fulfill" means "put away by giving, give up, give over; 1. deliver (relinquish what is one's own) hence to give away for one's own profit what is one's own, i.e. sell; 2. pay off, discharge (what is due [because a debt, like a burden, is thrown off, by being paid]; a debt); 3. give back, restore; 4. requite, recompense" (Thayer, p. 60).

"Duty" means "that which is owed, a debt, conjugal duty" (Thayer, p. 469). The only other places "duty" is used in the New Testament are in Matt. 18:32 and Rom. 13:7 where it refers to paying debts to others.

The words "fulfill" and "duty" both include the idea of paying back *something owed* to another. Thinking of the sexual relationship as a duty seems offensive to many people. Yet when a person enters marriage, he takes on a debt, just as a person who signs a loan contract to buy a new car assumes a debt. Promising to make regular payments on the car doesn't take away the new car owner's joy of ownership. He gladly pays the debt for the privilege of driving the new car wherever he wants.

When a man marries, he assumes a similar debt with his wife to satisfy her sexual desires to the point that sexual temptations do not entice her. The same is true with the wife. She takes on a debt in marriage to completely satisfy her husband's sexual desires so that he's not tempted to engage in illicit sexual conduct. Both the husband and the wife share a marital debt to pay off to the other.

Sometimes thinking about lovemaking as a duty to be performed for the other or thinking about the other just performing his duty turns both men and women off sexually. Seen in this light, it takes away much of the emotional and physical pleasure of the act. However, the husband and the wife both need to recognize the other's dependence on them for sexual fulfillment. God says that dependence can't be taken lightly. At the same time, the husband or the wife who treats sexual intercourse only as a duty usually fails to fully satisfy the mate's sexual desires. Instead, the attitude of *only* performing one's duty tempts the other to commit fornication.

The age of Victorian morals demonstrated this principle abundantly. While advocating that good women lacked the ability to enjoy sexual intimacy, the Victorian moralists taught the wives to submit to their husbands' desires as their marital duty. The Victorian women did a good job of doing their duty and enduring their husbands' supposedly animal natures. At the same time, the doctors lamented over and over about the large number of husbands who brought home syphilis and gonorrhea to their wives from seeking sexual satisfaction from prostitutes—the only women to whom the Victorians gave the right to freely engage in sexual intercourse. Obviously, while the wives lay there and allowed their husbands to vent their sexual desires on them, the wives doing their "duty" failed to fully satisfy their husbands.

Nearly every chapter in *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* shows over and over how a satisfying sexual relationship must involve a mental union of both the husband and the wife. A wife, eager and excited about lovemaking, turns a normal husband on. Her expression of love in the sexual act—not a limp body just lying there doing its duty—ravishes him.

The Song of Solomon shows how during their courtship, the maiden promised to pay her sexual debt to the Shepherd in marriage. She made a commitment to him to initiate lovemaking after marriage when she said, "There I will give you my love" (7:12). She pledged to bestow all kinds of choice sexual fruits on him which she had saved up (7:13). She assured him that her mother had taught her how to satisfy a man (8:2). The Shepherd approached marriage with confidence that he was marrying an exciting and willing sexual partner.

The Shulammitte also expected the Shepherd to satisfy her sexual desires. Early in the story she said, "Let his left hand be under my head and his right hand embrace me" (2:6). Then after telling him how she would satisfy his sexual desires, she again said, "Let his left hand be under my head and his right hand embrace me" (8:3). She recognized the passions of her body and mind which he awoke in courtship. She expected the Shepherd to satisfy those desires in marriage. A platonic marriage would have left both the Shulammitte and Shepherd feeling cheated out of the wonderful love-life the other had promised.

The Shulammitte made a statement parallel to I Cor. 7:2-4 in Song of Sol. 7:9 when she refused King Solomon and told him how she felt about the Shepherd. She said, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me." In other words, her sexual charms belonged to the Shepherd, and his desire was her privilege to fulfill. They were ready to possess and to satisfy each other in marriage. They could depend on each other sexually.

God showed His approval when He inspired the poet to say, "Eat, friends; drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers" (Song of Sol. 5:1). God wants courting couples to marry and to fulfill their pledges of a wonderful love-life to each other.

Unfortunately, many wives suffer great sexual pain because, as they put it, "He was very affectionate in courtship, but after getting married, he's a lot different. I don't understand why he changed." Many wives were promised sexual fulfillment in courtship only to find their husbands negligent about delivery. A past-due notice isn't much fun in business and it's even less fun in marriage.

Likewise, many husbands know the pain of unsatisfied sexual desires. One husband who has counseled sexually frustrated men said, "The root of a lot of male bitterness is that *they made a deal*. He said, Let's get married, I'll give you kids (that you genetically are desperate for but I'm not) and a home and security (also in your psyche-wish list), working and worrying to live up to the money needs somehow. And you give me *good sex* (putting it at the top of the day's list)!"

He continued, "She says, Sure! and they get hitched. Then she gets all that she bargained for, but him? He feels like he was suckered into a deal not kept, while he cannot help but deliver his side of the deal, for the kids mainly. And the bitterness is extreme."

The pledges of the Shulammitte and the Shepherd plus the unfaithfulness of Victorian husbands testify that "duty" involves much more than a cold body letting the other perform a sexual act upon it. Proverbs 5 and 7 portrays a harlot tempting a husband to stray for reasons other than just providing a body for sexual gratification, such as her enthusiasm plus flattery. The fact that many husbands settle for feigned admiration from harlots shows how important appreciation from the wife is for a happy sexual relationship. A wife's emotional love along with her responsive body becomes her most satisfying sexual feature to her husband.

Paul says, "Because of immoralities . . . let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise, also the wife to her husband." God expects each partner to deliver the body *along with loving attitudes* to the other in such a way as to help the mate avoid sinning by impure thoughts or deeds.

The happiness of the sexual relationship depends in large part on both the husband and the wife *knowing* that the other is always available mentally. This knowledge protects the partner with the stronger desires from feeling rejected by *temporary* setbacks on the way to sexual love, when circumstances beyond their control prevent lovemaking. In this way, the husband or the wife knows that the "no" is not a personal rejection.

The partner with the weaker desires ought to allow the other to stimulate him or her for lovemaking. Likewise, the partner with the greater desires ought to willingly do most of the work of initiating sexual love. If the person with the lower desires lends him or herself to the moment and allows the other to touch and to express love without being pressured to perform, he or she may well find sexual desire surging for release.

Sometimes, just telling the mate with lower desires one wants to make love produces a delayed effect, even though the mate initially says, "no." Planting the idea gives the mate a chance to experience his own sexual cues for a future date. And if the mate with the

stronger desires approaches the other *long before* desire turns to feelings of deprivation, then they both can eagerly anticipate the next sexual encounter. Making dates with the spouse helps prepare both the mind and the body to respond gloriously in the embrace of love.

"The *Redbook* Report on Sexual Relationships" of 26,000 men and women found that the couples with the best sexual lives didn't want sexual intercourse about 25 percent of the time when they had relations. In a similar manner, the couples who rated their love-lives good to excellent said that 75 percent of the time they weren't interested in lovemaking when, in fact, they did engage in sexual intercourse. *Redbook* wanted to know why these couples still rated their love-lives so high when from 25 to 75 percent of the time they weren't interested in sexual contact, but made love anyway. The answer? *They ended up enjoying it.* They willingly surrendered to their marriage partners' needs and passions. As a result, they rated their love-lives from the best to excellent to good. (Philip and Lorna Sarrel, "The *Redbook* Report on Sexual Relationships," *Redbook*[Oct. 1980], p. 75.)

The mental differences between the male and the female minds makes compatibility a realistic goal. While the Shepherd pleaded for the Shulammitte to always give her love to him, he recognized his part by spending time cultivating her love. The Song of Solomon emphasizes the necessity for emotional involvement for true love. Without the mental union, the physical union lacks much of its splendor and glory. God designed the mental natures of the male and the female to fit perfectly together.

Likewise, the physical natures of the male and the female bodies fit perfectly together. God designed a woman as the perfect guardian of both mental and physical love. She can make love *nearly* any time—whether she's tired or energetic, though she can become so fatigued or preoccupied that her body doesn't respond as fully as she would like. The woman can also forgo lovemaking even when she greatly desires it if her husband is not physically able. A truly loving woman understands that her husband is made differently from her, and she isn't hurt when he is *temporarily* unable to engage in the sexual embrace. At such times she channels her love into other avenues of expression such as hugging, patting, kissing, or even baking a pie for her husband. She knows that when they must postpone lovemaking, it becomes just that much better the next time.

The man, however, is more limited by his physical abilities. If he's overworked or preoccupied, he may desire and need lovemaking, but lack the physical stamina necessary. When a couple joins together emotionally and shares genuine concern for each other, the woman possesses the ability to always satisfy her husband by her gentle sexual makeup, taking her cue from him either in stimulating him or waiting for a better time.

Because the wife desires the man more than the sexual act itself, the man possesses the ability to always satisfy his wife's needs. If the husband allows himself to get too tired so that he not only fails to satisfy his wife, but also neglects himself, the wise wife solves the problem by arousing his desire to make time and energy for lovemaking.

God created the woman as a perfect guardian of love and the husband depends on her to fulfill her role. In fact, Dr. Maxine Davis says *the wife's attitude toward lovemaking determines what happens to her husband's sexual capacities in his later years.* When the wife passively does her duty, she may cause her husband to become "impotent with her" long before age takes away his abilities. The wife, more than the husband, keeps sexual interest and activity going throughout a long marriage. (Maxine Davis, *The Sexual Responsibility of Woman* [New York: Dial Press, 1956], as quoted by Donald W. Hastings, M.D., *A Doctor Speaks on Sexual Expression in Marriage*, Second Edition [Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971], p. 38.)

The husband's failure to pay his sexual debt also affects what his wife becomes over the years. Such a husband forces his wife to constantly strive to control her pent-up sexual desires by denying her a legitimate way of relieving them. As a result, she loses much of her true loving personality—her femininity is even affected. She must channel all of her energy into avoiding sin in her thoughts, rather than giving herself mentally over to loving her husband. Such a wife works hard at not degenerating into a bitter shrew of an old woman in her later years. Many a woman loses that battle with bitterness all because her husband didn't deliver what he promised in courtship. Even if out of ignorance, he didn't promise to satisfy her sexual needs in marriage, God still promises her that she has a right to expect sexual satisfaction from her husband.

Neither Person Can Satisfy Self

1 Cor. 7:4: "The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does."

"Authority over" means "to have power or authority, use power; to be master of any one, exercise authority over one, to be brought under the power of any one" (Thayer, p. 225).

Often husbands and wives selfishly use this passage on each other by saying, "Your body belongs to me and I have the right to say what happens sexually. I have the authority over your body." This attitude conveys the opposite of what the verse says.

This verse contains two ellipses—two "not-but" constructions with a common verb. An ellipsis, a common Greek word combination, shows a relationship between two things that are both true, but it places the emphasis on the second over the first. In other words, the wife has authority over her own body, but the husband exercises greater authority over her body.

Yet the husband's authority is not to tell the wife what to do with her body. Rather, the husband exercises his authority *by giving his wife's body sexual satisfaction* in keeping with the context of the passage "because of immoralities." Thus, the wife possesses some authority or ability to satisfy her own sexual desires through masturbation.

However, the passage emphasizes her husband's power to satisfy her in comparison to her own ability—he exerts much more power to satisfy her by making a vaginal orgasm possible. In fact, once a woman tastes of a vaginal orgasm, masturbation seems empty and worthless. It takes a husband to satisfy a wife's deepest feminine needs. (*Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* discusses in detail the difference between a vaginal and a clitoral orgasm.)

This makes masturbation a sin when the husband uses it to drain off his sexual energies so that he fails to satisfy his wife's sexual needs. Tim LaHaye says in his book *The Act of Marriage* that a man's heavy use of masturbation is the most common cause of a low sexual drive in a husband for his wife. He says that a man often gets into the habit in his youth and carries it over into his marriage. When a couple comes to him for counseling because of a husband's low sexual interest, the first question he always asks is if the man masturbates.

The woman wields the same power over her husband as he does over her. The husband, likewise, exercises limited power to relieve his sexual urges in comparison to his wife's power. The *Redbook* survey of 40,000 men found that the most happily married men didn't enjoy masturbation nearly as much as making love with their wives. (Carol Tavris, "The Sex Lives of Happy Men," Part II, *Redbook* [March 1978], p. 197.) Consequently, a husband does not possess the necessary body parts to *fully* satisfy himself—only his wife can give him the very best of sexual thrills.

While both the husband and the wife depend on the other for sexual satisfaction, both also find their greatest pleasure in experiencing the other's satisfaction. The wife finds her fulfillment in seeing her husband's deep satisfaction from her charms. Likewise, the husband finds great pleasure in his ability to give supreme delight to his wife. Many of the men in the *Redbook* survey said that the best lovemaking occurred when their wives obviously experienced their best times. (Tavris, "The Sex Lives of Happy Men," p. 195.)

Pleasure selfishly sought often evades the seeker. Instead, pleasure comes from seeking to give pleasure to the marriage partner.

Since neither marriage partner can adequately satisfy his or her own sexual desires, the question of frequency often comes up. Some husbands and wives want more lovemaking. Others think they have too much and would like less. All these couples want to know what is normal so they can convince their mates to have either more or less sexual contact.

To answer this need, most of the books about the sexual relationship give averages for each age group. Yet some of the more recent books which recognize the role of the mind in the sexual union point out that the weekly figures fail to show the level of happiness in the marriages surveyed. So certain questions arise, "Do happy couples engage in sexual intercourse three times a week, or do they enjoy lovemaking more often than the average unhappily married couples? Or do unhappily married couples engage in the sexual embrace more often than happily married couples in an effort to find the missing element in their love lives?"

In truth, the statistics fail to prove anything and leave many couples right where they started—frustrated with either too little or too much sexual contact. However, God's treatment of the problem shows His love for mankind. God provides a formula for each married couple to apply to their individual marriage to determine how much or what kind of lovemaking is right for them. God tailor-made His law of compatibility to satisfy the needs of each couple, regardless of how often other couples engage in sexual intercourse.

Basically, the amount of sexual activity necessary for protecting both the husband and the wife from sexual temptations determines how often a couple should engage in the sexual relationship (1 Cor. 7:5). For example, many husbands and wives wake up thinking sexual thoughts. In fact, researchers say that most people feel their strongest sexual urges in the early mornings. If both the husband and the wife feel satisfied with their sexual life, they wake up thinking loving thoughts of the other—perhaps remembering the night before.

However, if the sexual relationship frustrates either one of the partners, the picture changes completely. The husband or the wife may wake up with an illicit sensual dream on his or her mind. If the person tries to maintain pure thoughts, he must deliberately force the improper thoughts out of the mind. This creates anger and bitterness toward the spouse before the day even starts.

These sensual dreams come about in a natural way. If the husband or the wife constantly feels cheated by a mate who is frequently *unavailable* for desired sexual intimacy, the subconscious may try to find an *available* sexual partner to satisfy legitimate needs. While an ungodly person might give in to these sensual imaginings and allow him or herself to lust after another sexual partner, the godly husband or wife resents the mate for placing him or her in a position of constantly fighting sexual temptation. Likewise, a godly mate must also constantly fight the resentment and bitterness that is always present.

On the other hand, if the sexual desires are regularly satisfied, the subconscious plugs the spouse into the dreams. This fosters love toward the spouse and creates a pleasant feeling of desire and longing. *The answer to the question of how much lovemaking is right for a couple must be determined by how much sexual activity is necessary to keep illicit sensual dreams and temptations from occurring.* The couple determines this by their intimate conversations. If either one of the partners faces sexual temptations, then they should work at increasing the frequency of sexual intercourse, or work at enjoying lovemaking more, or both.

Conclusion

At their weddings, couples used to pledge, "Forsaking all others, to have and to hold, in sickness and health, for richer or poorer, and for better or worse." *Having and holding* makes sickness, poverty, and misfortunes worth it. No matter how healthy, wealthy, or smiled upon by good fortune, a broken heart in the bedroom makes it all worthless. That's why the Shepherd, who offered only a life of hard work and poverty, won the Shulammitte's heart away from King Solomon, who promised her luxuries and prestige beyond description, but without sexual love.

God so created the woman that when her husband satisfies her deepest sexual needs, no sacrifice is too great to be with him. He may be a poor Shepherd to others, but to her, he's "dazzling and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand" (Song of Sol. 5:10).

Likewise, God warns the man not to get so caught up in the challenges of subduing the earth that he loses the priority of enjoying life with the woman he loves. That is God's reward for his labors (Eccl. 9:9). When a wife gives her sexual love freely to her husband, all the sacrifices he makes to provide for her and their children are worth the worry and the long hours. When a wife satisfies her husband's deepest needs for a loving companion, he feels richly rewarded by God for his labors.

The Song of Solomon ends with the Shepherd pleading with the Shulammitte to come to the wedding. She responds, "Hurry, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices." They then entered into the most wonderful relationship ever that God provides for His people to enjoy on earth. They were both eager and ready to pay their debts to each other as they joined in sexual love.

God's people not only can enjoy all that sexual love offers with a clear conscience which frees their bodies for total sexual liberation, but they should also thank the wonderful Creator for designing such a great marital blessing. Such a thoughtful Creator deserves to be cheerfully thanked, loved, and served. Yes, even in bed!



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This booklet is composed of excerpts from *Marriage: A Taste of Heaven, Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers* by Patsy Rae Dawson, an award-winning author. It provides a small sample of the wealth of exciting information found in the Bible about the sexual natures of both men and women and how they can find supreme physical and mental pleasure in lovemaking. *Vol. I: God's People Appreciate Marriage* teaches about the differences between men and women and how they balance and support each other. Together, these books use the Bible to examine in detail how the husband's and the wife's minds and bodies fit perfectly together to bless both their lives and to give them both supreme sexual bliss. Many people enjoy reading *Vol. II: God's People Make the Best Lovers first*. Your marriage will never be the same after you read these stimulating volumes.