

HOME GROWN

Growing a Thriving Marriage through Sacrificial Love

I. Desire we have for marital intimacy

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone . . ."

—Genesis 2:18a

1. We long for marital intimacy.
2. We seldom experience this intimacy in marriage.

II. Dilemma we have as being created opposites

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

—Genesis 2:18

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

—Genesis 1:27

1. Opposite in gender

- Communication
- Sexual make-up

2. Opposite in temperament

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." . . . And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

—Genesis 1:26, 31

III. Deception from Satan

1. Create questions about the authority of God's word.

"Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

—Genesis 3:1b

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

—2 Timothy 4:3–4

2. Raise questions about God's goodness.

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

—Genesis 3:4–5

IV. Design for marital intimacy: sacrificial love

This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. —1 John 4:10 (NIV)

1. To love sacrificially, you must know your spouse.
2. To love sacrificially, you must act on that knowledge.

V. Delight in experiencing marital intimacy

“Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.” —Luke 17:33

But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him” — —1 Corinthians 2:9

1. We were designed to sacrificially love.
2. When we sacrificially love we are most fully like Christ.
3. When we are imitating Christ we are living out His design.
4. When we live out His design we are both most fully satisfied.

“We are most satisfied when He is most glorified.” —John Piper (paraphrased)

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

—Ephesians 3:20–21

Discussion Questions

1. How do you see the connection between sacrifice and love?
2. What areas of “opposite-ness” have challenged you most in your marriage?
3. Thank each other for a time when you saw your spouse loving you sacrificially.
4. Share an area in which you think you could improve in loving your spouse more sacrificially.