

"I CHOOSE TO SATISFY YOU"

"GRATIFYING AND IMBIBING YOUR LOVER'S PLEASURES"

Sex is God's idea! And what a great idea it is! One man and one woman; hearts and bodies locked in a union of selfless passion; fervent even desperate efforts to satisfy and relieve the extreme tension that has been built up in their minds and affections because of the intense, personal love they have for one another. It was made by God and given to us as a sacred, precious gift to married people. Sex only makes sense and can only be experienced to its fullest, by those who know and love God.

The world doesn't get it. They like it because it feels good, but they don't get it. They enjoy it and seek it to no end, but they do not understand why they have the capacity for it or how to appropriately use it—therefore, it never satisfies. But try they will. Inventing new and foul ways of exploiting and experiencing sexual pleasure is the only way they know how to do it, because something is missing, and they can't find it. Hollywood doesn't get it either. They know their audiences will pay to see it and they will pay top dollar to actors and actresses who will imitate it on the big screen. And while they can portray it, joke about it, and profit from it, they cannot understand it, nor can they offer us as Christians anything helpful in it.

It is interesting to note that when God describes a people who have rebelled against Him, the first area to be compromised is human sexuality. Whether it is fornication, adultery, homosexuality, pedophilia, or whatever, any perversion of God's sexual design is always the result of the sin-justifying suppression of truth out of a desire to remove God's authority and an ungrateful, idolatrous rejection of Him as Creator (**Romans 1:18-32**).

It's no wonder then, for those who desire to glorify, love, honor, worship, obey, enjoy, serve, and fear the Sovereign Creator, the area of your personal sexuality is one of the strongest evidences of His transforming grace in your life. How you view and engage in sex says everything about your relationship with God, or lack thereof. The question is, have taken your cues from the world, or from the Bible?

Thankfully, God has given us helpful and clear instruction on the matter of human sexuality – a wonderful gift meant to be experienced and enjoyed between a man and a woman within the confines of marriage. The most detailed and elevated teaching in all the Bible on the subject is in the Song of Solomon. Previously at the altar, this couple has publicly affirmed their commitment to one another and has now moved from the public celebration to the private honeymoon suite. In **4:8-5:1**, at last this couple is able to experience the wonderful gift of God for married couples—the unhindered, unrestricted, and unparalleled bliss of mutually gratifying sexual intercourse. Practically, the text in front of us in this study is God's description of how to experience the best sex you have ever had. Yet there is nothing about techniques, tools, or positions—it is powerfully packed with principles which should govern every sexual activity between a married couple. *In specific, this pure, eager, nervous, and excited couple models 5 ways to maximize your sexual pleasure to the glory of God in the marriage bed.*

1. N _____ P _____! (4:8-10)

- A. Who is speaking in 4:8 and what is the tone? Why is this significant?
- B. What do all of the geographical references have in common?
 - **"Lebanon"**
 - **"Summit of Amana"**
 - **"Summit of Senir and Hermon"**
 - **"Dens of lions"**
 - **"Mountains of leopards"**
- C. What kind of leadership is the husband taking and why is this important that he initiate in this way?
- D. What possible kinds of fears does the Shulamite wife potentially have, which is common for a woman to experience on her wedding night and in intimacy?
- E. Where does Solomon begin his admiration of his wife, now that they are alone and what is the significance and wisdom of that choice? What does it also suggest about Solomon as a leader and a lover?
- F. How does the word "**sister**," which is repeated throughout this section four times, help nurture her and how is that term different than our modern usage?
- G. In 4:10, how does Solomon lead her forward by his words (which we have heard before), and what is his focus?
- H. What does this passage imply about the pace at which a couple should approach the marriage bed and the act of intimacy?
- I. How are men and women different in their sexual passions and drives, typically?
- J. What attitude should always be present in the minds of both partners?

- K. How does **1 Corinthians 7:3-5** help inform your understanding?
- L. What should a couple do if only one of the marriage partners is sexually aroused and interested?

2. E_____ A_____! (4:11-15)

- A. Where does Solomon begin to explore the passions and delights of his wife in v. **11**? What is the relevance of **"honey and milk"** to the Old Testament Jew?
- B. In what direction does Solomon move towards his bride at the end of v. **11**?

"Solomon intends, I believe, that we imagine him lifting her gown to his face to breathe in its aroma, then removing it from her body in preparation for more intimate love" (Craig Glickman, *Solomon's Song of Love*, p. 30).

- C. What metaphor is used in v. **12** to describe the Shulamite, who is now his "bride" and what is its meaning?
- D. Having described her in this way, what do his words in v. **13-15** suggest about his access to what is protected by rock and hewn in?
- E. What is the significance of each of the plants that Solomon has used to describe her body?
- **Pomegranates with choice fruits**
 - **Henna**
 - **Nard**
 - **Saffron**
 - **Calamus and cinnamon**
 - **Trees of frankincense, myrrh, aloes, finest spices**
 - **Garden spring, well of fresh water, streams flowing from Lebanon**

- F. In what ways is this couple, Solomon in specific, actively engaged in the absolute enjoyment of their consummation, that is, how sensory is this moment?
- Sight
 - Touch
 - Taste
 - Smell
 - Hearing
- G. When the Shulamite finally speaks in **v. 16**, as a response to all that has been said, how does she play off her man's language and give to him in return?
- H. What two personal pronouns does she use to describe herself in **v. 16** and what does her language suggest about her view of her body and sexuality?
- I. What adjectives would best describe her attitude towards Solomon? Why is this important in the marriage bed?
- J. What common phrase that has been repeated throughout the earlier portions of this book is not used now (cf. **2:7; 3:5**)?
- K. By contrast, how does sexual disinterest, boredom, insincerity, or disdain hurt a marriage partner?
- 3. P _____ C _____! (4:16-5:1)**
- A. What does Song of Solomon say *in specific* about their actual act of intercourse and how is it described in this text?
- B. What does this imply about the privacy of their encounter?
- C. How has this couple protected the act of intimacy in their language leading up to this event?

- D. Why is this so important and what does it convey about the discretion of a couple's sexual experiences?
- E. How and when should a couple speak about their sexual experiences with others?

4. W_____ G_____! (5:1)

- A. In **5:1**, someone speaks to this couple as they are basking in the delight of what they have just experienced—who is it and how do we know?

"The moment is dramatic. Immediately after the lovemaking, it is the only time in the Song that someone speaks to both lovers, and it falls at the exact midpoint of all the Song's lyrics. The speaker's identity is mysterious... In artistic symmetry he now encourages the couple to enjoy the pleasures of the wedding night. But who could be apart from all the participants and yet the most intimate participant of all, orchestrating the celebration at the beginning and end? Who could be present on the wedding night? And who could know a king and queen so well that he calls them both by their favorite names for each other? Who could have so intimate a relationship with them that he can encourage euphoric pleasure in their sexual love? And whose voice would be given at the most prominent position in the Song, at the center of a design that peaks precisely at this point? It must be the voice of the Ultimate Songwriter, who has enjoyed the celebration from beginning to end. Like a joyful parent taking pleasure in a gift he has given his children, the Songwriter delights in their happiness. What a transforming view of love and sexuality—to believe the Creator would enter the world he created to celebrate this beautiful moment of lovemaking" (Glickman, p. 35-36).

Given the intimate and private nature of sexual union, it seems difficult to understand anyone but God speaking these words (cf. Prov. 5:21). This is the divine affirmation of sexual love between husband and wife as holy and beautiful (John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, Notes on Song of Solomon 5:1).

- B. What does this suggest about the way in which a couple should approach the marriage bed and the act of intimacy?
- C. What exactly is the intent of this exhortation, as it is given to these lovers?
- D. What are some practical ways a couple can enhance the value of their intimacy in light of this truth?

5. I _____ R _____ ! (5:1)

- A. What four phrases does Solomon use to reflect back on the sexual intercourse with his wife in **5:1**?
- B. What metaphors does he use in **5:1** and how do they compare with what he said in **4:13-14**?
- C. What does this suggest about the joy and the limitations of the experience they have enjoyed together? What does it suggest about future experiences?
- D. What does the exhortation in **5:1**, given to this couple after the act of intimacy, imply about the act of intimacy?
- E. How do the word pictures of "**eat, drink, and imbibe deeply**" affect the way God intends couples to experience His gift of sex?

TAKING IT HOME AND MAKING IT REAL

- A. If you are married, take some time this week to evaluate the sexual aspects of your relationship and discuss what kinds of changes may need to be made in light of this study. Speak openly and honestly about your fears, concerns, desires. Ask your partner how you can serve him/her more pleurably in the marriage bed and plan a time this week to not only do it, but a way to work those changes into the pattern of your lovemaking. Be sensitive and be a servant. Give and receive (**Acts 20:35**).
- B. If you are single, remember **Hebrews 13:4**, that "**marriage is to be held in honor among all, and that the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**" Take some time to evaluate and reconsider your commitment to purity. Is there any area in your personal sexuality that needs to change? Are you pure? In what ways are you most vulnerable and seducible to sexual sin? Enact Biblical accountability ASAP if it is not already in place.
- C. Consider purchasing one of the following resources for more practical help on the Biblical issues surrounding our sexuality from God's perspective:
 - CJ Mahaney, *Sex, Romance, and the Glory of God*.
 - John Piper, *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*.
 - Timothy Lahaye, *The Act of Marriage*.
 - Timothy Lahaye, *The Act of Marriage Over 40*.
 - Ed Wheat, *Intended for Pleasure*.