

## SEXUAL UNITY

In this unit, the problem of so-called "sexual problems" or "sexual incompatibility" is discussed. Some of the possible reasons for "sexual incompatibility," a biblical perspective on sex relations, and some pointed, practical suggestions for developing sexual unity are presented. Suggested supplementary reading, study questions, and exercises are included.

A. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

1. Every commentator that I studied on this passage agreed that *becoming one flesh is a broad concept involving the totality of life*. The context of Genesis 2 and the teaching of the rest of the Bible about marriage demand this.
2. At the same time, it is generally recognized that there is no place where this total sharing is more beautifully pictured or fully experienced than in the sexual relationship of the man and his wife.
3. In his book, *Design for Christian Marriage*, Dwight Hervey Small has written, "Sexual intercourse is more than a physical act,

it is a symbol of a spiritual relationship and the expression of the complete oneness of two persons in married love . . . . It is . . . the means by which they are confirmed and nourished in that union. Sexual intercourse is the physical establishment and confirmation of that oneness. The true dignity of sex is in its ability to enhance this personal unity between two persons who have committed themselves to each other in love and marriage. In sexual intercourse the couple becomes joined in an indissoluble unity, called in the Bible 'one flesh' (pp. 94, 96, emphasis added).

B. Significantly, the Bible often describes the marriage act in terms of a man knowing his wife.

1. Genesis 4:1 is a case in point.

a. The Amplified Version translates this verse, "And Adam knew Eve as his wife and she became pregnant."

b. The New American Standard Version translates the Hebrew text, "Now the man had relations (the margin acknowledges that the word literally means knew) with his wife and she conceived."

2. What else can this mean but that the sex act is a means of deep communion and sharing through which a husband and wife come to know each other in a very intimate way?

C. Sexual relations are normally an integral part of genuine unity in marriage.

1. In the words of Dwight Hervey Small, they are a means of expressing, establishing, confirming, enhancing, and nourishing "the complete oneness of two persons in married love."

2. According to the Bible, the marriage act is more than a physical act. It is an act of sharing. It is an act of communion. It is an act of total self-giving wherein the husband gives himself completely to the wife, and the wife gives herself to the husband in such a way that the two actually become one flesh.

3. It becomes obvious, then, that the establishment of good sexual relations is an important part of developing genuine oneness in marriage.

D. Yet, it is sad but true that there is no area over which more marital battles have been fought and more dissatisfaction manifested.

1. Multitudes of couples have sought divorces, complaining of "sexual incompatibility." A lawyer whom I interviewed told me that almost every couple who comes to him to get a divorce complains of "sexual incompatibility."

2. And there are many couples who never seek a divorce who still have many a conflict over their sexual relations.

My own personal experience as a counselor has certainly confirmed the fact that it is a major area of conflict. All too often the marriage act becomes a source of irritation instead of satisfaction, an area of conflict instead of a promoter and expression of unity.

3. One question that must be faced is, if God created and ordained sex relations as a promoter and expression of unity in marriage, why is it that many couples have problems in the area of sex?

1. Probably some couples have sexual problems because of unresolved guilt.

A. Scripture warns us to be sure that our sins will find us out (Num. 32:23). It also reminds us that we have a conscience that either "accuses or excuses us" (Rom. 2:15).

1. We may try to ignore our sin. We may try to cover it up. We may even think we are doing a pretty good job of it.

2. But we need to be sure that our sin will find us out. We have a conscience that frequently reminds us of our disobedience and prevents us from really enjoying life in the present.

3. Witness the misery that David suffered because of unresolved sin and guilt in Psalm 32. He said, "When I kept silence (before I confessed), my bones wasted away through

my roarings all the day long . . . my moisture was turned into the drought of summer" (Ps. 32:3-4). In these words, David describes a horrible experience that he had as a result of unresolved guilt. He had grievously disobeyed God and then had tried to ignore his sin. But he could not do it. To his dismay, he discovered that things which he once enjoyed, he no longer enjoyed. To his consternation, life began to lose its zest, and emotional, social, physical, and spiritual problems began to emerge. Why? Because God's hand of displeasure was heavy upon him. Because his conscience was constantly accusing him. Because his sins were finding him out.

B. In a similar fashion, *there are people who are presently having sexual problems in marriage because of unresolved guilt over illegitimate sexual experiences in the past.*

1. I have had people tell me that they still felt guilty and were frequently disturbed about sexual sins they had committed seventeen or eighteen years before. Remembrances of past practices of heavy petting or self stimulation or homosexuality or promiscuous, selfish sexual practices continue to harass them, making it difficult to really enjoy proper sex relations now.

2. R. C. Sproul writes, "Many women carry an enormous burden of guilt into marriage that festers for years. . . . One question I frequently ask men who complain to me about their wives' frigidity is, 'Did you have sexual relations with your wife before you were married?' . . . In every case where I have asked this question, the man has responded in the affirmative. Then I ask the next question: 'Would you say that your wife was more or less responsive to you sexually before you were married?' Again in every case where I have asked this question, the man has replied quite emphatically that his wife was indeed more responsive before they were

married. Then they usually look at me with a puzzled glance and say, 'How did you know that?' The answer is that it is a rather common phenomenon. There can be many plausible explanations for the man's evaluation. . . . But one explanation should be given weighty consideration. Perhaps the woman feels so guilty about her loss of virginity before marriage that she is now suffering the paralyzing effects of that guilt" (*Discovering the Intimate Marriage*, pp. 96-97).

C. Such a condition can be corrected *only when the person involved faces his sin, acknowledges it to God, seeks cleansing through the blood of Jesus Christ, depends upon the power of the Holy Spirit to change his attitudes and meditates on the Word of God.*

1. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).
2. "I acknowledged my sin to you, and my iniquity I did not hide. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord (continually unfolding the past till all is told), then you forgave me the guilt and iniquity of my sin" (Ps. 32:5).
3. "He who covers his transgressions will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes his sins shall obtain mercy" (Prov. 18:13).
4. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7).
5. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin and guilt" (1 John 1:7).
6. "If anyone should sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation (atoning sacrifice) for our sins . . ." (1 John 2:1-2).
7. "Do not be deceived; neither the impure and immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor those who participate in ho-

mosexuality, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed clean (purified by a complete atonement for sin and made free from the guilt of sin) and you were sanctified (consecrated, set apart); and you were justified (pronounced righteous) in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

8. "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty—emancipation from bondage, freedom. And all of us, as with unveiled face, beholding (perhaps this means contemplating in the Word of God or perhaps it means reflecting) as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being changed into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; (for this comes) from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:17-18).

9. "How shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed and keeping watch according to your word. . . . Your word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Ps. 119:9,11).

10. "Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day" (Ps. 119:97).

11. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in your hearts (have its home in your hearts) in all its richness. . . ." (Col. 3:16).

D. *Some couples could take a long step in the pathway to sexual adjustment by dealing with their sin in a biblical fashion.*

1. I am not suggesting that a person should come to Christ or seek to obey Christ merely for the purpose of getting more enjoyment out of his sex life. God forbid that I ever should do that.

2. *Man's basic problem is his alienation from God*, not the difficulties involved in sexual adjustment with his mate. Man is a sin-

ner by nature and by practice (Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-18; Ps. 51:5; 58:3; Eph. 2:1-3). His sins have separated him from his God. He is dead in trespasses and sins. He is under the curse and condemnation of God.

3. *Man's greatest need is to be born again by the Spirit of God, to be reconciled to God*, to be redeemed and forgiven, to be brought into the favor of God through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Man's great problem is sin, which alienates him from God. Man's great need is reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ. So man should come to Jesus Christ primarily for this reason (Eph. 2:4-7; Rom. 5:6-21; Col. 3:13-21).

4. However, *the Scripture does promise many side benefits to those who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and redeemed through Jesus Christ*. "Godliness is profitable in everything, for it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). "I am come that they might have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance—to the full, till it overflows" (John 10:11). "God, who richly and ceaselessly provides us with everything for our enjoyment" (1 Tim. 6:17). Certainly Wade Robinson was stating a scriptural truth when he said that for the Christian, "Heaven above is softer blue, Earth beneath is sweeter green, Something lives in every hue, Christless eyes have never seen."

5. I firmly believe that *a real Christian has the potential to enjoy the good things God has created for man more fully than the non-Christian*. Sex is one of the good things that God has created for man (Gen. 1:27-31; Heb. 13:4). I believe that the release, the enabling, the freedom from the penalty and power of sin that redemption brings can solve many of the sexual problems that couples face in marriage. It often happens that when couples get their relationship to God straightened out, their relationships with one another begin to straighten out as well.

II. *Many times, the sexual problems of married people are not really sexual problems.*

A. This may sound like double talk, but it is not. What I mean is that *poor sexual adjustment is often like the red warning light on the dashboard of an automobile.*

1. The red light is an indication that the car has some other problem or problems. Working with the red light (jiggling, shaking, banging) or even replacing it will not solve the automobile's real problems. You have to go deeper than that.
2. The red light indicates that the car needs oil or water, or that the brake needs to be released. Solve these problems, and the red light will go out automatically. Ignore these problems, and the red light will continue to glow until the automobile is ruined.

3. After years of study and experience in marriage counseling, James Petersen asserts, "Conflicts over money or religion, neglect or discourtesies, quarrels and bitter words will in time have an adverse effect on sexual harmony. One reason why it appears that sexual adjustment is difficult to achieve is that failure in any one or several of the other major areas of marital life is reflected in physical relationships. Generally a couple which has achieved a satisfactory cooperative framework in which to face all their other problems will find a minimum of difficulty in coming together sexually" (quoted by Dwight Hervey Small in *After You've Said I Do*, p. 228).

B. I have heard Dr. Jay Adams graphically describe what I am talking about in this way. He compares the unresolved problems that couples may have to suitcases.

1. Here is a husband who does not love his wife in a biblical fashion. He's thoughtless, inconsiderate, harsh, ungrateful, irritable, unforgiving, impatient, and contentious. He bosses her around as though she were a slave, or ignores her as if she did not exist, or treats her as if she were an object instead of a real person.

2. The result? Why, the husband's attitudes and actions begin to weigh upon his wife. She thinks about them. She is hurt by them. She feels unwanted, unloved, unappreciated, and neglected. *They become like heavy suitcases that the wife carries around with her all the time.* They are with her when she is cooking or when she is cleaning, but *they are especially with her when she goes to bed with her husband.* There are the suitcases of his inconsideration, of his harshness, of his ingratitude, of his unforgiving spirit, of his unconfessed sin against her. There are the suitcases of her self-pity and bitterness and resentment between them.

3. And then he turns to her and wants to have sexual intercourse. *They engage in the physical act, but both of them know that something is missing.* Somehow the marriage act has been hollow, empty, meaningless, and unfulfilling.

4. Why? The explanation is simple. *They have tried to have sexual relations in a bed piled high with suitcases between them.*

5. How do you solve the sexual problem in this case? You solve it by *getting rid of the suitcases.* The real problem in a situation like this is not the sexual problem. *The real problem is a host of other problems between the husband and wife.* Solve those problems, and it may well be that the sexual problems will be automatically corrected. Ignore those problems, and the sexual problems will probably get worse.

C. Colossians 3:12 tells us that *love is the perfect bond of unity.*

1. When applied to sexual relations in marriage, that verse speaks volumes. *If love is the perfect bond of unity, sexual problems may be the red light on the dashboard of the marriage indicating a lack of biblical love in that marriage.*

2. Usually when couples are expressing and experiencing 1 Corinthians 13 love, sexual problems are at a minimum. A fresh application of the type of love which is patient, kind, humble, compassionate, gentle, forgiving, unselfish, cour-

teous, considerate, sensitive, truthful, appreciative, and protective will do more to improve sex relations than reading all of the latest books on methods and techniques. Let the husband and wife lovingly and joyfully fulfill their biblical roles toward each other; let them learn to communicate deeply according to biblical principles, and most of their sexual problems will evaporate.

III. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that some sexual problems are the result of ignorance or misinformation.

A. *Some married people are woefully ignorant about their mate's physical anatomy.*

1. One Christian man knew that his wife was not receiving personal pleasure from their marital relations. She dutifully submitted to him, but he began to feel guilty for "forcing" her to engage in an activity which was mostly for his satisfaction. She assured him that she was pleased to please him. Still he was concerned because he genuinely wanted to bring pleasure to her. He was convicted about selfishness. He made their sexual relations a matter of prayer.

2. In the larger context of the marriage, he practiced consideration and did try to nourish and cherish his wife. Still, after fifteen years of marriage, his wife had never experienced a definite climax. Finally, he sought help, and when he did, he discovered that his inability to really please his wife was due to an ignorance of her sexual apparatus. As a result of some new information, this man and his wife, who both happen to be college graduates and very intelligent, began to experience a sexual unity which had previously been unknown.

B. But if ignorance concerning the mate's physical anatomy is sometimes a problem, *ignorance concerning the mate's temperamental differences is more often a problem.*

1. *Many women do not seem to understand the male temperament.*

a. They do not comprehend that most men are very easily and very quickly aroused. Nor do they know that most men are stimulated by sight. Without even touching a woman's body, a man can be aroused. It can happen very easily.

b. Perhaps this is why Jesus warned men about the danger of looking on women who are not their wives (Matt. 5:28). Perhaps it is because men are easily aroused that the book of Proverbs contains admonition after admonition to men concerning the danger of being seduced by loose women (Prov. 5:1-23, 6:23-35, 7:1-27).

c. Because men are easily aroused, they need to be very careful about what they look at and what they think about. On the other hand, women need to be careful about the way they dress and walk and talk before men who are not their husbands. In addition to this, wives must recognize that their husband's sexual desires are more quickly stimulated and, initially at least, more intense. *Wives must realize that their husbands may desire sexual relations more frequently than they do, and that this does not make them "sex perverts."*

d. Certainly, it is the husband's responsibility to exercise self-control and to think in terms of his wife's condition and desires. But it is also the wife's responsibility to be mindful of her husband's temperament and to seek to be his helper by being sensitive and willing to fulfill his sexual desires. *Failure to understand the male temperament has tempted some women to harbor disrespectful and even resentful attitudes toward their husbands. Besides this, through ignorance these women have put an unnecessary burden of temptation upon their husbands.*

2. Unfortunately, ignorance concerning the varying temperaments of men and women is not restricted to the female gender.

- a. *If anything, husbands are often more uninformed than wives. Many a husband wrongly has accused his wife of being sexually cold and unresponsive, even "frigid." In his mind, he is a great "lover" and he cannot understand why his wife does not manifest the same interest in sex that he does. It must be that she is "undersexed" and he is sure that other women are much more interested in sex than is his wife.*
- b. *Actually, she is probably no different from most women. As a rule, women are not aroused as easily as men. The sight of the male anatomy is not nearly as stimulating to a woman as is the sight of a woman to most men. Soft words, unselfishness, consideration, genuine love, patience, kindness, appreciation, compassion, acceptance, and tenderness are the things that excite a woman and prepare her for satisfying sex relations.*
- c. *It is not true that she is less interested or incapable of enjoying sex as much as her husband. Rather, she is of a different temperament. She responds to other stimuli and in a different way. Consequently, if the husband wants his wife to enjoy "lovemaking," he will have to resist the temptation to rush.*
- d. *Because of his temperament, he may be aroused quickly, but in most cases this will not be true of his wife. She will probably become excited very slowly, and thus the husband must exercise patience and self-control. He must deny himself for her sake and be more interested in fulfilling her needs than his own.*
- e. *Furthermore, he must continuously treat his wife with kindness, and not just when he wants to "make love." The husband who becomes tender and solicitous about his wife only at certain times will soon have a wife who feels used and abused, a wife who doubts the sincerity of her husband's love.*
- f. *Scripture does teach that "the wife does not have authority or control over her own body, but the husband"*

(1 Cor. 7:4). The wife must then yield to her husband gladly and seek to satisfy his needs. She is not to refuse her husband unless by mutual consent (1 Cor. 7:5). On the other hand, *the husband must be very sensitive to his wife's temperament, needs, and desires. He must "dwell with his wife in an understanding way" (1 Pet. 3:7). He must love his wife as Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25). He must esteem his wife better than himself and be concerned about her interests as well as his own (Phil. 2:3-4). He must give honor to her as the weaker vessel (1 Pet. 3:7). He must make it his practice to please his wife for her good and not to please himself (Rom. 15:1-2).*

g. *When the husband disregards this God-prescribed way of treating his wife, he is, of course, being disobedient to God. But he is also manifesting his ignorance of his wife's temperament. God's commands to husbands are in accordance with the woman's temperament. Thus, the husband who ignores God's injunctions is making it difficult for his wife to become genuinely one with him. Contrariwise, because these commands are in keeping with the woman's temperament, the husband who obeys them will be providing an atmosphere in which sexual unity and every other kind of unity will flourish.*

C. *One other kind of ignorance which sometimes causes sexual problems needs to be mentioned—namely, ignorance of what the Bible has to say about sex. Many people have the idea that the Bible really does not have much to say about sex and that what it does have to say is in a negative vein. On one occasion, I was staying in a pastor's home while conducting a Christian Home Seminar. One day we were sitting around the table having a cup of coffee and discussing various issues about marriage and the family. In the course of our conversation, this couple shared with me the fact that they had had some problems in adjusting to each other sexually. The*

woman had been raised in a home where nothing positive was ever said about sex and in a church where whatever teaching was given was always negative. As a result, the thought of sex was frightening to her. She got the idea that sex was something that women endured for the sake of procreation, but it certainly was not something that spiritual people ever discussed or enjoyed. Her home and her church had emphasized the abuse and wrong use of sex, but had failed to communicate to her the many positive things the Bible has to say about it. Surely their reason for emphasizing the Bible's negative teachings concerning the evil of pre-marital sex, masturbation, homosexuality, and adultery was good. They wanted to protect their youth from sin. However, at least in this woman's case, their failure to emphasize the Bible's positive teachings about sex had made it difficult for this woman to think of sex as anything but unspiritual and even dirty. Ignorance then of the Bible's positive teaching can produce sexual problems in marriage and hinder the genuine experience of oneness.

At this point, I want to share with you the seven important biblical principles concerning sexual relations which are delineated by Harry H. McGee, M.D., in the booklet, *The Scriptures, Sex, and Satisfaction*. These seven principles are taken from one pivotal passage in 1 Corinthians 7:1-6, but they are supported by many other passages as well.

1. *Sexual relations within marriage are holy and good* (Heb. 13:4). God encourages sexual relations and warns against the temptations that may arise from deprivation or cessation.
2. *Pleasure in sexual relations (like pleasure in eating or in the performance of other bodily functions) is not forbidden but rather assumed* when Paul writes that the bodies of both parties belong to one another (cf. also Prov. 5:18-19 and Song of Solomon).
3. *Sexual pleasure is to be regulated by the key principle that one's sexuality does not exist for himself or for his own pleasure, but for his partner*

("rights" over one's body are given in marriage to one's partner). Every self-oriented manifestation of sex is sinful and lustful rather than holy and loving. Homosexuality and masturbation thereby are condemned along with other self-oriented activities within marriage. In sex as in every other aspect of life, it is "more blessed to give than to receive." The greatest pleasure comes from satisfying one's spouse.

4. *Sexual relations are to be regular and continuous*. No exact number of times per week is advised, but the principle that both parties are to provide such adequate satisfaction that both "burning" (unfulfilled sexual desire) and the temptation to find satisfaction elsewhere are avoided.

5. *The principle of mutual satisfaction means that each party is to provide the sexual enjoyment which is "due" his or her spouse whenever needed*. But, of course, other biblical principles (e.g., the principle of moderation), and the principle that one never seeks to satisfy himself but his partner in marriage always regulates the frequency in such a way that no one ever makes unreasonable demands upon another. Requests for sexual satisfaction may never be governed by an idolatrous lust, but neither may such regulation be used as an excuse for failing to sense and satisfy a partner's genuine need.

6. In accordance with the principle of "rights," *there is to be no sexual bargaining*. ("I'll not have relations unless you. . . .") Neither partner has the right to make such bargains.

7. *Sexual relationships are equal and reciprocal*. Paul does not give the man rights superior to the rights of the woman. Mutual initiation of intercourse, stimulation, foreplay, and participation in the sexual act is not only permissible but enjoined. Marital rights entail mutual responsibility. (Quoted from the appendix of *The Scriptures, Sex and Satisfaction*, by Harry M. McGee, M.D. The appendix was written by Jay E. Adams.)



These then are some biblical principles concerning sex relations. I suggest that knowing and practicing them and other biblical principles found in this unit of this manual will help you to develop and maintain real unity in your marriage relationship.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READING

- McGee, Harry, M.D. *The Scriptures, Sex and Satisfaction*. Phillipsburg, N. J.: P&R Publishing, 1975.
- Miles, Herbert J. *Sexual Happiness in Marriage*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967.
- Rice, Shirley. *Physical Unity in Marriage*. Norfolk: Norfolk Christian Schools, 1973.
- Small, Dwight. *Design for Christian Marriage*. Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, 1971, chapters 4 and 5.
- Sproul, R. C. *Discovering the Intimate Marriage*, chapter 4.
- Strauss, Richard L. *Marriage Is for Love*, chapter 13.

### DISCUSSION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

To be completed by husband and wife together.

- A. Read 1 Corinthians 7:2-5, 9 and list everything that you see in this passage about sex. Look for answers to such questions as: With whom is it proper to have sexual relations? What are the "marriage rights" of each partner in marriage? What are some of the purposes of marriage and of sexual relations? What attitude should both partners have about sexual relations? Is it proper for a Christian to masturbate? What is God's answer to sexual desire? Should husbands and wives discuss their sexual relations and desires? How long should a couple refrain from sexual relations?

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B. What does Proverbs 5:15-21 tell us about marriage and sexual relations?

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
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C. Summarize in a few sentences what principle Acts 20:35 might suggest concerning the sex act.

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- \_\_\_\_\_
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D. Comparing 1 Corinthians 7:2-5, Proverbs 5:15-19, and Genesis 1:27-28, list the purposes of sex in marriage.

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

E. Paraphrase Hebrews 13:4 in your own words.

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F. What truths about the marriage relationship are taught in Malachi 2:13–16?

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G. Study Philippians 2:3–4 and state specifically how this passage may be applied to marital (sexual) relations.

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H. What does Song of Solomon 1:2, 13–16; 7:1–10 teach us about the marriage relationship?

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4. 

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I. What attitudes toward the marriage partner and his/her body are suggested by the Song of Solomon 4:1–7 and 5:10–16? Should a marriage partner be embarrassed or ashamed because he finds delight in his partner? Is it proper to be excited about, to anticipate, and to enjoy sexual relations with your spouse?

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4. 

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J. Look at 1 Corinthians 6:12; Matthew 5:27–28; 1 Corinthians 7:9; and 1 Corinthians 7:3–4, and list 4 reasons why masturbation is wrong.

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K. What implications does the fact that 1 Corinthians 7:2–5 and Proverbs 5:15–19 indicate that begetting children is not the only purpose of the sex act have in reference to birth control?

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L. What relevance do 1 Timothy 5:8; Philippians 2:4; Ephesians 5:25, 28–29; 1 Corinthians 7:3, 5; Exodus 20:13; Genesis 1:27–28; Proverbs 5:18–20; and James 2:17, 20 have in reference to birth control?

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4. 

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M. List 4 different methods of birth control.

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N. According to Matthew 5:27–30 and Hebrews 13:4, how serious is the sin of sexual relations outside of marriage?

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O. Discuss the following questions:

1. What pleases you about your present sexual relations?
2. Is there anything about your sexual relations you do not enjoy? When? How? Frequency? etc.?
3. What are the greatest hindrances to good sexual relations?
4. What is proper and improper in sexual relations? What does the Bible prohibit?
5. Does the pattern of your sex life need to be varied? If so, how?
6. How do you differ from your mate in your sexual attitudes, feelings, needs, desires?
7. Do you have any fears about sex? If so, what are they?
8. Do you communicate freely with your spouse about your sexual relations?
9. Does great sexual desire indicate a lack of spirituality?
10. How often should you have sex relations?
11. Should sexual relations be a mutually satisfying experience? What should you do if they are not? How will you get help if you are having problems achieving sexual adjustment?
12. What can you do to meet the sexual needs of your spouse more fully?

## ——— UNIT 7

### RAISING CHILDREN

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In this unit another of the major areas in which unity may be either enhanced or thwarted is discussed. Biblical principles of child raising, suggested supplementary reading, study questions, and action plans which will make child raising a unifying rather than a divisive force are presented. Thirty-four practical, specific "how to" suggestions which may serve as a guideline and checklist are included in the study section of this unit.

- A. Strange as it may seem, it is nonetheless true that the same sun produces different, even opposite results on different substances.
  1. It hardens clay but melts ice.
  2. It promotes health in human beings but kills germs.
  3. It tans or burns our skin but makes white cloth whiter.
- B. And, strange as it may seem, it is nonetheless true that *children can be a magnetic force drawing married people together or a wedge which drives them apart.*
  1. As I did research for this manual I interviewed a variety of Christian people to find out what factors encouraged marital unity and what factors hindered marital unity. It soon

