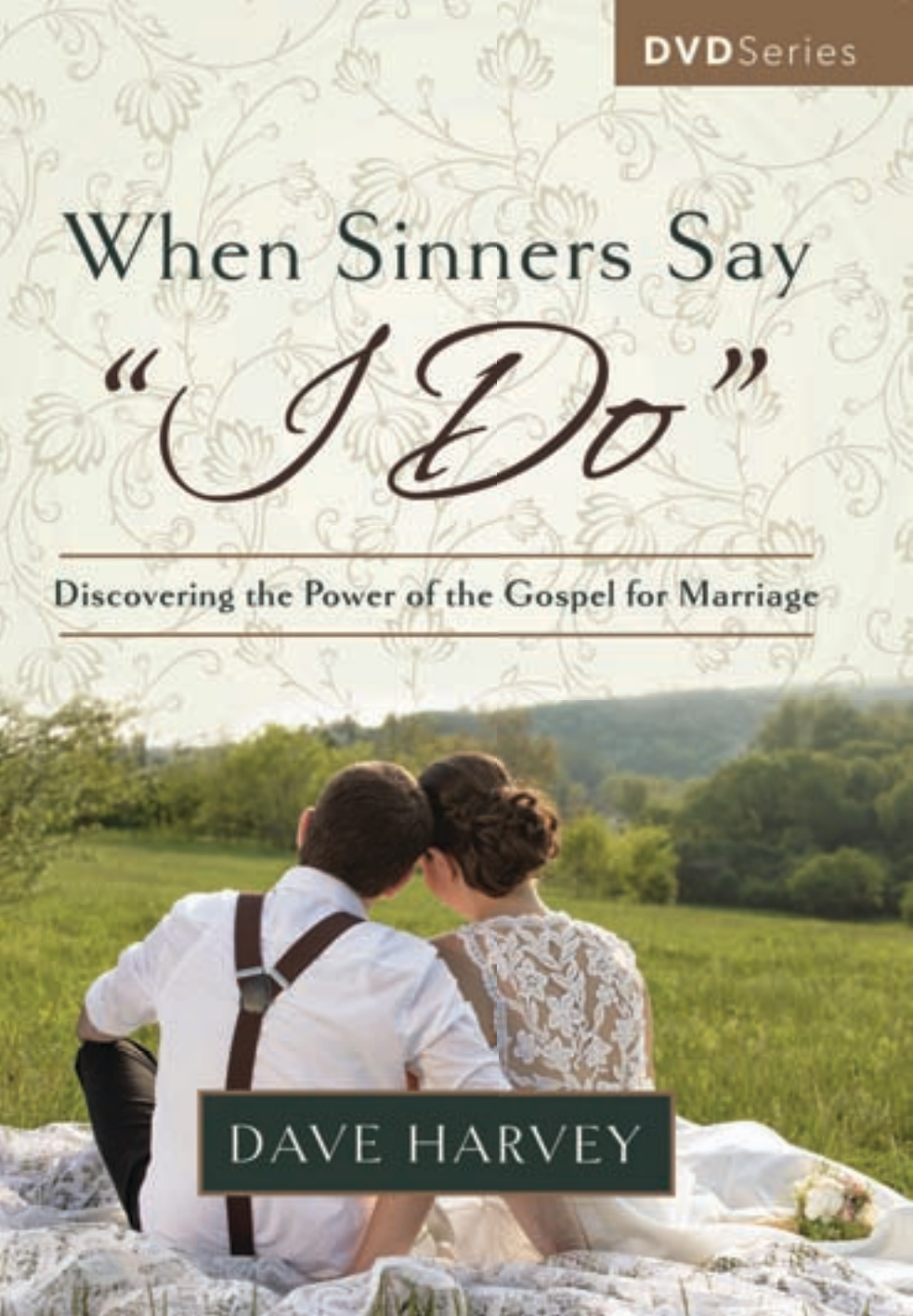


DVD Series

When Sinners Say "I Do"

Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage



DAVE HARVEY

When Sinners Say “I Do”

DVD Study Outline

Sessions 1-8

Dave Harvey

Session 1 Overview

What this session is all about

This first session is about the problem of sin in your marriage, specifically your sin. Dave begins by helping you see that you should not be concerned about your spouse's sin — you should be concerned about your own.

In this session, Dave takes an in-depth look at I Timothy 1:12-17. He unpacks this passage for you as it pertains to your marriage and your sin.

What to look for

In this first video Dave offers the first of four crucial affirmations that will help you form a biblical understanding of the impact of your sin on your marriage. The other three affirmations will be explained in session two. Also, notice how Dave makes use of self-deprecating humor to make his points clear, for example when remarks that he thought it was his wife that was making him sin early in their marriage.

Session 1: Sin, Part 1

I Tim 1:12-17

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Early conflict in marriage

- Dave thought his wife was making him sin—he was struck by her sin issues.
- Instead of focusing on your spouse, start by acknowledging that you are a sinner.

The problem with false teachers is that they have lost sight of the sinfulness of sin.

- Praise God that Christ came into the world to save sinners
- Note the link between Paul's teaching in I Timothy and your sin.

Affirmation 1 - Our biggest problem is within us.

We are told 1) Paul *was* a sinner, and 2) Paul *is* a sinner.

How can this statement ever be a sign of growth/health? Four answers come to mind:

1. It's healthy when it shows there is only one heart on earth we can really scrutinize.
 - Are you the worst sinner you know?
 - Your goal is to see the value of being convinced that "I'm my worst problem."
2. It's healthy when it is not an end, but means to understanding the impact of sin.
 - If we are to reflect on where we can improve, we must start with the gospel.
3. It's healthy when it is self-descriptive for you and not a diagnostic tool for others.
 - A healthy doctrine of sin fuels self-evaluation, not suspicion of sin in others.
 - Would your spouse or kids say you are more skillful at identifying sin or seeing the grace of God?
4. It's healthy when we counsel people with the whole gospel.
 - Jerry Bridges says:

"The gospel is meaningful for us only to the extent that we realize and acknowledge that we are still sinful. Although we are new creations in Christ, we still sin every day in thought, word, and deed, and perhaps even more importantly, in motives. To benefit from the gospel every day, then, we must acknowledge we are still sinners."

- We must exalt in God's solution, without ever losing sight of problem of our sin.
- Delight in the cross, without avoiding why the cross was actually necessary and why it is needed now everyday.

End of Session 1

Session 2 Overview

What this session is all about

In session 2 Dave continues to examine the impact of our sin on our marriages Dave makes four affirmations about this reality. He covered affirmation one in the first session. Now he deals with affirmations two, three and four. Here the four affirmations:

- Our biggest problem is within us.
- Our highest status is not being sinned against.
- Our greatest hindrance is our confident morality.
- Our loudest praise targets God's astounding grace.

Dave stresses that serious problems come in marriage when we focus on our spouse's sins instead of on our own sin. This is why living out the gospel is crucial to marriages that bring honor to God.

What to look for

Once again notice how Dave uses humor to contrast his style with his wife's style. She is different from Dave, but he is not superior. These are excellent observations. Also, note that Dave introduces Pete and Cindy in this session to help us understand Affirmation 2.

Session 2: Sin, Part 2

Dave begins by reminding us from the first session how Paul's story intersects with our own stories.

Affirmation 2 - Our highest status is to not be sinned against.

What is the greatest hindrance in your marriage right now?

- People seldom see themselves as the most important problem
- Our minds target the actions and attitudes of others.
- When we tell our stories of pain we don't appear as sinners.

The status we assign to ourselves:

- Must start with the gospel, not the actions and attitudes of others.
- Being sinned against is not our most important status

We must avoid seeing ourselves as being sinned against.

- Note the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18.
- We may want to forgive, but then we make the wrong, un-Christlike assumption that forgiveness should not cost us anything.

Pete and Cindy were liberated by this biblical truth: Sin became bitter, then Christ became sweet.

Affirmation 3 - Our greatest hindrance is our confident morality.

The problem with confident morality: I may be a sinner, but I am better than you!

- Note the examples Dave gives in the session, for example: "I can't believe you did that" or "I don't deserve this!"

The parable of the two sons, i.e. the Prodigal Son.

- When we are confident in our judgment we become confident in our morality.
- We don't start with, "I have been forgiven a great debt." We start with, "I have been greatly sinned against."
- Note the humorous story of how Dave and Kim deal with ordering meals. Don't miss the similarities in your life.

The goal here is to see that if Paul considered himself foremost among sinners, how should we consider ourselves?

Affirmation 4 - Our loudest praise targets God's astounding grace.

Paul understands that studying his own sin leads him to the amazing love of God

Key point:

When sin become bitter, Christ becomes sweet and worship becomes real!

As you look over the story of your marriage does sin seem bad? Rejoice! This is not how your story ends. Sin *is* bad, but God is greater. Sin continues, but grace is vast. When sin is bitter, Christ becomes sweet.

End of Session 2

Session 3 Overview

What this session is all about

This session is about design. Marriage is not some random, arbitrary idea or the product of social evolution. Marriage is tied in the mind of God's creation itself. Marriage is connected to God's design for human interaction and for the church. This session lays out biblical truth that is lost in our modern culture.

What to look for

See how Dave works his way through the important passage of Genesis 2:18-25. Also note the significant quotes from Tim Keller and John Piper. Throughout this series Dave quotes leading theologians of the past and the present to show God's purpose in designing marriage and why the gospel is absolutely essential in any marriage.

Session 3: Design

A word to singles: "Learn about marriage before you get married."

Genesis 2:18-25

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

*"This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man."*

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. The origin of marriage is rooted in God's Creation.

Marriage is more than me!

- **We were created for community.**
 - It is not good for man to be alone.
 - There was no helper suitable for Adam.
 - Man's existence is incomplete without community.
 - It is important that we see this connection with the local church.
- Quote from Tim Keller—this is why God created marriage and the church

"To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything."

- God brings Eve from Adam; woman is defined in connection with man.
 - The biblical vision is of men and women complimenting each other.
 - Both husband and wife find their satisfaction outside of themselves.
 - God meant for it to be more than just a bunch of individuals and God.
 - Note the divine order of creation. In this way man and woman are satisfied.
 - Most people tend to think of marriage in terms of function rather than design.

Quote from John Piper:

"The mystery is this: God did not create the union of Christ and the church after the pattern of human marriage; just the reverse! He created human marriage on the pattern of Christ's relationship to the church. The mystery of Gen 2: 24 is that the marriage it describes is a parable or symbol of Christ's relation to his people.....When God engaged to create man and woman and to ordain the union of marriage, he didn't roll the dice or draw straws or flip a coin as to how they might be related to each other. He patterned marriage very purposefully after the relationship between his Son and the church, which he had planned for all eternity."

Great value in the design of marriage: Marriage points to the gospel

Ephesians 5:31-33:

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Christ died so that we could experience his nourishing, cherishing, tender care for us

**From the beginning marriage was never about me.
Marriage is a picture of Christ and his church!**

End of session 3

Session 4 Overview

What this session is all about

This session is about contentment. In this session Dave teaches that the key to contentment is not in comparing our circumstances with those of others, but by comparing what we have with what we really deserve. This makes the gospel come alive in your marriage. In this session, Dave unpacks a familiar passage in Philippians and makes a direct application to marriage.

What to look for

Don't miss the clue that shows the problem of being discontent: "by now we should have been..." You will also learn that Dave is not the guy you want to call when something needs to be repaired in your home. This session will provide you with a deeper understanding of the relationship between contentment and your marriage.

Session 4: Contentment

Philippians 4:11-13

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Contentment and your marriage.

This session illustrates importance of following Paul's admonition to be content in all things. We often find ourselves in places that we did not expect to be. This is why contentment is vital for your marriage.

How do you respond when things don't turn out as expected?

- It is fine to desire good things for your life and your marriage.
- It is healthy to keep pressing on.
- But these things must be done with contentment!
- When these desires become demands, discontentment reigns in our hearts

"If you have not what you desire, you have more than you deserve." —Thomas Baxter

When Paul is writing these words on contentment he is writing from prison.

- He was able to be content even though he could not personally go to Philippi, which is what he desired.
- This gives weight to his words that he had learned to be content in all things.
- Paul had learned to be content with his relationship with God, that was what mattered most to him!
- Regarding Jonathan Edwards, it was said that "his happiness was out of reach of his enemies."

- There are times when our desires for our marriage are satisfied.
- But there are also seasons when they are not, when we are brought low.
- Don't miss this: "I know how to abound, to have plenty. But I also know contentment when I have little." (note Dave's humor about the Lexus.)
- Also note Charles Spurgeon quote. We can be tempted by plenty as well as need.

**Paul affirms that it is possible to be content even with unmet desires,
when things do not go as we had hoped!**

Illustration of water in the basement.

- Life will change when we begin to see the denial of our dreams through the eyes of being content.
- There will be no peace in life until we are convinced that our place is his choice!
- Don't buy the world's definition of success.
- God is more committed to our rescue than to our earthly success (e.g. Paul was able to find peace in prison).

Power comes from Christ and his strength!

- Paul exalts in his relationship with Jesus above all else.

**The driving force behind discontentment is this: "I don't have what I deserve."
"You're absolutely right. And you can thank God for that!"**

- The gospel turns our complaint on its head and reminds us that "regardless of our state—be it humble or exalted, plenty or hunger, abundance or need—we live infinitely above what we really deserve."
- Christ took the punishment that we deserve and gave us a treasure we could never earn (note illustration of the man who lived a modest life and a homeless person).

We don't find contentment by comparing ourselves to those who have less than we do.

We find contentment by comparing what we have with what we deserve.

"You have not what you desire, but more than you deserve!"

End of session 4

Session 5 Overview

What this session is all about.

This fifth session is about mercy and your marriage. Dave will help you to see that your marriage is a stage to display the wonder of mercy. Mercy introduces ministry as a primary goal of marriage. He is not talking about a ministry in the church, but ministry to each other as husband and wife. So, instead of being dominated anger and frustration, mercy displays how your marriage is designed to bring you closer to Christ.

What to look for.

This season begins with the humorous analogy between solving marriage problems and contacting computer tech support. Be on the lookout for how mercy becomes the God-given tool to restore and strengthen your marriage.

Session 5: Mercy, Part 1

Luke 6:27-36

"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

Mercy is the metaphor that describes the relationship between Christ and his church.

- Note the Tech Support email that is typical of many marriages.
- This comical dialogue describes one of the most common challenges of marriage:
How do I respond when my marriage is not going the way I expected?

Background for the passage on mercy in Luke 6

Because Jesus lived that perfect life, died that substitutionary death, and rose triumphant – we now are called to, and capable of, being merciful.

This brings us to a crucial point of Luke 6:36:

"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

This summary verse has two simple points:

1: Our heavenly father is merciful.

- Mercy is a unique and exceptional word—it shows how God relates to us as sinners.
- Note the example of staying at a friend's house when the IRS visits.
- The Truth from Ephesians 2:4-5.

2: Be merciful.

- This verse calls you to reproduce the Father's mercy for others.
- This begins right where we are, where we live in our marriage.

Marriage is amazing. It is a place where two sinners are thrown together just as they are, with no pretenses.

- Marriage becomes a stage to display mercy.
- We can't extend mercy to others until we begin to see them as God sees them.
- Mercy introduces ministry as a primary goal for marriage—the ministry of tender loving care for each other
- How I relate to others in their sin reveals my grasp of the gospel.

Luke 6 becomes a powerful declaration of the transforming power of Jesus!

In this passage, by displaying the worst situations happening to us, he covers all of the possible exceptions.

Remember:

Marriage is about mercy.

Mercy introduces ministry as a primary goal of marriage.

End of Session 5

Session 6 Overview

What this session is all about

In this session Dave offers practical and valuable help about what mercy looks like in your marriage. This is material that is distinctly Christian and gospel centered.

Three central ideas:

1. Mercy in Kindness
2. Mercy in Covering
3. Mercy for Weakness

What to look for

Dave provides you with an intimate glimpse of the role that mercy has played in his marriage with Kimm. Pay special attention to these illustrations and make the connections to your own marriage! There is humor, love and compassion in abundance. Please take special note of Dave's wise counsel regarding abuse. See what happens when Dave "loses" his phone.

Session 6: Mercy, Part 2

Luke 6:27-36

"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

1. Mercy in Kindness

- How do you respond when your spouse sins in general and specifically when you are the one sinned against?
- Are you tempted to become angry, to withdraw, to retaliate, etc.?
 - Remember: Even in the face of poor behavior, our God is merciful.
 - This is extraordinary - God is kind to sinners! See Luke 6:36: *"Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."*
- God's mercy must impact our lives—for instance, how do you do when spouse or

family member seems ungrateful?

- Kindness is not simply the absence of bad but the presence of good.
 - Kindness is not just a refusal to retaliate. It is also retuning good for bad
 - Kindness displays the power of the gospel because it is an extension of the cross.
- See Romans 2 and follow the example - God's kindness is meant to lead us to repentance.
 - Note the story of how a husband's kindness leads his wife to repentance, but remember that this will not always happen. Honoring God is not like going to the soda machine.

Don't miss this:

True mercy does not enable abuse. In fact mercy sees that highest form of love is not to submit to physical or sexual abuse but to expose the evil of it.

2. Mercy in Covering

There is a special privilege in dealing with sins committed against you. This is called forbearance.

- Forbearance is not ignoring that there may have been sin; it is a choice to overlook it as if it never happened.
 - Proverbs 19:11 *"...it is his glory to overlook an offense."*
 - I Peter 4:8 *"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins."*
 - See illustration about going to church on Sunday morning.
- Since Jesus paid the price for sin, we don't need to exact justice from one another.
- Expressing kindness or covering sin does not mean we neglect the ministry of correction.
- Correction by a merciful person carries more weight – the suspicions of having an agenda are eased.
 - Mercy helps to shape how and when we correct.
 - We shouldn't be controlled by our inner prosecuting attorney as we deal with others.

3. Mercy for Weakness.

How does mercy apply when we encounter one another's flawed and frail humanity?

- **Help, I have lost my phone!**
 - This story represents an opportunity to humiliate or to show kindness in mercy!
 - Even when others are slow to respond mercy is appropriate and needed to build the marriage relationship.
 - It is the heart of mercy that stirs sympathy, rather than self-righteous, as a

response to weakness.

- Here is a significant question. How do you respond to the weaknesses and limitations of your spouse?
- **As God is patient with you, he calls you to be patient with your spouse!**

In conclusion: Do you see your marriage as a place for ministry through mercy?

- Sometimes mercy is pushed aside because we want peace and comfort more than ministering mercy to our spouses.
- Do you extend mercy to get a response? Do you view mercy as some spiritual transaction where you get a good response for your efforts?

If so, you have missed the point of mercy:

- **Mercy is a promise of reward, not of results.**
- **Mercy is given to be shared.**
- **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**

End of Session 6

Session 7 Overview

What this session is all about

This section is perhaps one of the best presentations you will ever hear about a biblical understanding of sex. Dave carefully works through 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 to demonstrate how radically different biblical sex is from what we are accustomed to hearing. Dave's purpose is to be both careful and pastoral.

What to look for

This material will turn your understanding of sex upside down. It is frank but not graphic—there is no racy terminology, no diagrams, just clear material to help you experience sex as God intended. Listen carefully to Dave's explanation about the role of service in sex. He calls this passage in I Corinthians 7 "The Corinthian Guide to Great Sex." Note the three main sections: Service, Talk and Heart.

Session 7: Sex

I Corinthians 7:1-5

Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

The Context - Corinth and Sex

1. What the Corinthian culture was like

- The city was a cosmopolitan, booming sea port complete with sailors and merchants, much like many of our modern cities.
- The Corinthians were interested in sex. Its chief shrine was the temple of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love.
- Worship involved prostitution and perversion.

2. People were being saved from this culture and brought into the church

- These new Christians brought their ideas of sexuality with them.
- Sex abounded—except in marriage

3. Paul offers a radically counter-cultural view of sex to these converts

- He gives them a biblical reorientation
- Marriage is about one man and one woman; everything else is excluded

The Corinthian Guide to Great Sex

1. Service

Scripture casts physical relationships in the context of service and responsibility.

Physical intimacy provides protection from sexual temptation. This is God's answer to pornography, adultery, sexual fantasy, etc.

Service in giving conjugal married rights.

- We have a responsibility to give to our spouses.
- God's sex system is to supply, not demand.
- The blessing of sex is bound up in discovering how our bodies can bring pleasure to our spouse.
- In pursuing the pleasure of our spouse, we glorify God with our bodies.

Claiming our bodies

- Our culture begins by claiming *my* body, *my* choice, *my* rights.
- In marriage, God claims our bodies for the pleasure and service of our spouse
 - This has important implications for masturbation.
 - God commands us not to deprive but to give.
- The force of this passage in I Corinthians does not diminish as we get older. Desires may change, but the fundamental orientation should not change from the honeymoon to post-menopause.

What must remain is communication, intimacy, and affection.

Marriage is more than sex.

2. Talk

Sex is not supposed to be the unspoken secret of marriage.

- Sex is designed not simply to experience pleasure, but that we should bond on the deepest level possible this side of heaven—Adam *knew* Eve.
- Talk is important because the experience of sex can shift and change as we pass through life.
- Talking helps us take the long view of situations and life events.

The goal for sex is the deepest level of heart exchange.

- Talking helps us define success for each other.
- Sexual success cannot be drawn from past expectations.

Some practical encouragement:

- Talk openly and often about giving conjugal rights.
- Don't fall for *silencers*—common excuses people give for not talking about sex.
- Encourage each other often—your spouse should think he or she is God's gift to you.
- Whatever you encourage, you get more of.

When to talk about sex:

- When you are **alert**
- When you are **alone**
- When you are **not in conflict**

3. Heart

Sex is about the heart.

- Scripture builds an amazing bridge between your heart towards your spouse and sex with your spouse.
- Heart issues often underlie sex problems.

Many sex problems center around the "trilemma" of sloth, unbelief or bitterness.

- **Sloth:** too passive/unresponsive, boredom/lack of desire, one spouse does all the initiating.
- **Unbelief:** I can't enjoy it, things will never change, past will always dog me, etc.
- **Bitterness:** Unbelief says "I can't," bitterness says "I won't."

There is good news in the gospel

- The gospel speaks to the most intimate problems of we have as a couple.
- The cross re-centers our identity so that we are no longer defined by our past, our mistakes or our fears!
- The gospel speaks to our bedroom—it changes what sex means.
- The gospel makes all things new so that sex can become the place of protected intimacy.

The illustration of 13 Things That Don't Make Sense.

- The purpose of sex can't be found in biology, evolution, science and culture. It must be found in God.
- Good sex exists for something outside of itself, it points to a greater reality.
- God loves good sex. He works to produce and protect it, because it says so much about him.

Session 8 Overview

What this session is all about

In this final session of the *When Sinners Say I Do* video series, Dave reminds us of just how dependent we are on the stubborn, relentless grace of God for all of life and especially for our marriages. While we may not have all of the answers, we have all that we need, which is supplied by God's stubborn grace.

What to look for

Notice how Dave makes the idea of grace practical for every area of your marriage. He provides a wonderful illustration from the story of Helen Keller that shows what stubborn grace looks like in action. This session has three key themes: God reveals the enemy by grace; God trains us to fight patiently by grace; God calls us to point our spouse to grace.

If you are a Jane Austen fan, be prepared for Dave's interpretation of her popular novels!

Session 8: Stubborn Grace

Titus 2:11-15

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

A survey of Titus 2:11-15

"No need in Christendom is more urgent than the need for a renewed awareness of what the grace of God really is." —J.I. Packer

- The goal of this series is not to simply get your marching orders and form a checklist for things to improve.
- Here is a stunning concept—grace is God's method of training us to pursue him.
- Grace did not just *appear*, it *remains*. It is not passive but active. It trains!
- Grace in marriage is not like the end of Jane Austen novels, where each book ends in a marriage. Grace is not just the end, but also it is the beginning.
- Grace that appears is grace that remains.

1. God reveals the enemy by grace.

How do you become aware of areas you need to change?

- Before we renounce we must first see... but we won't see unless grace first reveals.
- Before grace trains, it exposes the real problem.

The illustration of drilling the wrong tooth.

- In our desire to relieve pain we often drill the wrong tooth.
- **When we become aware of our sin, of the need of grace, do not jump to condemnation.**
- Start with this thought - stubborn grace is at work in my soul!

2. God trains us to fight patiently by grace.

Grace has not only appeared, but it has arrived with a job description.

- Grace meets us where we are with the goal of taking us to where God has called us to go.
- Grace opens our eyes and ears.
- Note the illustration of Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller— This is what stubborn grace does:

"I cannot begin to count over all she has done to give me eyes and ears within my limitations." —Helen Keller

- Grace educates us in the art of living.

How does grace work to change us?

- Grace gives the power to renounce the old. (verse 12a_)
- Grace gives us the power to live. (verse 12b)
- Grace gives us the power to wait for our blessed hope. (verse 13)
- Grace trains us to aggressively renounce and live while waiting patiently for God to move and change us.
- Change takes time!

"Human sin is stubborn, but not as stubborn as the grace of God and not half so persistent, not half so ready to win its way."

3. God calls us to point our spouse to grace

Grace is not a message we keep to ourselves—We are to become the means of grace to our spouse.

Practical tips:

- We know our friends are inclined to drift from grace to self effort.
- Our spouse may become discouraged with the pace of change.
- We want rapid change. It is important to remind each other that God works beneath the surface first. Celebrate what you see.
- We must point our spouse not simply to grace, but to the One from whom all grace flows.
- Real change can only happen because of grace.

**The illustration of Dave teaching his daughter to ride without training wheels—
We often don't see the hand that is guiding us!**

A final reminder:

**We don't have all the answers,
but we have all that we need:
a stubborn grace to run the race!**

End of Session 8