



SEX-LESS MARRIAGE **MASTER CLASS**

HEALTHY HABITS TO CREATE A FULFILLING SEX LIFE

with
Lonnie & Kara Barker

Sex is one of the least talked about topics in the church. It is a sad reality that many of us are introduced to sex at an early age but we are foreign to real intimacy until later in our adult lives. In this four part master class, we will explore sex from a biblical perspective and share some fun and exciting ways to have a “sucSEXful” marriage.

Over the years we’ve encountered so many couples who have been on the brink of divorce and were ready to call it quits, not because of infidelity or financial problems but one of the main reasons we’ve noticed couples are ready to throw in the towel is because of unmet expectations. They got married assuming their spouse was going to satisfy their every sexual desire the way they’ve pictured it from an early age. And because of a lack of communication or because their spouse is either uncomfortable or unwilling to perform the act, they are left frustrated, resentful and ready to walk away. Truth be told, we have also been there. And although it is a long road to recovery, it’s still possible to turn it around.

Your sex life as a married couple is a profound gift and it’s one that you will continue to unwrap for the rest of your lives. Over these next four sessions we will explore biblical principles on the taboo subject of sex and intimacy from a biblical perspective. We will also discuss the blessing, beauty and benefits of sexual intimacy in marriage and give you a few tips and insight on how you can explore new and exciting ways to take your sex life to another level.



HOW THE WORLD VIEWS SEX

The world is bombarded with sex. Just about everywhere you go, on television, on the internet, on billboards and commercials. Everything is infused with sexual innuendos because sex sells. It's a sad reality that the average person is exposed to sexual propaganda through various media channels before the age of 8 years old. Studies have shown that early exposure to sexual content can have undesirable effects in the lives of young people. This is concerning because it gives them a perverted perception of sex which carries over into their adulthood, relationships and marriages. Unfortunately, pornography twists the true purpose of sex. **Pornography gives men and women the false impression that sex and pleasure are entirely separated from relationships.** Because porn is self-centered and self-serving, it doesn't require that husbands be lovers of their wives and vice versa. Key point: Porn rewires the brain to focus on "you" — not on intimacy.

HOW GOD VIEWS SEX

God is the creator of sex. God designed sex to be pleasurable between husband and wife. Sex is oneness before God. Sexual intimacy is a gift from God between a husband and wife and should be celebrated as such. We believe God's design for sex is to be mutually enjoyable in the confines of marriage. Anything outside of this boundary is not ordained by God and unholy.

SEX IS A BY-PRODUCT OF MARRIAGE

Key point: Sexual intimacy, celebrated regularly and passionately, is vital to any healthy marriage. However what many don't understand is that marriage is more than just sex.

- God created sex and had a wonderful design in mind
- A satisfying sex life is the result of a satisfying marriage relationship
- The ultimate purpose of sex is to bring glory to God by celebrating our oneness.

Sex is a wonderful gift given to a married couple by God as a means of experiencing physical pleasure together and as a way to experience the deepest, most profound intimacy with a spouse — “and the two shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24).

3 REASONS THE BIBLE GIVES FOR SEX:

1. **PROCREATION** (Genesis 1:28) God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it...”
2. **PLEASURE** (Song of Solomon 6:3) “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine.”
3. **ONENESS** (Genesis 1:24) And the two shall become one flesh...

SEX SHOULD BE PLEASURABLE IN MARRIAGE

GOOD SEX DOES NOT BEGIN IN THE BEDROOM. Good sex begins with foreplay. The word “foreplay” is composed of two English words, “before” and “play.” So “before” you start the “play” in the bedroom, there is some groundwork to cover if you want to have a greater experience with your spouse. This happens way before you ever touch each other.

Sex should **NOT** be used as:

- A form of control or manipulation
- As a “favor” for your spouse
- As a form of entitlement

The ultimate purpose of sex is to bring glory to God by celebrating our oneness.

You may be asking what do you mean, control or manipulation, favors or entitlement?

Glad you asked— here are some examples: bottom line it is about insincere acts with hidden motives relative to sex.

Hidden motives may be - **intentional withholding sexual interaction to punish the spouse after a disagreement** or even to **rewarding a spouse based on their treatment**. Another act of misuse is **expecting “kicks backs” or expecting something in return**. All of these forms of manipulation, control and entitlement kills intimacy. If you manipulate your spouse through sex, which is a key expression of married love, you are jeopardizing your relationship.

Here are some examples or tips to help you in this space. This is not an all-inclusive list, we encourage you to get a little creative and create some new SEXexpectations:

1. Send him or her a text message telling them you can't wait to see him or her later.
2. A lot of women and men too, need physical touch throughout the day, but not all sexual. Hugs, kisses, flirting, etc. If the only touch is sexual in nature, you missing out the opportunity for building on emotional intimacy, especially if words of affirmation and physical touch is a top love need.
3. Call them during the day and leave a sultry voice message just to let them know they were on our mind.
4. If you pack their lunch every day, drop a note in their lunch bag, purse or backpack letting them know you think they are wonderfully made and that you appreciate them.
5. Plan for sex and don't be afraid to schedule it. Some of us need a little warming up.

Truth be told— meaningful sexual intimacy is a lot like a wedding cake. Don't tune out yet. It's something you build layer by layer. You start at the most basic level and work your way up. You initiate a connection in some small and simple way and then maintain it and elaborate on it as you move forward. The act of intercourse could be compared to the icing on the cake. It's the finishing touch you put on a painting that you've labored long and painstakingly to get "just right."

Oftentimes we miss out on a fulfilling experience with one another sexually because we rush through foreplay or the pre-game even skip it altogether to get to the main course. If you ever expect to have a better experience with your spouse sexually, you have to change your routine. As the old adage goes, if you want to keep getting what you're getting just keep doing what you're doing. But for those of you who are tired of the same old routine and are ready to spice things up, you have to do things differently if you want a different result.



The bible says in Proverbs 4:7, “The beginning of wisdom is this: get wisdom. Though it costs all you have, get understanding.” Once we have a better understanding of the unique differences husbands and wives have as it pertains to sexual desire and intimacy, we are better equipped to function from a place of wisdom and not from our own logic or assumptions.

MALE AND FEMALE DIFFERENCES

When it comes to sex and intimacy we all can agree that men and women often have two very different perspectives. These vast differences should be discussed if we expect to have harmony in the bedroom.

Men are visual creatures. They are stimulated by what they see. You can say all the right words and whisper sweet nothings in his ear but it is what he sees with his eyes that really gets his motor revved up.

Women are emotional and stimulated by how you make them feel. When she feels loved, secure and cherished, this is what lights her fire.

Although there are always exceptions to the rule, for the most part men and women have two different perspectives of what they desire sexually. Understanding that there are differences between men and women in the way they approach sex is very important. This is something we wish we could have mastered early in our marriage because it would have saved us so many years of frustration and false assumptions.

Ladies: A man’s number one physical need besides food and water is sex.

This may come as a surprise to many of you but it’s true. Research suggests that men think about sex nearly twice as much as women. On average, men think about sex around 20 times a day, while women think about it only about 10 times a day. Before you jump to conclusions ladies, this is not all men’s fault. God designed them that way. Sex is a man’s outward expression love and intimacy for his wife.

Men: A woman’s number one emotional need is affection.

Affection can be expressed in numerous ways. Some of these ways can be non-sexual affection like hugs, kisses or holding her hand. Other ways include a gentle tone of voice and words of affirmation that create in her a sense of intimacy.

Generally speaking, men put a much higher priority on sex than women do, and women have a different orientation that demands a different approach.

- A woman is more relationship-oriented
- A man wants physical oneness; the woman desires emotional oneness.
- A man needs respect, admiration, to be needed physically, and respect.
- The woman needs understanding, love, to be needed emotionally, and time to warm up to the sexual act.
- A man responds sexually by getting excited quickly, while the woman is much slower.

Here are some general differences between men and women. Obviously, this is not absolute comparison—it compares the general tendencies and differences between men and women and how they view sex.

MEN	WOMEN
Tend to say what they think	Tend to say what they feel
Turn on quickly	Need time to warm up
Can compartmentalize sex	Can integrate sex with other areas of their lives
Responds sexually by getting excited quickly	Sexually responds at a slower rate
Desire direct sexual contact	Desire nonsexual or limited sexual stimulation.
Are put in touch with their emotions by sex	Are put in touch with sex through their emotions



When we first met as college sweethearts, we discovered we had a lot of things in common and a few things not so common. Over the past 25 years of marriage we've learned to compromise and take turns enjoying one another's likes even though we may dislike them. But one of the things we both love to do is travel. Some of the most significant things when traveling are planning, preparation and packing. We always try to make sure we have the necessities and oftentimes we both are guilty of bringing extra unnecessary items that we will either never wear or we'll never use during our trip. It's never fun getting to the ticket counter at the airport to check our bags and realize we've exceeded the weight limit and are faced with the decision to either pay the extra fees or get rid of some unnecessary items in order to check in for our flight.

It's the same way in marriage. Many of us come into the relationship eager and excited to be joined as one in holy matrimony. We are filled with joy, bliss and anticipation until it's time to say "I do" and then we have to check our baggage. Right before we can board the plane we realize we have a lot of items that are too heavy and can't come along on this trip called marriage.

It is a person's unresolved past issues that weigh them down in the present and oftentimes they don't see it.

Baggage comes in an array of styles and the effects are massive.

There is **emotional baggage** that comes from a past belittling, harshness and rejection where fears, insecurities and anger express from a family member and/or loved one.

Relational baggage comes from a past of being rejected, neglected and controlled- which creates insecurities that rob one's ability to trust and fully commit.

Moral baggage comes when our moral compass is off balance and the knowledge right and wrong is blurred and lying and cheating are justified.

Physical baggage fear of getting close or being intimate or even believing that one is worthy to be loved.

Spiritual Baggage is past behaviors of distorting the truth using unhealthy words and behaviors twist and manipulate God's truth for selfish gain or control.

Sexual baggage caused by early inappropriate sensuous exposure, sexual abuse, porn involvement and addiction completely vandalizes a person's vision and truth about true intimacy.

The depth of our baggage is often hard to measure and should not be used as excuses for inappropriate behavior but it's important to know what things can have a hindrance on your marriage.

Dysfunction breeds dysfunction. Grace breeds acceptance and forgiveness.

This extra baggage comes in the form of old relationships, ex-girlfriends/ex-boyfriends, a promiscuous past, a secret porn addiction, sexual abuse, etc. All these things are significant and can hinder you from reaching your God-given destiny in marriage. Sometimes couples ignore the signs or sweep them under the rug but it inevitably resurfaces when you least expect it and causes more damage in the long run.

The bible says in James 5:16, "Confess your faults to one another so that you may be healed." That's why it is so important to have open lines of communication and be honest with your spouse about your past hurts, past mistakes and past indiscretions. Truth be told, we all have them and if we ever expect to be healed from our past, it starts with confessing it so that the healing process may begin. Even if it involves seeking professional help from a counselor or therapist, do whatever it takes to start the healing process so that you both may become the best version of who God created you to be as husband and wife.



It's All About Intimacy (In-To-Me-See)

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.” Genesis 2:24-25

Many of us were introduced to sex at an early age but we are foreign to real intimacy now that we are in our adult lives. Did you know sex is a byproduct of intimacy? Intimacy is NOT a byproduct of sex. (Selah) Let that linger in your spirit for a minute. The way the world views sex, they would argue that you become intimate as a result of being sexually involved. This is not the case for believers and Christ followers.

A satisfying sex life is a result of a satisfying marriage relationship. And whether the world wants to accept it or not, the ultimate purpose of sex is to bring glory to God by celebrating our oneness as husband and wife. The bible says, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24 AMP) How is this oneness achieved? It is achieved through intimacy. Besides accepting another person just how they are, (Note: This doesn't mean accepting any form of abuse), real intimacy can only begin once you know yourself. Intimacy simply means to “see into me.” Intimacy goes deeper than undressing before one another and exposing your nakedness, your scars, flaws and

stretch marks. Real intimacy is looking into one another's soul and loving them to the very core of their being.

Sex is a part of intimate expression, but it is not intimacy.

Seeing past their hurts, failures, their fears, their hopes, their dreams and desires. Seeing past their insufficiencies, weaknesses, their selfish tendencies and their propensity to miss the mark and fall short. Intimacy is having a deep understanding of someone. Without intimacy in marriage, you're just going through the motions of just having sexual intercourse but no sexual intimacy and there is a huge difference between the two. With one (intercourse) your flesh is satisfied but with the other (intimacy) your soul is satisfied.

One of the best ways to enhance intimacy in your marriage is to create an atmosphere of openness and honesty. Set aside intentional time for having honest conversations. Begin your time with prayer. Allow yourselves to be vulnerable, naked and unashamed. Discuss areas of concern about sexuality. Talk about your apprehensions, your fears and what causes you to have reservations about being intimate and transparent with your spouse. This is sometimes an uncomfortable conversation to have but once you break the ice, it gets easier with time and consistency and before you know it, you're well on your way to a new realm of possibilities in love and intimacy. Developing intimacy is like peeling an onion — it can happen just a little at a time while trust is developed.

Intimacy with God is the key starting point of it all. God longs to have an intimate relationship with you individually. He created you and knows you inside and out. Every flaw, failure, mistake or mishap. He knows every one of your weaknesses, every fear and every shortcoming but He loves you in spite of it all. We invite you to renew your relationship with the Father so that you can come to know true intimacy with Him. And with the help of the Holy Spirit, you can rekindle the love and intimacy in your marriage.