

The Process of Becoming One (Part 5) Sexual Intimacy

Key Thought: There are three basic principles that a couple must consistently practice in order to fully enjoy their sexual experience.

- **I Corinthians 7:3-5** “Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourself to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

1. The Principle of NEED . (7:3)

- A. Both husband and wife have a definite need for regular sexual intimacy.
- B. Need depends on what the other requires.
- C. Consideration for one’s mate must regulate requests.

It is generally true that there is a significant disparity between men and women concerning sexual need. Men tend to have an urgent, strong desire for gratification that is due to the fact that they are easily aroused by visual stimulation. It tends to be visceral and automatic sometimes occurring within a few seconds. Wives frequently express dismay at their husband’s ability to be aroused so easily by other women. They need to understand two things: 1) His reaction does not mean that he is promiscuous or unfaithful. It is simply characteristic of the male reaction; it is a built-in response mechanism that God created in him. 2) His arousal, in and of itself, does not mean that much to him. It occurs effortlessly and has nothing to do with emotional attachment.

Women find these facts about their husband hard to understand because they experience arousal in a different way. Unlike men they are not necessarily stimulated by sight. It is far more complicated and deliberate. When actor Burt Reynolds posed partially nude for Cosmopolitan magazine a number of years ago, most women viewed it as humorous rather than sexually stimulating. Sexual arousal for a woman involves more of a mind-set than the result of stimulation. She can choose whether she wants to experience arousal or not. Many women report that their arousal is often dependent on whether or not she has an emotional attachment to a particular man. Rather than looking strictly at his physical appearance, she tends to look for personality qualities such as affection, attentiveness, warmth, and kindness. For a woman, looks are not the critical issue. A tender touch or gentle treatment mean far more to her than a handsome face or trim physique. Feelings of affection and romance are the important keys to a woman’s sexual arousal.

2. The Principle of AUTHORITY. (7:4)

- A. Each spouse must *relinquish* his/her “rights” to the other.
- B. Mutual rights involve mutual *responsibility*.

I Corinthians 6:19 “...your body is not your own; it is the temple of the Holy Spirit.”

Sexuality is not self-oriented but other-oriented. Scripture makes it clear that we are to care for our mate’s body as our own. It is not the husband’s responsibility to meet his own sexual needs or for the wife to meet hers. His biblical responsibility is to consistently meet her needs and vice versa. It is to be a cooperative experience.

Note to wives: Simply “sacrificing” your body to meet his sexual needs is an unbiblical attitude to take. You must join your husband in the sexual experience or his needs will remain unmet. It will then be transformed from simply having sex to making love.

3. The Principle of HABIT. (7:5)

- A. Sexual intimacy must be on a *regular/continuous* basis.
- B. This provides adequate sexual satisfaction and prevents succumbing to *temptation*.

Word study: ‘do not deprive’—don’t cheat or rob your mate except by mutual consent (literally ‘symphony’).

When a husband and wife make vows together before God they are committing to one another that they will exclusively meet the other person’s sexual need. They trust that their spouse will be sexually available to them. Unfortunately, many discover that putting their trust in their spouse was a big mistake. Unless their moral and spiritual values are strong some will fall prey to temptation when the occasions arises.