

Men, Are You Building Oneness and Intimacy?

PORTIONS: Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5, 6; Ephesians 5:31

This question is foundational and profound as God sets forth His plan in marriage.

I. ONENESS IN GOD'S PLAN:

A. *Oneness in Humanness!* God states that this is a *mystery!* What did Moses, Paul, and Christ mean when they stated that a man and women would become one?

1. How was oneness illustrated in the original creation?

2. Prior to the creation of Eve, there was no one with whom Adam could share his life. The implication is clear. It would take another human being created in God's image and in Adam's image -- to fill that unique role.

3. Adam needed a "*help of his kind*" that is a *helping being*, which, as soon as he sees this one, he may recognize himself in that person.

4. What did Adam mean in Genesis 2:23? What five things are meant here?

5. Adam recognized Eve was like him. Though she was uniquely female, she looked like him, talked like him, walked like him, and smiled like him. She was his complement. He could relate to her as to no other living creature, for she was another *human being*. How did God set the stage for this event?

6. Eve was a unique creation-- physically, psychologically and spiritually, just as he was.

B. *Oneness in sexuality!* Eve was indeed *one* with Adam for she was taken from his side. Part of his physical body became part of Eve's physical body, and in God's sight they were "one flesh" even before they came together physically.

1. What does God mean in Genesis 2:24, I Corinthians 6:15, 16?

2. God planned that the oneness in physical union would be the consummation of the oneness He planned in the original relationship between man and woman. *Isn't oneness more than the physical?* _____ *In what way?*

C. *Oneness in Spirituality!* This oneness is pictured in what takes place in salvation as we become *one in Christ!* We are individually, and collectively *married to Christ*. What is meant by Romans 7:4 and II Corinthians 11:2?

1. In what way is the oneness we have in Christ, as set forth in Ephesians 5:30-32 a picture of the oneness that a couple have in marriage?

2. True experiential oneness or unity are yet future in the life of any newly married couple. Like our *oneness* in our relationship with Christ, our total relationship with our husband or wife must be carefully nurtured and developed. Only then will we begin to *experience* true oneness.

3. How can we build an experiential oneness in marriage? _____

An exercise in becoming one!

In God's sight a husband and wife are *one* even though they might not have a mutually satisfying experience. Marital unity that is *total* -- physical, psychological and spiritual -- involves a process that takes time, insight, sensitivity and effort.

Knowledge of sexual techniques are not enough. The marriage can still be in the shambles even though the physical is well known.

1. How well do you know your marital partner _____

2. Consider the materials that are given to you so you can make a marital check-up.

How do you relate to the following statement? "*Most men find it difficult to listen to their wives share feelings of unhappiness and resentment.*" It is very threatening. But the fact is, it is only as the husband learns to know what his wife's needs are that he can meet those needs. There *must* be communication."

3. Both men and women find it difficult to truly *listen* with real concern. But that is the only way that oneness can be built. Consider the following verses:

James 1:19 _____

Proverbs 18:13 _____

Proverbs 18:15 _____

4. What is your mate's greatest strength? Explain why. _____

5. How can you help your mate become a more fulfilled person? _____

6. If you could change something about your mate, what would it be?

7. What do you do that causes the greatest difficulty with your relationships?

8. What one personality factor in the *average* wife and the *average* husband causes the most emotional difficulty in the *average* marriage? Explain why.
husband - _____ wife - _____

II. INTIMACY IN GOD'S PLAN:

In this consideration we will plan to look at the lives of Aquila and Priscilla. (Note Acts 18:1-3.) These young tent makers, who were companions of Paul are mentioned six times in the New Testament. They were expelled from Rome because Aquila was a Jewess. They went with Paul from Corinth to Ephesus where they remained for awhile as teachers. It was here they took Apollos aside and tutored him in the faith. (See Acts 18: 18, 26.)

They are mentioned again in Paul's epilogue in First Corinthians. Here Paul refers to the church in their house (I Corinthians 16:19). Paul was thrilled with their commitment, courage, widespread influence and ministry. (See Romans 16:3, 4 and II Timothy 4:19.)

A. We can experience togetherness. Aquila and Priscilla are always mentioned together. This implies an intimacy which made them truly one. We can have this in our lives as well.

1. The purpose God has for marriage is a loving intimacy in which two people are to be literally "glued together" in a one-flesh kind of relationship which is characterized by togetherness and unity.
2. Togetherness or intimacy means certain things which is far more than being geographically near each other. Intimacy is a many-faceted thing that involves every dimension of our lives. **It involves --**
 - a. emotional intimacy (the depth sharing of significant feelings),
 - b. intellectual intimacy (sharing in the world of ideas),
 - c. aesthetic intimacy (the depth sharing of experiences of beauty),
 - d. creative intimacy (sharing of acts of creativity),
 - e. recreational intimacy (sharing activities and fun times),
 - f. work intimacy (sharing in common tasks),
 - g. crisis intimacy (standing together against the buffeting of life),
 - h. spiritual intimacy (the sharing of ultimate concerns),
 - i. and sexual intimacy (the sharing of one another physically).
3. While we do not have the full detailed story of Priscilla and Aquila we can assume their intimacy was one which was based on shared activities in every area of their lives.
4. They were one spiritually that much is evident. They also knew work intimacy and their relationship to Apollos implies intellectual intimacy. The challenge of the persecution of that day would have given much opportunity for crisis intimacy.

B. We can have intimacy or a blessed togetherness!

1. **The first step is to desire it!** We must come to the point where we are dissatisfied with anything less than real oneness, where you are tired of just existing in a marriage. We must take inventory of our marriage and see if we have true intimacy or do we just have physical proximity? Togetherness must be desired, nor just talking about it either.
2. **Honesty is required!** Be willing to open the deepest self to each other. Intimacy begins when we lower the masks, the barriers, or the walls which protect our inner self and we allow our soul to touch the soul of our mate.

3. **There must be genuine concern** for one another and an expressing of love which is genuine on a daily basis. Only when there is loving concern can the barriers be lowered and true intimacy can be developed.
4. **A climate of trust and respect** in the marriage is necessary as well! Leave no doubt about your complete commitment to one another. Complete trust in each other will help you to open your souls to one another.
5. **Spend time together.** This does not just happen, it must be planned, worked at, and made a mutual determination.

C. We can adjust to the changes of life that will impact us!

Conflicts, changes and crisis will come for they are inevitable. In A.D. 52 Claudius passed a decree banning all Jews from the imperial city of Rome. Priscilla's marriage to a Jew and expulsion from her beloved city would have brought a crisis of great proportion. Constant moves was probably another challenge to their marriage.

How can we deal with conflict, change, and the continuing crisis in marriage and the daily dilemmas that may come our way?

1. **We need good communication skills!** Before resentments build up within, we need to talk problems out. Many marriages go on the rocks because people simply refused to acknowledge their problems and then fail to communicate. They do not even recognize them. Communication means to express what you really feel, to establish an understanding and desire to meet needs.
2. **There must be assimilation!** We need to assimilate the facts, recognize the position of the other person, and be willing to practice longsuffering and forbearance. Assimilate the other person's view into your viewpoint, and find a common meeting ground for peace and understanding.
3. **Then there must be the give and take of accommodation!** Coming to the place of compromise in the two positions may be necessary as we accommodate God's will and plan for peace and unity.
4. **Tolerance is also necessary.** If each partner holds to their viewpoint, in that process the couple must respect each other's position and give the right to lovingly disagree.
5. **Cancel the feelings in the problem, put it behind you!** Totally forgive, bury the problem, not allowing it to hurt your intimacy or togetherness. Whether you settled it by assimilation, accommodation or toleration, put it behind you.

D. You must put God at the center of everything!

1. **The greatest source of heartache and tension** in many marriages is the simple fact that one or both partners is out of fellowship with God.
2. **Too often the husband and wife never** read the Bible together. They do not pray together, nor go to church together.
3. **Is God at the center of YOUR marriage?**

IS YOUR MARRIAGE ON TARGET?