Premarital Preparation—Sexuality

**Spiritual Considerations**

1. How do you interpret the following Scriptures:
   a. Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5; Ephesians 5:28–31; Mark 10:7
   b. 1 Corinthians 7:3–5
   c. Song of Solomon 5:10–16, and 7:1–11; Proverbs 5:15–19
2. Did God ordain sex or does He close his eyes when married couples have intercourse?
3. Have you or are you able to pray for Christ to help you achieve a satisfactory sexual relationship?

**Sexual History**

1. Where or from whom did you learn about sex?
2. Was that a positive or negative experience?
3. Would you like your children to find out about sex the way you did? Why or why not?
4. What are your parents’ attitude toward sex? (positive, neutral, negative)
5. Did they show affection (hugging, kissing, saying I love you) openly and freely with you and each other?
6. Were sex questions freely discussed in your home?
7. Have you had negative sexual experiences (e.g., sexual abuse, pornography) that you have not fully resolved?

**Medical Considerations**

1. Have you had a physical exam in preparation for marriage? If not, do you plan to get a physical exam?
2. Do you believe in birth control? If so, what type are you comfortable with?
3. Do you know and understand the anatomical and physiological differences that make up male and female sexuality (e.g., sexual organs, sexual response, lubrication, etc.)

**Marital Sexual Relationship**

1. Who should determine when and how frequently to have sex?
2. How do you feel about various sexual acts?
3. How will our differences in being morning or night people affect our sexual relationship?

**Expectations for the Honeymoon**

1. Do you expect to be an ‘expert’ lover on the honeymoon?
2. Do you have any particular fears as you approach married sexuality?
3. How will you resolve any problems that you encounter sexually in your marriage?

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Differences in Male and Female Sexuality

Men and women are different sexually—not better or worse, just different. That seems like an obvious statement, but it is one of the most complex concepts and one of the greatest causes of marital discord. It is also the source of joy, mystery and excitement in marriage. It is understanding and overcoming the differences that makes for the sexually-adjusted individual. The differences are, of course, more than just physical; they are psychological and emotional as well. The major sexual struggle in a marriage is to understand the mate’s point of view with regards to sexuality. Many men soon learn to play at love to get sex while many women play at sex to get love.

All marriages have sexual problems from the minor to the major which are based on past emotional relationships and/or ignorance of sexual differences. Naiveté about sexual differences can exacerbate the problem when either the husband or the wife ignores these subtle variations. Too many times we idealize the concept that good marital sexual adjustment comes naturally without any detours. Doing what comes naturally, however, can be the wrong approach. If we do what comes naturally, we tend to view our mate as having the same sexual desires and the same feelings toward sexuality as we do.

Sexuality involves the whole of life even though the sexual act may involve less than 3 percent of life’s activities. The other 97 percent of life that is involved with sexuality has to do with our daily communication and understanding of each other. A good sexuality outlook is not something that automatically comes naturally, but something that is learned through much effort. The problems of marriage tend to surface in bed because that is the one aspect of marriage that cannot be ignored; it must be faced periodically. The sexual act then is the tip of the iceberg that represents far more than just the sexual union. It represent the husband and wife’s success at communicating with each other.

Men tend to be stimulated more by sight and women by sound and touch.

Men tend to be aroused by female nakedness far more than women are aroused by male nudity. Women tend to enjoy soft music and complimentary words for their loveliness and charm, while men are usually more sexually stimulated by what they see.

Men become more quickly aroused while women make a slow climb to excitement.

Women need more foreplay physically and emotionally. Women sometimes complain that men are too ready to dispense with the preliminaries and want to jump right into the sexual event. There is a difference, then with regards to the amount of time it takes to be sexually ready for intercourse.

Men are more consistently sexually aroused while women tend to be aroused through mood or situations.

Women have a difficult time becoming sexually aroused after a rough day or after a fight. Men, however, can more easily become sexually excited after a fight or after a rough day at the office, or even with a fever. It seems to women that nothing keeps their husbands from having sexual interests. The wife can easily develop a sense of being used. She may become angry and
frustrated because the “only times he kisses me is when we have sex” or “he only kisses me when he has sex on his mind.” The woman senses that the man is interested in her physically, as a sexual object, and not really seeing her as a total person. On the other hand, the man may feel that he is sexually inferior because his wife is not as sexually active as women are in the movies or in the magazines. He feels that his sexual prowess is inadequate because his wife does not jump to his sexual advances. The wife may play on this feeling when she knows she will have her husband’s attention longer if she is slow with her advances. That is, if the marriage relationship is weak, the longer she holds out, the more her husband will give her attention in his efforts to get her to bed. Giving love to get sex and giving sex to get love are destructive patterns and are a signal that there are problems in the marriage.

**Men tend to differ from women in terms of how they experience orgasms.**

As a general rule, women are more capable of having multiple orgasms while men need a recovery period between orgasms. While the male orgasm is almost always guaranteed, the female orgasm is very delicate. It must be nurtured, and may or may not occur, depending on the mood and the situation. It takes considerable communication and understanding of sexual differences for the husband to help his wife to orgasm, while it seems that orgasm is a natural occurrence with intercourse for men.

**Men tend to need to reaffirm their physical sexuality while women need to develop meaningful relationships.**

God in His wisdom points out that in marriage each must give to the other in order to receive pleasure for themselves. (I Corinthians 7:3–5a) “The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband’s body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent.”

Another aspect of dealing with sexual differences in marriage is to begin and to continue a communication process which leads to understanding each other’s sexual needs. The communication process does not last a week or a month, but many times it takes years of regular communication to begin to understand male and female sexual differences. The best time to discuss sexuality is not when you are angry or have had an unsatisfactory sexual experience. The time to discuss sexuality is when you are in a relatively good mood and have the freedom to openly discuss with each other your own needs so that you can gain a perspective of the other person’s sexual desires.

Empathy with the opposite sex’s needs is a difficult area because there is no real reference point in one’s own sexuality. We tend to think that other people see and feel as we do, so it is hard to comprehend that our spouse usually does see things differently when it comes to sex. However, it is not a personal affront or an attack on one personally to have a different need, but rather it is a natural living out of sexual desire and sexual conditioning.