

# The Joy of Married Love



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**T**oday I want to talk about the incredible gift that God gave the human race—married sexual love. Our passage is rather explicit. In beautiful poetic, erotic imagery typical of Solomon’s writings, he paints a picture of the power of passionate marital love. He also speaks directly about the problem of lust outside of marriage.

God is not reluctant to talk about sexual themes in the Bible. Sex is a huge part of life and we need to know what God has to say. So please open your Bibles to Proverbs 5:15-23 and read the Word of God along with me.

I’m convinced that one of the greatest lacks in the world is biblical training about sexuality. There are few discipleship programs on making love. People fall in love and they move into the realm of sexuality with little or no knowledge and guidance. I think the Christian home and the church ought to be the major places where each generation is trained in Scriptural sexuality.

Up to this point in Proverbs, we have been warned about the dangers of immorality. I really hope each of us has taken that teaching to heart. Now Solomon puts before us the proper arena for sexual satisfaction – monogamous heterosexual marriage.

Teaching about satisfying and fulfilling sexual relationships falls on at least four kinds of soils in any church like ours.

Soil #1—Some of you are not married and you want to be some day. Listen carefully to the teaching of the Word of God and save yourself for this relationship. Soil #2—Some of you are not married and don’t want to be. Receive the Word of God in order to pray for those for whom this more directly applies.

Soil #3—some of you are married and you are experiencing the good things this passage is describing. Praise God. You are in a blessed minority. And soil #4—some of you are married and you are very frustrated sexually. What I have to say may be hard for you to hear. Be open to how the Spirit of God wants to apply this to your life.

Marriage is not only the realm where sex is right — but where sex is necessary.

If we can understand and apply the Wisdom of Solomon in the following *three areas* of guidance, we can have the kind of marital relationship God wants for us.

## Satisfy your sexual needs within your marriage (Proverbs 5:15-18)

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When God created human beings, He created them with sexual appetites. Granted, some have bigger appetites than others. Someone has said that if everyone had the drive of the typical man, the world would be overrun with kids and no work would ever get done. And if everyone had the drive of the average woman, the world would be incredibly efficient but within a generation of extinction.

In beautiful metaphorical language, in verses 15-18 the satisfaction of sexual needs is likened to various situations of water – a cistern, well, springs, streams, and fountain. No profound differing meanings are meant for these words. These are synonyms for literary value. In the Old Testament, the well was one of the most important possessions of a household. Their very lives depended on water. To steal water from someone else's well was a serious crime.

The major function of the well was to satisfy thirst. The wife is likened to a cistern and well in verse 15. The idea is a rich supply of water from his own wife for the thirsty husband. I don't think that we are to press the passage to say that this arrangement is not reciprocal. The husband is also a cistern and well supplying to his wife fresh and flowing water.

So, verses 15-18 are talking about sexual satisfaction. And there are three strong exhortations in these verses.

**Marriage is the only right place to find sexual satisfaction.** You are to drink water from your own well, not someone else's well. The water supply is very private. Verse 16 is clear. The streams of water are not to be shared

with others and splashed around all over the place. In the most explicit teaching of the Apostle Paul about this, I Corinthians 7:2 says each man is to have his own wife and each woman is to have her own husband for sexual satisfaction. The water of your partner is for you alone and not for strangers (vs. 17). Only one person is allowed at the well.

**Sexual thirst is normal.** God made us with sexual desire. The married partner is to provide good, fresh water for the thirst. Partners need to be sensitive to each other's needs and provide the water. God never intended marriages to experience sexual droughts. When water is cut off from a partner, the thirst does not go away. It only intensifies. Paul tells us in I Corinthians 7:3 that spouses are to fulfill their duty to each other. Paul goes on to say in verse 5 that to deny the needs of your partner is to make him or her a target of Satan for sexual temptation.

I used the word "normal" a few moments ago. I can't say what's normal for you. You need to discuss your thirsts with your partner. All I know is this. I Corinthians 7:5 says that the drinks need to be regular. And I know that the average guy is a little disappointed that the average wife isn't as thirsty as he is. So this is my caution. We're talking about satisfying thirst, not gluttony.

Some people want to drink even when they aren't thirsty. Moderation applies here.

**Don't take your partner for granted.** Verse 18 shows us that there is more to sex than satisfaction. It is a wholesome concern and respect for the well or fountain itself. If you don't take care of the fountain, you're going to have a problem with the water. We are to bless the fountain. We are to value the well and take care of it. We are to rejoice in

the person we chose to spend the rest of our lives with when we were young.

Many of the sexual problems in marriages are at this very point. The partner is not treated well yet he or she is expected to provide the water. If you don't take care of the well and the water does not flow well, it's your own fault. How we treat the person is more important than achieving sexual satisfaction. Our partners need to know we bless them and not use them. They need to know that they are a delight to us now, not just when we first got married. Or there will be big water problems! Ask yourself, "How well am I maintaining the well?"

God designed that sexual needs be met within the marriage relationship. Partners should meet each other's true needs and never look for sexual satisfaction elsewhere.

That brings up a huge practical problem. What about sex in troubled marriages? Is the Bible telling us to have a great sex life when our marriage is falling apart? Are couples being asked to do something very difficult when emotional love has died and the wounds are deep? In a situation like this, there is usually one partner who wants to go forward and one who feels obligated, forced, or used.

This is a tough problem and hard to answer. But you can never lose sight of the goal—a good marriage blessed by God. In light of this, I advise three things. I must be brief:

**Guard your heart.** Don't become bitter and develop a cold and distant spirit towards your mate. Treat your insensitive partner as Christ would treat him or her.

**Obey explicit Scriptures about sexual responsibilities.** In I Corinthians 7, we

are told that we have sexual obligations to each other in the marriage. It does not say that when things are difficult, don't have sex. Part of obedience has to do with doing things we do not feel like doing. I really believe that God honors the sacrifices we make to obey Him while we entrust ourselves to Him who judges righteously (I Peter 2:23).

**Get qualified help.** If things are this bad, you likely will not be able to solve your problems alone. Don't shy away from help because of fear of your spouse or lowered esteem in other's eyes. The longer you stay in the quagmire, the harder it will be to get out.

Solomon's first point is that marriage is the one and only place to have our sexual needs met. Now the second point.

### **Strive for sexual passion with your mate (Proverbs 5:19-20)**

God designed the sexual experience to be an exciting event. He never intended it to be dull and boring. Some people make their grocery lists and "to do" lists while making love. That's not what the Lord had in mind.

The reality is, when you first fall in love, there is a lot of sexual excitement. For many couples, the excitement fades away as the years go by. That's not what God had in mind. It's God's will that you turn each other on as long as you can. I happen to think that God is for Viagra.

Verses 19 and 20 are erotic language in the genre of the Song of Solomon (cf. Song of Solomon 4:5). In the imagery of Solomon's day, he is telling us that a wife's body is very attractive to the husband. Her physical features offer him great satisfaction. In verse 19, the limbs and eyes of the doe and deer

stand for female beauty. Personally, I don't use these descriptions for Marie. I have other ones that only we know. But when the husband sees the body of his wife, it is very pleasing to him.

Verse 19 talks about a private part of the female anatomy. This is as explicit as we're going to get. It's called the "breast". The Hebrew word for breast is always used in the context of sensual, erotic love. It's a shame that the breast has become the focus of American lust. But in the marriage relationship, this verse tells us that the breast is to be a great source of pleasure for the husband. It is of continual interest for him and is part of perpetual male satisfaction.

The verse goes on to say that the husband should be exhilarated always with his wife's love. The word "exhilarated" is an incredible Hebrew word. It means "to be ravished, lost, drunk, or intoxicated." In love making, the husband is to be so totally captivated by his wife that he is no longer in his own power and can no longer restrain himself. When this happens, there is a love-ecstasy in progress of intense feelings of superabundant happiness.

Now I want to make some very important comments.

**It is passion that makes marriage more than a business arrangement.**

Marriage was never designed to be an arrangement for paying bills and being roommates. Marriage was designed to have flaming passion between two individuals for a lifetime.

**Marital lovemaking is not always exciting.** This verse isn't trying to tell us that if we don't go crazy with passion every time, that we have missed the Scriptural standard for marriage. There are times when the passion is not there. But the prolonged absence of passion

should be a warning that something is wrong.

**If the passionate side of married love is sagging, work harder in the kitchen than in the bedroom.**

When I was in seminary, I was in a group that did a project on sexual passion in marriage.

We concluded that if a wife is not treated with love and respect during the rest of the day, she isn't going to have a lot of passion in the bedroom. Guys set the tone for the relationship in the kitchen – how they treat their wives as they start their day and go through it.

This goes back to verse 18. If the well is not being properly maintained, there isn't going to be much passion with the water.

This verse is not just about the husband's passion. The wife is to enjoy her husband's body and be intoxicated as well. She becomes passionate about him when her emotional needs are met, when she feels honored, loved and respected. Sexual passion flows from there.

Sexual excitement with anyone but a person you are married to is always wrong. Verse 20 says, "How could you ever become sexually passionate with someone you are not married to and caress their erogenous zones?"

That's my translation of the verse. Sexual touching and excitement with a person you are not married to is way out of bounds. Sexual excitement on the Internet is wrong. There is a huge difference between married erotic love and extramarital erotic lust.

The temptations in this world are many for husbands and wives to find excitement and pleasure elsewhere. Only blind lust will allow you to be pulled away from married love.

That's why this third point is so necessary.

## **Steer away from all extramarital sex (Proverbs -23)**

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It is no secret that there is a lot of extramarital sex going on in the world. The Bible calls it adultery and fornication. We call it affairs and premarital sex. Whatever you call it, it's a bad idea and very dangerous. God wants us to know the truth about people moving outside of marriage for sexual fulfillment. It's in the following verses.

**God watches what happens behind closed doors (vs. 21).** Sex is a very private thing. It happens behind closed doors and the thought is that you're all alone and nobody's watching. The truth is, God watches everything we do, even our most intimate and private moments. Nothing is hidden to God. He sees it all. The words "ways" and "paths" in verse 21 stand for how we live our lives, our lifestyle both visible and private. We take no step of our lives in any direction without God. One of the ways or paths of life is our sexual life. God is totally acquainted with all that we do in that arena.

When God sees a wife and husband enjoying each other sexually with abandon, God is glorified and happy. In His mind He is thinking, "Enjoy each other. This is what I had in mind for you." He is excited about the blessing of sex.

But I know that God sees a lot of sexual activity that makes Him sick and angry. People have taken a sacred, holy, and wonderful gift and have made it vulgar and dirty and harmful. God sees it all and it is an affront to Him.

Many of you have seen the movie, "The Truman Show."

It's about a baby boy who grows into manhood as the world watches his every move from a hidden camera. That story is truer than we think. We are Truman on display before God at all times. We can never forget that!

If there is anything or anyone you are currently involved with that you can't tell your spouse or pastor about, you are in a danger zone. Just remember, God already knows and He is the one to worry about.

Here's the second piece of truth about extramarital sex:

**Immorality leads to a person's undoing (verses 22-23).** Whenever people engage in sexual activity outside of marriage, they hurt themselves. The world tells us that sex outside of marriage is freedom and fun. Most of the entertainment out there portrays the joy of sex outside of marriage. But the truth in verse 22 is this. Sexual sin enslaves. It captures a person and holds him prisoner.

II Peter 2 talks about how sensuality and adultery take people over. Verse 19 says that sexually indulgent people promise others freedom but they themselves are slaves of corruption, because by what a person is overcome, by that he is enslaved.

Sexual freedom looks so wonderful. But those who live there are living at the low level of lust and are becoming its slave. Who in their right minds would want to be a slave of their glands? It's but a small step from freedom to addiction. Sexual immorality is not freedom. It entangles a person.

Verse 23 is extremely serious. Sexual immorality is a road that leads to death.

The text says that the immoral person will die for lack of discipline. Most of us have temptations and lusts that would love to be satisfied improperly. It takes resolve, restraint, and discipline to stay holy and pure. Without that discipline, people move into dangerous territory on a road that can lead to death — relational death, physical death, and spiritual death.

The verse goes on to say that people who engage in sex outside of marriage are “in the greatness of his folly.” In other words, they are so infatuated with lust that they can not see that what they are doing is wrong. And being consumed with sexual desire, they go astray. This is the same word in verse 19, to be intoxicated with sexual love in the marriage bed. A person becomes so captivated by lust that he can no longer restrain himself and he steps beyond the standards of God, not listening to anyone’s advice.

My friends, to walk the road of sexual immorality means that you will eventually walk into some huge problems down the road. If you call yourself a follower of Jesus Christ, you are called upon by God to walk the road of chastity, purity, and fidelity. Sex outside of marriage is always wrong and harmful.

When tempted, remember the three great deterrents in this passage that help keep people from adultery—good sex in marriage (verses 15-19), the fear of a watching God (verse 21), and restraint (verse 23). Those three things go a long way in maintaining purity. Marriage is the greatest partnership on earth. Don’t jeopardize or destroy it!

I pray often that our church would be sexually pure. I shudder to think about the sexual conduct that happens outside marriage even in this church. Don’t let

sexual compromise happen to you!

## Conclusion

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What have we talked about today? Simply this; If you are married, seek sexual satisfaction with your partner. Find your delight and fulfillment in your mate rather than going elsewhere to drink from other waters. What’s more, remember that all of your life is directly viewed by God, even the bedroom. Marital infidelity puts you in harms way.

If you are not married, the obvious conclusion is that you are to lead a life of discipline that pleases God and prevents you from sexual entanglement. You are to live a life of sexual abstinence.

What we talked about is a challenge and much of it is difficult. I want you to know that Jesus is the secret to all of this. In marriage, when two people are vitally connected to Jesus, they connect with delight in the bedroom. If one or both partners are not relating well with Jesus, there will be trouble in the bedroom and the door is opened to all kinds of temptation.

And if you are single, Jesus is right there with you. He is preparing the way for something great ahead. Don’t turn your back on Him and compromise your future.

One last thing. If we know Christ as our Savior, the Bible says we are married to Him spiritually. We are His bride. We are to find our soul’s delight in Him. We are to be intoxicated with His love. We are not to be chasing the things of this world for fulfillment and delight. Psalm 16:11 says, “In Your presence is fullness of joy and in Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” The greatest delight possible in this life is to experience intimate delight with Jesus

for our soul's hunger and thirst. How is it with you and Jesus today?

I encourage you to do some soul searching. If you are struggling with sexual matters in marriage or outside of marriage, or if you are struggling to find your delight in Jesus in life, do let that situation or condition go on. Get before the Lord a time of evaluation and confession, a time of reaching out to Jesus, and a time of redirecting and commitment. This could be a key step in a new direction for you. Don't delay.

## Scripture References

- **Psalms 16:11**
- **Song of Solomon 4:5**
- **Proverbs 5:15-23**
- **I Corinthians 7:2-3, 5**
- **I Peter 2:23**

## Notes: