

Senior Leader
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THE MESSAGE

JAMES 1:22

"..DON'T JUST LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD. YOU MUST DO WHAT IT SAYS.
OTHERWISE, YOU ARE ONLY FOOLING YOURSELVES."

Wholehearted Love

Marriage, Singleness, and Emotional Health

Part Four

Sexuality, Intimacy, and Sacred Trust



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Starting Point: Previous teaching seminars with notes available for those who weren't around for that where we explain the challenges of our UK and Western culture and why we uphold the historic Christian view of marriage between a man and a woman.

- Teaching Seminar night on Sexuality Part 1 March 2023
https://youtu.be/YzEZlU9y_ds
- Teaching Seminar night on Sexuality Part 2 March 2023
<https://youtu.be/En7PZmXjuvw>
- Our aim was to: navigate it sensitively, deal with it biblically

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WHOLEHEARTED LOVE MEANS UNDERSTANDING GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUAL INTIMACY

Gen. 1:26-27, 31; 2:18-25; 1 Tim. 4:4

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SEXUALITY IS GOD GIVEN – IT IS CONSIDERED A GOOD GIFT FROM GOD.

- Human sexuality is created by God for his glory, the joy of his creatures and the continuation of the race. (Gen. 1:26-27, 31; 2:18-25; 1 Tim. 4:4)
- Our gender and natural sexual desires are part of our God-given physical existence: designed them for a purpose.
- One man, one woman is ordained by God as the only moral expression of human sexual relationship. (Gen 2.24; 1 Cor. 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4)
- Sexual intimacy is the interweaving of pleasure, affirmation, self discovery, self giving, love, reproduction, social unity.
- Sexuality is a gift meant to express covenantal love and self-giving:
NOT DIRTY

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1 Corinthians 7:1-5

- Challenge in this text is the misinterpretation of 1 Cor 7:1
- Paul is quoting what the Corinthians are saying to him!
- It's a slogan they used that was reported to him.



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Understanding the verse:

Paul: *“Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: [you say,] ‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’”*

Paul's response: *“But because of sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife...” (7:2)*

That makes particularly good sense of vv. 2–5.

Paul appears to qualify or correct the Corinthians' claim

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Paul's argument flows naturally:

Corinthians Claim: *“Sexual abstinence is good.”*

Paul:

- *“There are reasons for sexual abstinence, but because of the danger of sexual immorality, husbands and wives should continue sexual relations.”*
- *“Neither spouse has exclusive authority over their own body.”*
- *“Don't deprive one another of sexual relations in marriage.”*
- *“Temporary abstinence is possible by mutual agreement, particularly for prayer, but then come together again.”*



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The point in 1 Cor 7 is nuanced:

- Celibacy is good; marriage is also good;
- and married Christians aren't supposed to turn celibacy into abstinence from their spouses.

**DISTINGUISHING AND APPROPRIATELY
EXPRESSING OUR SEXUALITY IS PART OF THE
PATH OF SPIRITUAL
AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY.**

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Applications:

YOUTH - Is the Bible Restrictive?

- sexually transmitted disease
- emotional damage
- unhealthy spiritual connection

MARRIED COUPLES:

SINGLES:

FOR EVERYONE:

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**BEFORE YOU DECIDE THAT
WHAT YOU FEEL IS RIGHT,
DECIDE IF YOU TRUST HIM**

Matthew 19:4-6

Eph 3:17-21

1 Timothy 2:4

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**WHOLEHEARTED LOVE MEANS
EMOTIONAL INTIMACY IS
FOUNDATIONAL TO
PHYSICAL INTIMACY**

**Gen 2:24, Song of Solomon 2:16,
Rom 12:10, 1 Cor 13:4, Eph 4:32**

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Biblical expression: “And they shall be one flesh.”
Genesis 2:24

- Becoming one flesh involves a whole-life union not just a wedding event or a great honeymoon.
- Emotional closeness helps husband and wife experience marriage as a partnership of hearts, not merely a physical relationship.



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- Physical intimacy is **NOT** merely a physical act;
- It is meant to be an expression of the deeper unity, trust, affection, commitment, and love shared between husband and wife.
- God's design for marriage encompasses the whole person — ***spiritual, emotional, relational, & physical.***

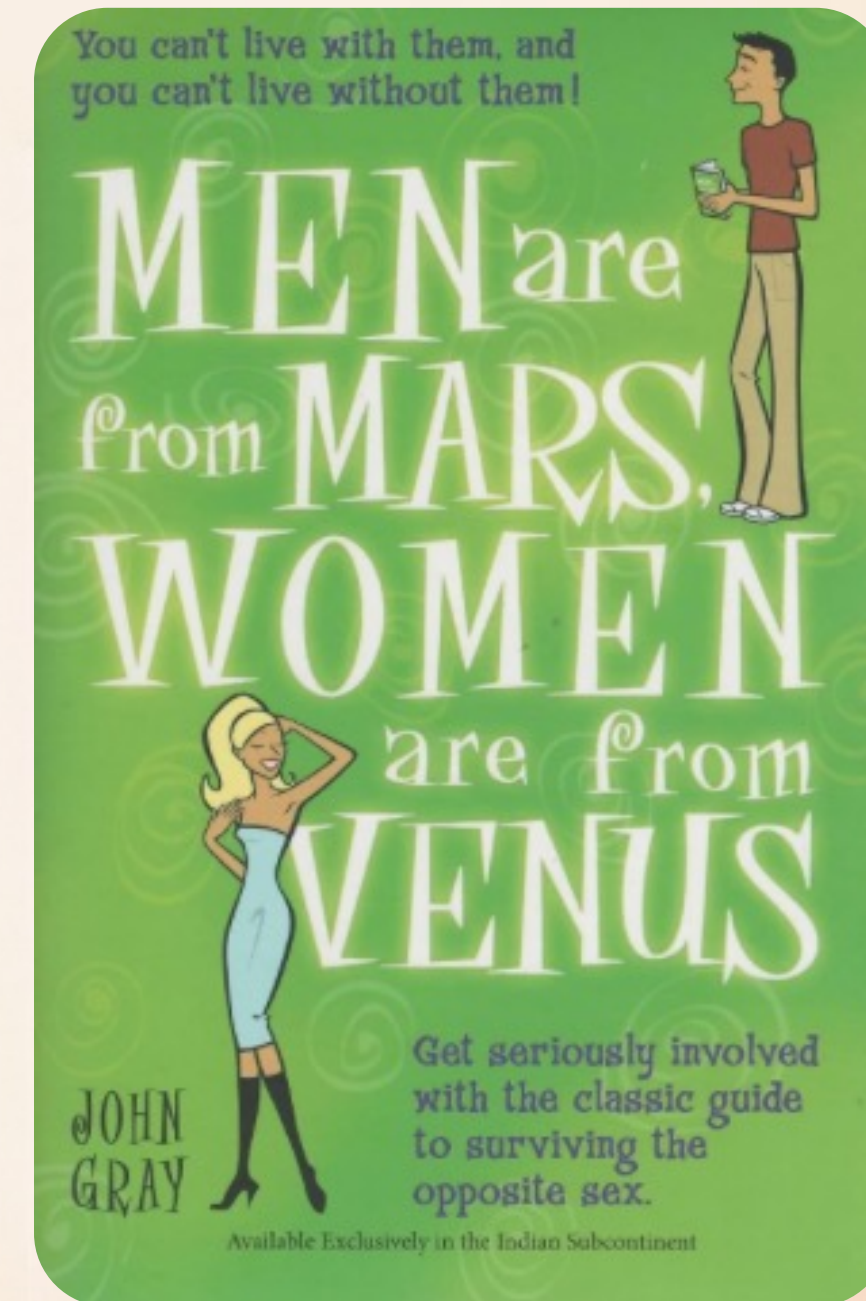


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MEN ARE FROM MARS, WOMEN ARE FROM VENUS.

John Gray argues that men and women can have different ways of communicating, processing emotions and expressing their needs, leading to misunderstandings ***even when*** they genuinely love one another.

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**WHOLEHEARTEDS LOVE ISN'T SIMPLY
GIVING YOUR PARTNER WHAT YOU WOULD
WANT TO RECEIVE;**

**IT'S LEARNING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT
HELPS THEM FEEL HEARD, VALUED
AND LOVED.**

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<https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language>

4 minute quiz



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EMOTIONAL INTIMACY CREATES THE SECURITY IN WHICH INTIMACY FLOURISHES

- It grows where there is patience, kindness, forgiveness, and faithfulness.
- A spouse who feels ***cherished*** rather than ***criticised*** is more likely to feel secure enough to express affection and vulnerability.

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Biblical expression:

- **1 Corinthians 13:4** *“Love is patient, love is kind.”*
- **Song of Solomon 2:16** *“I am my beloved’s and he is mine.”*
- **Romans 12:10** *“Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honouring each other”*
- **Ephesians 4:32** *“kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving.”*

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TRUST BEFORE VULNERABILITY

- We need the freedom to trust, communicate, and feel safe with one another.
- The bedroom can't consistently repair what neglect, harsh words, and unresolved resentment have damaged in the heart
- Tender words, attentive listening, reassurance, and compassion help spouses feel valued.
- When unresolved hurt, resentment, or fear is present, physical closeness may become difficult.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR COUPLES:

Use these questions to help you reflect on how emotional intimacy influences your relationship.

- *Do we feel safe sharing our deepest emotions with one another?*
- *How consistently do we show affection outside moments of physical intimacy?*
- *Are there unresolved hurts or family pressures affecting our closeness?*
- *How can we better communicate our needs without criticism or pressure?*
- *What practical changes could help each of us feel more loved, understood, and appreciated?*
- *How can we place Christlike love, patience, and mutual honour at the centre of our marriage?*



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WHOLEHEARTED LOVE MEANS HONOURING THE BODY AS PART OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

1 Corinthians 6:18–20

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- Culture is ***craving intimacy and worth***, but its a culture which can squeeze out the dignity of children and value of families.
- Jesus's death on the cross makes no sense until you realise the universe-shattering power of his death to live a transformed life, not squeezed or conformed into the pattern of this world (Rom 12:2)
- For the disciple of Jesus, the body is sacred, made holy by the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit and therefore to be used in a manner that glorifies God.

(1 Cor. 6:15- 20; Rom 6:12-14)

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IS LIVING TOGETHER BEFORE MARRIAGE ACCEPTABLE?

- The difference between Christian/Non-Christian
- **Biblical truth:** expectation is for unmarried couples to live apart and be sexually abstinent until marriage – that's God's best plan, the ideal, the normal.

1 Cor. 6:9-11; 13-20; 10:8; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-5; Col. 3:5, 6; 1 Thess. 4:1-7; 1 Tim 1:8-11; Hebrews 12:15-17



CONCLUSION: SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? WHAT'S MY NEXT STEP?



- Perhaps the most important question today is not...
“How well am I doing in this area?”
- But *“Can I trust Jesus with this part of my life?”*
- **HANDOUT– Next Steps:** *“Jesus, is there a next step You are asking me to take?”*

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**FOR SOME OF US, THE RESPONSE IS SIMPLY:
“JESUS, I TRUST YOU WITH MY SEXUALITY.”**

- **For some** - *surrendering something we know needs to change.*
- **For others** - *receiving forgiveness for something in the past.*
- **For some** - *asking for courage to establish a boundary.*
- **Married couple** - *begin again with tenderness, honesty and conversation.*

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**FOR SOME OF US, THE RESPONSE IS SIMPLY:
“JESUS, I TRUST YOU WITH MY SEXUALITY.”**

Single - *it may mean learning that faithfulness is not simply about saying “no” to something, but about learning how to steward desire in a way that honours God.*

For some - *talk honestly with a trusted, mature Christian who can listen without shock, judgement or gossip.*

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THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT:

- *Not everything connected with sexuality in our lives is something we have chosen.*
- ***You may need healing:** carry memories of shame from abuse, experienced coercion or exploitation. Some have been betrayed by someone they trusted.*
- *Please don't hear today's message as an invitation to condemn yourself for somebody else's actions.*
- *The invitation of Jesus is not, “Get yourself sorted out and then come to Me.” It is, “**Come to Me.**”*

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**WE CAN RECEIVE GOD'S GRACE
WITHOUT PRETENDING
THAT OBEDIENCE
DOESN'T MATTER.**

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So let's bring both grace & obedience together in prayer:

*Lord Jesus help us to respond to TRUTH WITHOUT SHAME,
To respond to Your GRACE WITHOUT COMPROMISE,
To respond with an OBEDIENCE ROOTED IN TRUST.*

*Lord Jesus, we choose to trust You with our whole lives —
including our bodies, our desires, our relationships and our
sexuality.*

*Help us to live in ways that honour You, honour one another,
and reflect Your love. Amen.*

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