

"Building A House and Home"

"Finances & Intimacy In A Marriage"

Session Six

Review: Finances/Legal Issues & Sexuality Sections

Discussion:

1. How do/did your parents handle money?
 - It takes time to acquire what your parents have acquired over 25 years.
2. Are you entering marriage with financial pressures?
 - Money is the #1 source of conflict within marriages!

Patterns Of Financial Stress

1. There isn't enough money to meet basic needs as perceived by the couple.
2. There is enough money to meet needs, but the couple does not have the money management skills required to make financial ends meet. Money is not handled wisely.
3. Members of the couple operate under different value systems concerning priorities in the use of money and attitudes toward material things in general – leading to many conflicts over how money is spent.

Let's consider the habit of generosity. In the Bible, the word "believe" is used 272 times. The word "pray" is used 371 times. The word "love" is used even more, 714 times, but the word "give" is used 2,161 times. Now, why do you think that that's so? Why do you think God places such a major emphasis in the Bible on giving? Let me give you six practical reasons.

- a. Giving will make you more like God.

You see, God is a giver. Everything we have is a gift from God. I would have nothing if God hadn't given it to me. When I give, I'm like God. The Bible says that God so loved the world that He gave.

- b. Giving will draw you closer to God.

²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. **Matthew 6:21 (NIV)**

Let me ask you, where is your heart today? It's wherever your treasure is. If it's in a boat or a house or your business or your clothes or your children or your family or your career, wherever your treasure is, that's where your heart is. You see, every time I give to God, it moves me a little bit closer to him. It not only makes me like him, because God is a giver, it moves me closer to him. It draws me closer because that's where my treasure is.

- c. Giving is the antidote to materialism.

You cannot buy happiness, but you can give it away.

¹⁷Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. **1 Tim. 6:17 (NIV)**

Did you know that God wants you to enjoy everything that you have? It says it right there in the Bible. But then it goes on to say ...

¹⁸Command them ... to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. **1 Tim. 6:18-19 (NIV)**

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

d. Giving will strengthen your faith.

¹⁰Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. **Malachi 3:10 (NIV)**

This is the one place that God says, you can prove that I exist. He says try tithing. He says just give me ten percent and watch what I'll do in return. Now, I want to encourage you to take God at his word. Take a step of faith. Accept the challenge. And if you are not tithing, start tithing as God has commanded us to do. **(See Tithing Brochure)**

Now, of course, with all these promises in the Bible, there are premises. And God says, "You do this and I'll do this." And in this verse, he said, "You give and I'll give to you." Now, of course, we always say, "okay, God, you go first. You bless me and then I'll give to you." God says, "no, no, no. That doesn't require any faith. You prime the pump. You go first." Why? Because that requires faith. And what God is most pleased with is our faith.

e. Giving is an investment for eternity.

¹⁸ ... give happily to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. ¹⁹By doing this they will be storing up real treasure for themselves in heaven--it is the only safe investment for eternity! **1 Tim. 6:18-19 (Living)**

f. Giving blesses you in return.

²⁵A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. **Proverbs 11:25 (NIV)**

In other words, you reap what you sow. Whatever you give out, you are going to get back. But more than that, you are going to get back even more because if you are generous with others, God says "I'm going to be generous with you." If you are stingy, you are only hurting yourself. If you are not tithing, you are short-circuiting God's blessing. And in giving, God wants to bless you back.

³⁵"There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." **Acts 20:35 (NJB)**

Consider these four attitudes regarding how we give ...

- God wants you to give willingly.

¹²For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. **2 Cor. 8:12 (NIV)**

Paul is saying the amount isn't important. What's important is your attitude when you give. Reward for giving is based on the willingness, not on the wealth. It's based on how you give, not how much you give. God doesn't look at the amount you give. He looks at the amount left over.

He looks at how much -- he is evaluating your generosity not in light of how much you give, but how much you gave in light of how much he gave to you. That's the comparison. So give willingly.

⁷You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully. **2 Cor. 9:7 (NLT)**

If you ever feel pressured to give, don't do it. Because you don't get any credit for it anyway. If you are giving reluctantly and you are giving under pressure, don't give. He wants you to give willingly.

- God wants you to give thankfully.

¹²How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me? **Psalms 116:12 (NIV)**

You will never be able to repay God for all he's done for you. If he never did one more thing for you, he's already done so much for you today that you ought to give just out of gratitude the rest of your life.

³⁸Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity." **Luke 6:38 (MsgB)**

¹⁴Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. **1 Chron. 29:14 (NIV)**

- God wants you to give joyfully.

⁷You should each give, then, as you have decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. **2 Cor. 9:7 (TEV)**

God looks at our attitude. And the word "cheerful" -- when it said God loves a cheerful giver -- did you know that that word in the Greek is the word *hilarios*? Guess which word we get from that? It's the word hilarious. God wants us to be hilarious givers. Now, you know, in the New Testament, when they gave an offering, they had fun. Now, that's different from today's society.

- God wants you to give expectantly.

⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. **2 Cor. 9:6 (NIV)**

We reap what we sow; where we sow; after we sow and more than we sow. Another way of saying this is that we reap *later* and *greater*. For some this is discouraging but for those who allow this principle time to work in your life it's a tremendous blessing.

People often say can I give to my brother who is in need? Is that tithing? No, that's charity and you ought to do it. But it's not tithing. How do you know when it's tithing? It's undesignated. You come and you lay it at the feet of God and say, God, however you want this spent. Whenever I designate the giving, it's not tithing.

Three Types Of Growing Couples:

1. THE SPONTANEOUS GIVING COUPLE

Many of us are very good at this. If that is your only type of giving, then you will be very limited in what you can give. This is the way most people give and they are limited because of it. (Good Samaritan & The boy with the 5 loaves and 2 fishes)

2. THE STRATEGIC GIVING COUPLE

⁸ But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity.
Isaiah 32:8 (NLT)

Tithing is a strategic plan to put God first with your finances. Tithing is giving God 10% to the spiritual storehouse of my church so that we can be the blessing God wants my church to be for our families, our community, and the global commission. Become a percentage giver.

3. THE SACRIFICIAL GIVING COUPLE

These are the fanatics! These are those who think in upside down kinds of thinking. They don't think in terms of how much more they could get if their income rises, they think about what they can give if they give up other things. What can I give to God if I give up something else?

Discussion:

1. How was sex viewed in your household as you were growing up?

Honeymoon

- ★ Look under your pillow and you'll find your parents.
- ★ Look under your spouse's pillow and you'll find your in-laws.
- ★ Look at the foot of your bed and you'll find your siblings and your spouses siblings.
- ★ Look under your bed and you'll find all of your former lovers.
- ★ You bring to your bed your birth order, your parent's parenting style & early childhood experiences.

2. Do you have any inhibitions or hidden fears?

- ★ We all have a sex rulebook:
 - a. What gets me most upset in bed?
 - b. What, in general, most fulfills me sexually?
 - c. What makes me lose all interest in sex?
 - d. What generates the most interest in sex?
 - e. What sexual request or act creates the most fear in me?

Sex: ASAP

“As Soon As Possible”

vs.

“As Slow As Possible”

- ★ If you have been abused you need to share it with your spouse BEFORE you marry.

³Let there be no sex sin, impurity or greed among you. Let no one be able to accuse you of any such things. **Ephes. 5:3 (Living)**

⁴Honor marriage, and guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between wife and husband. God draws a firm line against casual and illicit sex. **Hebrews 13:4 (MsgB)**

Illustration: Making Music

Have each spouse play an instrument (guitar). Both can make noise ... they must work together to make music!!

Why women want to make their hubby happy ...

Your man needs you to be sexually attracted to him. It will impact his entire being one way or the other.

1. A sexually fulfilled husband will do anything for you.

2. A sexually fulfilled husband is a Scriptural mandate. (Goes both ways!)

¹Now, getting down to the questions you asked in your letter to me. First, Is it a good thing to have sexual relations? ²Certainly—but only within a certain context. It's good for a man to have a wife, and for a woman to have a husband. Sexual drives are strong, but marriage is strong enough to contain them and provide for a balanced and fulfilling sexual life in a world of sexual disorder. ³The marriage bed must be a place of mutuality—the husband seeking to satisfy his wife, the wife seeking to satisfy her husband. ⁴Marriage is not a place to "stand up for your rights." Marriage is a decision to serve the other, whether in bed or out. ⁵Abstaining from sex is permissible for a period of time if you both agree to it, and if it's for the purposes of prayer and fasting—but only for such times. Then come back together again. Satan has an ingenious way of tempting us when we least expect it. **1 Cor. 7:1-5 (MsgB)**

⁵ Love does not demand its own way. **1 Corinthians 13:5 (NLT)**

3. A sexually fulfilled husband will feel good about himself.
4. A sexually fulfilled husband will take on his life work with a vigor and purpose that is unmatched.
5. A sexually fulfilled husband appreciates the important things in life. (Home-centered vs. outside-the-home centered)

Husbands, it's time to make your wife purr ...

1. Pay attention to what she values and then pursue those things.

Have you approached sex as something you deserve and want, or have you approached sex as a very wonderful way to please your life like no other man can?

2. Mutually submit to her.

Men must die to themselves. Give up your control. Use your authority to serve protect and pleasure your wife.

²¹ Honor Christ by submitting to each other. **Ephesians 5:21 (TLB)**

3. Sexually pursue your wife outside the bedroom.

Good sex is an all-day affair. Your wife's responsiveness to sex will be determined how willingly you help out with the dishes, the kids' homework, or that leaky faucet that drips throughout the night.

Exercise: Write down your expectations for the wedding night.

Cycle: Women (28 days) & Men (72 hours)

Resources: "You Money: Frustration Or Freedom" (Howard L. Dayton)
 "Your Money Matters" (Malcom MacGregor & Stanley G. Baldwin)
 "Marriage And The Family" (Stephen A. Grunlan)
 "Real Life Marriage" (Lucy & Dennis Guernsey)
 "Intended For Pleasure" (Dr. Ed Wheat)
 "The Sex Act" (Tim LaHaye)
 "Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus" (John Gray, Ph.D.)
 "Sheet Music: Uncovering the Secrets of Sexual Intimacy in Marriage" (Dr. Kevin Leman)

Wedding Plans: Rehearsal