

Intimacy: Oneness in the Marriage Relationship.



Love, intimacy, and sex are often discussed together as one concept or they may be confused with one another. There is great misunderstanding regarding these concepts, especially in society today. People may think that each is essentially the same thing or that one can have love or sex without intimacy and still have a healthy relationship. The truth is that intimacy ties love and sex together; without intimacy, love is empty and sex is just the physical act of lust. The word intimacy derives from the Latin *intima*, meaning “inner” or “innermost.” The saying that intimacy means; “into me see” is very close to the mark. We see this in God’s original plan for marriage as Adam and Eve, before the fall, were “naked and unashamed” (Gen. 2:25). Through intimacy couples grow in oneness, the oneness that should be characteristic of the marriage relationship (Gen. 22:24).

A serious problem lies in the fact that most couples measure the health of their marriages by the quality and/or quantity of sex in the marriage relationship. A few years ago, Christianity Today even published “The Best Sex (Survey) Ever!” to help couples discover how their sex lives compared to others. Intimacy, how much a couple sees into each other should be the measure of relationship health rather than sex. An intimate, close, connected couple, barring physical problems, will find it much easier have a healthy sex life than the disconnected and distant couple.

Enhancing intimacy in the marriage relationship requires time and energy. Intimacy doesn’t just happen, it is the result of a couple doing the things that will connect them; spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically. Husbands and wives are very different and they must be intentional about growing together in intimacy. Honesty and openness promotes intimacy and brings a couple closer together. Acceptance, respect and seeking to meet each other’s needs grows the relationship and further builds intimacy. Praying together is extremely important to building intimacy. Through prayer, the couple grows in their relationship with God and with each other.

Intimacy is a crucial part of a growing, strong marriage and although it is a challenge to build and maintain intimacy in marriage, it can be done. Couples must carve out time together and intentionally work to build intimacy. Praying together is a big step in the right direction, but it is also a matter of taking the time to communicate at deeper levels; it is worth the effort.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Intimacy Resources: www.fortifiedmarriages.com/marriage_resources.aspx#8

Building Intimacy Through Prayer - Article by Chris Garner

Books to check out: *Intimate Allies* by Dan B. Allender & Tremper Longman

About Us; Moving from Anger to Intimacy by Gary & Carrie Oliver#