

Different Types of Intimacy in your Marriage

Lesson 6

What do you think of when you hear the word *intimacy*? Intimacy involves all that two people share: the mind, the will, the emotions, and the body. Genesis 2:24-25 refers to intimacy.

24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

“One flesh” is intimacy. It is not merely sexual union, but sexual union is included. Verse 25 tells us that Adam and Eve were naked, and we presume they were naked around each other, yet they felt no inhibitions. In other words, “Eve felt comfortable being a woman around Adam, and Adam felt comfortable being a man around Eve.”¹

But becoming “one flesh” is much more than physical. It is also emotional, spiritual, and intellectual.

Guy Greenfield writes in the book We Need Each Other concerning the above verse:

Now I realize that the one-flesh relationship in marriage is a unique and special thing, and that the term carries a clear sexual connotation. However, the oneness of the one-flesh relationship is certainly suggestive of the closeness I have found on the intimacy level where, in a psychological and emotional sense, two become as it were, one. On the intimacy level, one plus one equals one.²

Greenfield goes on to say that just because a couple is married does not mean they automatically have reached this level of intimacy. Neither does having sexual relations provide automatic access to the “intimacy.” It is safe to say that in a lot of marriages and a lot of sex there is no deep intimacy—the two have not become one.³

Sometimes the greatest intimacy comes from the most trying circumstances. Diane and I have experienced two miscarriages. It may sound strange to hear a man speak of experiencing a miscarriage; however, both of us participated in the conception, the anticipation, the loss, the hurt, and the healing. Both of these experiences taught us the significance of the intimacy. I can remember each time how Diane and I went to the doctor together, received the bad news together, and hurt together. We came home each time and curled up in bed holding each other as we processed our emotions. We had both lost something important, but we were on the same side. We were unique in how we expressed our emotions, but we were definitely together through the entire grieving process. Unfortunately there are times of stress and hurt when couples pull apart instead of pulling together. Consider improving intimacy in your relationship by: communicating, or building each other up, or learning to manage conflict, or spending

¹Harvey Cox, On Leaving It to the Snake (New York: The MacMillian Company, 1964), 49.

²Guy Greenfield, We Need Each Other: Reaching Deeper Levels in Our Interpersonal Relationships (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 151.

³Ibid.

more time together, or maybe even spending recreational time together—simply playing together. In lesson seven, Song of Songs will teach women how to improve intimacy through admiration and honor.