



2025 | Week 4

It's Not Just Sex

Blog Contributors:

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A married couple's connection, just like physical intimacy, should differ from those who aren't married. Sadly, this deeper connection is now undermined by the rampant occurrence of pre-marital sex. On the other hand, this "supposedly" special connection has also become a factor in the divorces we see today.

This week, we'll take some time to explore this connection that God created and intended for husbands and wives. How can we take care of it? As many say, it could also be a form of worship to God. In what way? May this week's discussion clarify many misunderstandings regarding this important aspect of marriage.

DAY 1

When we enter into the commitment of marriage, we're not just officially detaching ourselves from our families; we're entering into a commitment to create a new family. Such commitment involves a full sharing of life with your spouse, particularly in a physical manner. Sadly, in today's culture, physical intimacy or sex is undermined by the rampant occurrence of pre-marital sex, to the point that it has become a factor in today's divorces. Despite this, there is still significant ignorance or less attention given to this issue.

Glen Stanton released an article through Focus on the Family that shares different studies showing that

premarital sex has a greater risk of divorce. Below are the studies listed by the author [1]:

- **Khan and London (1991):** Data from the National Survey of Family Growth indicates that women who are sexually active prior to marriage face considerably higher risks of marital disruption than women who are virgin brides.
- **Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, and Michaels (1994):** This highly respected study, conducted at the University of Chicago, was the first serious and fully reputable study of sexual behavior in America. The authors explain that, for both genders, there is a common finding that virgins have dramatically more stable first marriages. Additionally, those who marry as non-virgins are also more likely (all other things being equal) to be unfaithful over the remainder of their lives compared with spouses who do marry as virgins.
- **Heaton (2002):** Heaton asserts that divorce is more likely among the sexually active and cohabitators because they have established their lives together or have "relatively unstable sexual relationships."
- **Teachman (2003):** Sociologist Jay Teachman examined how both premarital sex and cohabitation impact the risk of divorce among women. He found that "[i]t remains the case, however, that women with more than one intimate relationship prior to marriage have an elevated risk of marital disruption."
- **Paik (2011):** In this study, Anthony Paik at the University of Iowa looks specifically at first sexual experiences in adolescence. He explains that his "research shows that adolescent sexuality/premarital sex is associated with marital dissolution," noting that a significant factor is whether the sexual experience in later adolescence was welcomed by the girl.

It's not just an opinion; science shows us that premarital sex has a real and harmful impact on marriage later on. Despite this evidence, it seems that society has misinterpreted this threat. Instead of being reminded and recommitting to avoid pre-marital sex, the culture has taken the opposite route—focusing on birth control and "sex protection" options.

It's not just the wrong perception of sex that undermines this "supposedly" wonderful blessing of God for a married couple; there's also a strong perception of God's creation of Eve from Adam's rib (Genesis 2:22-23). This creation was very different from how God created other things, including Adam, who was made from dust (Genesis 2:7-9). Instead of viewing this concerning our physical forms and connection, misunderstandings, and misconceptions have clouded the truth. This has led many to disregard or misinterpret the oneness that God intended for married couples, as He declared to Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:24.

'The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.' Genesis 2:22-24

May our conversations this week give us time to reflect deeply on this important aspect of God's creation and His intended "one flesh" for married couples. May discovering and understanding this truth leads us to greater humility in recognizing God's authority and renewing our connection through Jesus Christ—the One who paid the price for our long-standing disregard of the truth.

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

DAY 2

Yesterday, we explored how physical intimacy has been undermined in today's society. Initially, we were aware of how impactful premarital sex could be, but we were surprised by the study results we discovered. It was a profound experience for us, offering a deeper understanding of how we should view physical intimacy as God intended.

Examining the latter portion of Genesis 2, we see a clearer connection in God's method of creating Eve, which was quite different from how He created Adam. This truth adds a more profound layer to the "one flesh" relationship that God intended for husband and wife (Genesis 2:24), as well as the roles He designed between them (Genesis 1:28; 2:18; Ephesians 5:22-31).

Matthew Henry's comments on Genesis 2:22-24 were very encouraging and strongly emphasize the importance of intentionally nurturing the marital relationship God has gifted us:

"The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not from his head to rule over him, nor from his feet to be trampled upon, but from his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved. Adam lost a rib without any diminishment to his strength or comeliness (for, doubtless, the flesh was closed without a scar); but in return, he gained a helper suitable for him, which more than compensated for his loss: what God takes away from his people He will, in one way or another, restore with advantage." [2]

We had not thought much about how God's creation method differed between Adam and Eve until we reflected on this week's topic, considering its relevance to physical connection and intended oneness in marriage. Truly, God's work is amazing! We can rest in the truth of how wonderfully God created us (Psalm 139:14) and our marriages. By embracing this understanding, we can genuinely worship God by honoring the designs He has formed for us.

It will be challenging to view our physical bodies and intimacy with our spouses through the lens of God's amazing work if we are not connected with Him. Our wrong perspectives and the years we weren't intentionally caring for our bodies with reverence will only be swept away if we accept Jesus Christ and allow Him to teach us to experience the great connection between our living bodies and God's spiritual truths.

A thoughtful note: we do not mean to undermine the pain of those who have deeply experienced this world's brokenness and faced terrible experiences with their bodies. Our hearts go out to you, and we pray that your

willingness to accept Jesus Christ faithfully brings you comfort and deliverance from such painful experiences. It may take time and process, but God never fails (Luke 1:37).

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

DAY 3 | For Husbands

As we've shared in the first two parts of this week's topic, Annie and I are equally guilty of living a life with the wrong perspectives on physical intimacy. We weren't aware of how our misunderstanding impacted our behavior and decisions at that time. Although we understood how things should be, our wrong knowledge of God, Jesus Christ, and even the existence of the Holy Spirit did not help us stand firm in the culture we live in today. Things changed course when we accepted Christ. Although we can't turn back to the old days, the grace of God through Jesus Christ included this sin that He has washed away from us.

As we move forward in anchoring our marriage to Christ, we've learned that physical intimacy is part of the well-known "5 love languages." The other love languages are quality time, receiving gifts, words of affirmation, and acts of service. We only heard about this when we started attending faith-based couple's retreats or seminars. Only then did we give it our attention.

We find the information shared by Gary Chapman about these love languages to be truly helpful in marriage. However, one thing we've observed and experienced is that translating these love languages can be very different for each person. It's fun to discover our own and our spouse's love languages, but this doesn't mean we should use them to set demands or justify selfish desires. Knowing our love language and how it may differ from our spouse's (which is often the case) is just the initial step toward expressing true love to them. Our focus should not be centered on our love language, but on our

partner's language and how we can selflessly provide it to them.

I have to admit that it's not always easy to be selfless and think of our spouse's needs above our own. Even when we consider ourselves experts in defining each love language mentioned, it does not automatically mean we are capable of practicing it. By nature, we're selfish and prideful. We tend to think of our interests first, even before those of our spouses. This is one area where I find myself needing constant reminders. I'm grateful that my relationship with Christ has made me aware of this, and the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit acts as my "arm" to be selfless in loving my wife and others. If it were just me, I would surely equate every sacrifice I made as "works" on my ticket to heaven.

'Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ' Philippians 2:3-5

The selfless love we can offer to our wives, even through physical intimacy, communicates differently when our hearts and minds are anchored in Jesus Christ. If we find ourselves improving in this area, we can remain humble by constantly reminding ourselves that it's only through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit that we can change and be selfless. When we face challenges in expressing such love to our wives, it is also Jesus Christ who can help us restore and relearn from this redemptive journey with Him.

Keep journeying with Christ Jesus.

Your Fellow Husband,
Rey

DAY 4 | For Wives

Our honesty in sharing our thoughts and experiences on this matter doesn't mean that Rey and I are experts. As we mentioned in the first blog post, we were surprised to learn about the many studies conducted to highlight how

negatively our culture today has been impacted by misconceptions about physical intimacy. This has been an interesting learning experience that has truly changed our perception of how we can further improve ourselves when discussing this topic.

On the other hand, it's valuable that we had an opportunity to examine and understand the impact of these misconceptions on physical intimacy. Furthermore, we don't often hear about how physical intimacy in marriage can also serve as a form of worship. Sadly, we have observed how this truth has been distorted by some, leading to many controversies surrounding sex and religion. It took me some time to fully embrace the truth that my intimacy with my husband is a form of worship to God, and I've been challenged by the truth shared in 1 Corinthians 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. ' 1 Corinthians 7:4

Innocence and natural pride often trigger defensive reactions to this command and can turn on my selfish mode. It wasn't until I continually sought God's word that I began to understand the deeper meaning of how God and His truths perceive a woman's body.

I love the article released by Kathryn Butler (via Desiring God) entitled "Following Christ in a Female Body." [3] It provides a good summary and serves as a profound reminder for us women of the Biblical perspective on our bodies. The challenges in today's culture, misleading campaigns on social media, and painful hormonal imbalances can easily distract us from God's goodness. As Kathryn shared, the truth is that even as our bodies age and change, God created our bodies to be good (Psalm 139:13-14). When God created Eve, He was clear about the purpose of being a suitable partner for Adam (Genesis 2:18). We are called to follow His command to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28). Kathryn's note spoke strongly to me:

"The value of our bodies, therefore, resides not in what we accomplish by our own hands—not in the liveness of our limbs or in the firmness of our skin—but rather in what He has done and continues to do through us."

Even when we find ourselves lacking in the "multiplication" aspect, God's purpose for each of us remains (Ephesians 2:10).

What an amazing reminder that our great God not only wonderfully created our bodies but also did so with a purpose. Understanding this truth is foundational to our continual submission to His authority. Our relationship with Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit empowers us to overcome the temptations of this world that seek to undermine our bodies. Additionally, it humbles and encourages us to keep our bodies as a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God (Romans 12:1-2).

'Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. ' Romans 12:1-2

Keep journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Wife,

Annie

DAY 5

We pray that this week's topic has been edifying and helpful for you, your spouse, and your marriage. It has been a new learning cycle for us, and we're thankful to identify areas where we must improve—not just in the application (attempting humor here), but also in fostering thoughtful and profound conversations on this challenging topic. We close this week's topic by highlighting a well-known factor that often leads to misunderstandings about sex (or physical intimacy).

Aside from the innocence that the Bible mentions this matter and God's intention for it in marital unity, another common factor that significantly distorts perceptions about sex is pornography. Many mistakenly equate sex

with pornography when, in fact, these two are fundamentally opposed.

In a December 2004 podcast episode of "Think Biblically," Sean McDowell shared findings from a porn study conducted by the Josh McDowell Ministry and the Barna Group [4]. In the episode, Sean notes key differences between sex and pornography, as pointed out by an expert contributor.

"Porn and sex are often seen as the same thing. The desire for porn is equivalent to the desire for sex. The idea is that the guy wants porn but, if he gets enough sex with his wife, would be able to resist pornography. But porn and sex are not the same; they're opposites. Sex is a deep, intimate experience that God designed to be mutual and intimate. Porn is using someone for your sexual gratification, where they don't matter at all. It's completely self-focused."

Sean continued to share powerful insights, revealing how pornography is worsening and attracting significant attention in churches. Sadly, not everyone has adequate resources to address this challenging issue. This prompts us to question why we don't see significant contributions to divorce statistics despite the numerous resources from various organizations today. Of course, gathering data directly addressing porn's impact is challenging. We can closely examine usage and viewing data alongside marriage statistics to gain some understanding. It seems the "porn" issue is one of those problems that doesn't show immediate effects; its influence can manifest over time or be obscured by other factors like insecurities and trust issues in marital relationships.

Some additional insights that could enhance our understanding include:

- Over the last 8 years, the situation regarding porn hasn't improved; it has worsened.
- Many churches still do not talk about or give serious attention to porn.
- 55% of practicing Christians reportedly believe one can view porn and remain sexually healthy.
- The top three porn sites in the US receive more web traffic annually than the combined traffic of Netflix, Amazon, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and TikTok.

- Many men find their partner's use of porn sexually stimulating, viewing it differently than women do.
- Women are 10% more likely to view porn to set the mood with a spouse or romantic partner. The fact that men tend to view their partners' porn use positively while women overwhelmingly view it negatively can undoubtedly contribute to misunderstandings and relationship breakdowns.

The study is detailed in the book "The Porn Phenomenon: The Impact of Pornography in the Digital Age." [5]

The point is, we need a healthy awareness that porn is aggressively present today. We might often overlook small details, such as scrolling through social media, which could trigger such interests. These small actions can collectively lead to misperceptions about the intimacy God designed for marriage. As Sean shared, it's not a question of willpower; rather, porn results from spiritual-relational brokenness that surely damages marriages.

The Biblical perspective on sex is that it is a gift from God to be enjoyed within marriage. It is not just a mere reference but an essential component of the intended oneness or intimacy between husband and wife.

"For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress and embrace the bosom of a stranger? As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. Let them be yours alone and not for strangers with you. Should your springs be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? Drink water from your own cistern and fresh water from your own well."
Proverbs 5:15-20

May we continue embracing God's truths in this matter and intentionally pursue changes in the intimacy aspect of our marriages that glorify God and His design for marriage.

Your Fellow Couple,

Rey & Annie

NOTES

- [1] Stanton, G.. (2024, August 20). *Premarital sex and greater risk of divorce*. Focus on the Family.
<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage/premarital-sex-and-greater-risk-of-divorce/>
- [2] Henry, M. Commentary on Genesis 2. Blue Letter Bible.
https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Gen/Gen_002.cfm
- [3] Butler, K. (2024, October 13). *Following Christ in a female body*. Desiring God.
<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/following-christ-in-a-female-body>
- [4] McDowell, S. Rae, S. Think Biblically: Conversations on Faith and Culture. "Eye-Opening New Study on Porn". Spotify.
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/0uIyxVDrls2Z1y2ySrxOdZ?si=061c94b8fc144970>
- [5] Group, B. (2016b). *The porn phenomenon: The Impact of Pornography in the Digital Age*.



Let's embark on a comprehensive learning experience with this week's topic by following the **D.R.A.S.H. - 5 Steps of Learning Method!**

Step 1 | Discover the Truth

- From the shared Biblical truths, perspectives from experts, and testimonies, what struck you

most that relates to physical intimacy in marriage or understanding the Biblical perspective of sex?

Step 2 | Reflect and Meditate on the Truth

- Regarding new discoveries or reminders of Biblical truths about physical intimacy (or sex), how does this relate to your current season in marriage? How does it impact your previous understanding?

Step 3 | Apply the Truth

- What old habits or practices do you need to change as a result of your new discoveries and understanding of Jesus' invitation? How do you plan to implement these changes?

Step 4 | Share

- Using a storytelling concept, compose a short story about how you will share the truths you discovered in this week's topic with your spouse or other married individuals journeying with you. You may want to consider a 1-minute or 5-minute storytelling technique.
- You can use the following guiding questions in your composition:
 - What truths did you discover and reflect on in this week's topic?
 - How are these truths and reflections related to yourself and your current marital status?
 - What actions do you plan to take in the coming days that relate to this week's learning?

Step 5 | Help in Navigating the Truth

- Besides your spouse, identify another person (or member/s of your small group) who will journey alongside you as you take intentional actions based on this week's learning. Consider what additional help you may need, such as further discussion or a regular prayer partner.

We pray that you encounter God through this week's topic. May His grace turn your learning experience into a transformative journey, leading to testimonies of breakthroughs that further strengthen your walk with Christ Jesus!

Let us know how this guide has helped you!

May this study tool be effective and helpful for every fellow seeker and believer who is intentionally journeying with Jesus Christ. We would be grateful to hear how this tool has significantly impacted your journey and your relationships with your spouse and others. Please share your feedback or experiences through this [link](#) (or scan QR Code)



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