

## Session Five: Sexuality and Intimacy

(Source: Wangerin)

### Scriptures:

Genesis 1:27; 2:24-25  
Song of Solomon  
Colossians 3:12-15  
1 Thessalonians 4:1-8  
Hebrews 13:1-6 esp. v.4

### Questions:

- How did your families deal with sex and sex education?
- What might it be about your partner, that if you were to know it, it will jeopardize your marriage/relationship with each other?
- Have you been up-front with each other about premarital sexual involvements (if any)? Did you practice sex before marriage? (Ask this question cautiously, sensitively. Sometimes, this question should not even be asked at all).
- Who or what determines the sexual standards and practices within a marriage? Hollywood, church, parents, friends, pornographic movies and material, etc.? Where will you take your cues from?

### Introduction:

#### Sexuality and Sex:

- We need both male and female to get a full picture of the image of God.
- The Scripture celebrates the distinctiveness and the complementariness of male and female.
- Man being alone in creation was the only deficiency. God fixed that by providing a partner
- Solitude contradicts the calling of humanity
- There is something in a husband-wife relationship that transcends all other earthly relationships.
- In marriage, we have the basis and model for all other relationships: siblings, friends, etc.
- There is a knowing that is intended in marriage that is greater and deeper than in all other earthly relationships.
- Self-sacrificing and self-giving are at the heart of the marriage relationship
- Sexual intercourse celebrates oneness inherent in and intended for marriage.
- The wedding gifts of God can only be received through humility. This includes sex.

**Definition:** Making love = a couple manifests their love for each in the sex act. cf. Wangerin, p. 173

### **What sex should not be to a couple?**

1. Commanding or shaping of the other person.
2. Manhandling or manipulation of [abusing] the other person
3. Sex does not make or produce love, which justifies and sustains the rest of the marriage
  - love is not made in bed and does not manufacture something that does not exist. It is a manifestation of something that exists or that does not exist.
  - An existing love makes sex a beautiful thing
  - Good sex won't save a bad marriage. Bad sex is seldom the primary cause of a marriage's failure.
4. Sex is not "making it with someone"
  - It is what a couple creates together at the beginning of their marriage as they commit themselves to each other, to the slow and tender task of creating their own pattern of sexual expressions (p. 173)
  - Sex is like that third person [entity] in the marriage; it is neither his nor hers, but theirs. It is unique and mutual sharing.
  - Sex is one of the means for loving. It does not make marriage, but it maintains and enhances marriage.

### **What hinders the creation of mutual, unique, personal and right sexual practices?**

1. Silence because of shame, embarrassment or false notions
2. One person arrogating the prerogative of determining what is good for both, instead of or before they determine what is right for them.
3. To allow passion to lead the way and giving up mutual and loving control.
4. To bring to the marriage bed prefabricated answers about right sexual behaviour, which were fabricated from the raw material of: society, parents, grandparents, friends, the Astreet,@ the church, Hollywood, etc.
  - Sexual innocence and purity before marriage is a plus not a minus. It affords the couple the opportunity to create their own unique sex life and to grow with it. The right sexual practice for them, must be learnt together. By doing, the couple discovers and designs the love-life that is suitable for them. Not allowing external and arbitrary standards to influence or shape their personal standards.
  - Unless the couple debunk the myths and lay aside previous experiences of sex, they cannot experience the mystery of this expression of mutuality.

### **Erroneous ideas of the church Re: Sex and Sexuality:**

1. It speaks of sex chiefly in terms of prohibitions
2. It holds human physical desires suspect.
  - Piety forgets that it has a body
  - Couples, who were/are frightened away from the reality that sex, can participate in it with purity, passion and personal practice,@ without diminishing true spirituality. It is a gift from God that is good when expressed within the context of marriage and as an expression of self-

giving love.

- With an unhealthy view of sex and sexuality, the strong sex drive and strong "moral" conviction twist and taint everything, even love.
- Sameness in sexual activity, unless mutually determined, leads to staleness, which may eventually lead to the death, not only of sex but of the marriage itself. A sex life that will last must be crafted with intimacy, sensitivity and variety in mind. The couple adopts only what is a truly right and personal sexual acts and experiences.

### **Erroneous ideas of Society Re: Sex and Sexuality:**

1. It announces a false freedom that, in fact, enslaves.
2. It portrays sexual purity and fidelity as shameful
3. It pushes individuals to fantasize experiences that are impossible for them or their relationship
4. It advocates sexual acts, postures, aids, advices which are unnatural to nature and the relationship of the couple
5. It has a false value and vision of sex, love and God
6. It expresses sex in terms of enslavement instead of terms of endearment

### **Erroneous ideas of Couples Re: Sex and Sexuality:**

1. Sees sex in terms of self-gratification, rather than self-giving
2. That they are not bound to sacrifice personal desires to the needs of the other
3. That previous sexual experience and pre-existing laws enhance sex.
  - In fact it detracts from it. These must be abandoned and the couple starting afresh, if it is to be what it is meant to be.
4. That they can use sex as a weapon, bargaining chip, or a means of exploitation
  - Methods, other than sex, must be used to resolve relational disputes involving persuasion, bartering and decision making.
  - Forcing these issues upon sex is taking small claims cases to the Supreme Court
  - To do this is to burden and to kill love
5. That they can keep unresolved issues on the minds and take their clothing off (have sex).
  - Deal with sin before sex . . . Don't let the sun go down upon your wrath. For the couple, this must be equivalent to don't make love before dealing with your sins.
  - Dirty hearts can infect the open, vulnerable, trusting, undefiled blood of your sexuality
6. That the answers of others, with reference to frequency, position, time and place, how much noise to make, what parts to be engaged, what foreplay is to be and how to linger, etc., are the answers for them.
  - The real answers to these questions are personal and unique. If there are any doubts, the law of love should suffice in providing a suitable answer.

## Remember:

- Change in lifestyle forces changes on your sex activity.
- You always need to make and keep on remaking the means of a loving sexual expression, always refitting it to your new circumstances.
- Truthfulness and dependability help a couple to be naked physically, emotionally and spiritually before each other without shame.
- Use your skills of talking and listening in love making.
- One of the holiest joys of love making is the spiritual entrance into another human being. It is to know what someone else of the other sex feels like on the inside (p. 190)
- Talk truthfully, without the hint of guilt or criticism, even about sexual matters. Open communication is necessary to bring healing and health to one's sex life.
- A healthy sex life is living, loving and learning together. The life that you make must grow up, grow strong and stable, only then it will carry the couple along.
- Years may steal beauty from the body, but it can still function beautifully sexually. It is the beauty that will last long after the beauty of the body has faded. Beauty is in the lives of those who live it. Beauty, like love, means different things to different people at different times. It even means different things to the same people at different times.
- Intensity may diminish but satisfaction and enjoyment can be sustained.

## Avoiding Adultery:

- Healthy love making between a husband and wife is a sort of incarnation of a rose-relationship.
- Adultery is evidence of the worm-self. The worm exists long before the activity takes place (p. 194). In adultery the worm is no longer invisible but incarnate.
- In lust for another, the worm curls in the heart of the rose.
- Self-love is a parasite in marriage relationships.
- The worm is fattened in lust and becomes a veritable viper in adultery.
- The strongest protection in marriage against adultery, is the attitude toward marriage and each other.
- A couple needs to cultivate the attitude of self-conscious **DEW** (Distant Early Warning).
- Adultery is never a sudden, spontaneous, and totally an unexpected act.
- It is within the powers of each one to close these doors, but it is important for one to define himself/herself and each relationship before hand. Who you are includes your spouse. See all relationships through the eyes of your spouse. Your spouse should know all your friends and you all his/her-s.
- When spouses believe that their relationship is more important than individual desires; when they establish the DEW line within their souls; and when they say ANo!@ to the moments of maybe, should the DEW line fail, they will be protected from the worm of adultery. (p. 199)

## **When Adultery occurs:**

### **Don't . . .**

1. Cover it up
2. Explain it away
3. Suffer the memory

### **Do . . .**

1. Recount everything
2. Admit faults
3. Speak it to another
4. Listen and believe it

## **For the Spouse of the Adulterer, remember . . .**

- Forgiveness is the tool that protects and maintains the marriage against the shock of sin (p. 204).
- Adultery strikes at the core of the marriage relationship.
- The emotions should not be suppressed, denied, or sublimated, but rather admitted, understood, channelled and so brought to a proper conclusion. (p. 204)

### **Deal with:**

1. Anger of being betrayed.
  - Anger may be defused, it does not need an object.
2. Hatred against your spouse.
  - Hatred always has a particular object.
3. Guilt
  - Self-questioning and accusations.
  - Guilt ruins self concept and relationships.
4. Pain
  - Physical pain . . . psychosomatic illnesses
5. Humiliation
  - The act of your spouse is a personal insult and a public slap in the face, because you were rejected and replaced.
6. Confusion
  - Your world was affected and tipped by the earthquake, with the fog and smog of Mt. St. Helen settling over everything.

## **How to deal with it . . .**

1. Express your feelings for yourself
  - Find a kind and objective friend
  - Understand the effects of the act of your spouse upon your marriage
  - Understand the cause and the nature of your feelings and take control of them

- Be persuaded of your own value and be convinced of the goodness of preserving your marriage
  - Begin the process of forgiving your spouse
2. Express your feeling for your spouse
- [The previous steps should be completed before this one is attempted. This will safeguard you against the release being explosive and hazardous.]*
- Tell your spouse (without rancour) what the act has done to you.
  - The act must be perceived and confessed as sin. Only then can repentance and forgiveness become real and effective
  - Accept no rationalization, defensiveness, mere promise to be better, no gesture of love, only repentance. In repentance alone, rests the hope for conversion and reconciliation.
  - Remember that forgiveness is most effective when it is most undeserved and least expected
  - Speak forgiveness with complete love and unqualified commitment. The grace of forgiveness can transfigure sinners to lovers once again, with humility. Forgiveness is the resurrection of marriage/relationships.
  - Cords that were broken can/will vibrate once again.