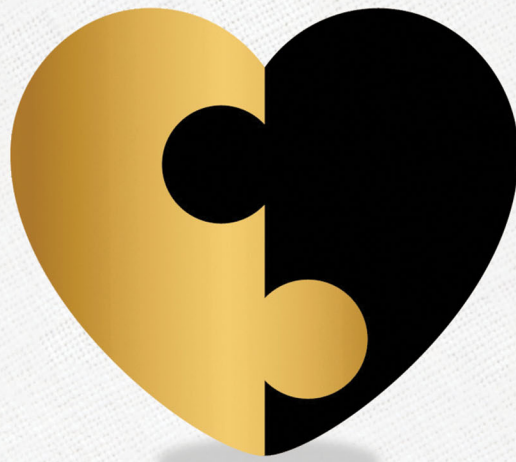


**GARY THOMAS & DEBRA FILETA, M.A., LPC**

# **MARRIED SEX**



**A CHRISTIAN COUPLE'S GUIDE  
TO REIMAGINING YOUR LOVE LIFE**

*chapter*  
one

# THE SONG OF ALL SONGS

Gary

Jocelyn and Danny come off as unusually integrated, connected, and intimate. They have the aura about them of knowing each other deeply, without facade, and delighting in who the other is.

“So what’s your secret?” I asked them.

“We sleep naked,” Jocelyn told me. “And Danny gets a full body-to-body naked hug every morning before he jumps in the shower.”

Though they have a very large master bedroom, they sleep in a relatively small, full-sized bed. “It looks like a postage stamp in that room,” Jocelyn said. “But we want to be close all night long.”

Jocelyn and Danny are living embodiments of the power of physical touch and sight to foster marital connection. This desire to connect and enjoy each other helps them avoid one of the most common marital arguments—yes, the nighttime thermostat setting.

“I’ve learned not to care what the temperature is,” Danny told me. “Guys usually think their wives want the temperature set too high and they complain about it being too hot to sleep and then fight to make it colder. But I’d rather Jocelyn feel warm enough not to want to wear any clothes, so I’ve trained myself not to care how hot it is.”

## Married Sex

Jocelyn and Danny aren't newlyweds, by the way. They've been married for a decade and a half, and in Jocelyn's words, "The sex keeps getting better and better and better."

That's not the message we're getting fed, is it? We live in a culture today that wants to fool us into believing that marriage is where sex goes to die.

The common lie that it's "all downhill" after the honeymoon, sexually speaking, allows far too many Christian couples to settle for mediocre or even pathetic sex lives. I'm astonished when Debra tells me how common it is for her to counsel couples who haven't been sexually intimate *in years*. And she's not talking about couples in their fifties, sixties, or seventies—she's talking about couples in their twenties and thirties.

Dr. David Schnarch, a clinical psychologist and certified sex therapist, points out that while our genitals reach peak performance before the age of thirty, "genital prime and sexual prime are entirely different, each occurring at opposite ends of your life span. People don't reach their sexual prime until their forties, fifties, or beyond."<sup>1</sup> A flourishing sexual relationship takes emotional maturity, relational maturity, and spiritual health, all of which can take decades to achieve. He captures the intent of *Married Sex* perfectly: "If you depend on horniness to carry you through a century of marriage,"<sup>2</sup> you're going to be sorely disappointed. If you're willing to build the kind of life, relationship, and spiritual vitality that energize sexual intimacy, your best, most satisfying years, sexually speaking, may very well lie ahead of you.

This evil, stupid lie that sex is most enjoyable and active only at the start of a relationship has stolen more marital pleasure than perhaps any other lie that Satan has concocted. The enemy's plan is always to subvert God's plan, which in this case means encouraging people to have as much sex as they can before marriage and as little sex as possible after marriage. And if sex is one of God's greatest gifts to us, you can be sure it is one of Satan's favorite targets to shoot at to ruin a marriage.

Thankfully, some couples fight back against this false view of sex, people who believe that God's plan for sex is better than anything

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we could have thought up on our own. These couples are “marriage explorers,” determined to map out, traverse, experience, and sightsee in this wondrous “land” called sexual intimacy in marriage.

Christians should lead the way in this endeavor. We worship God when we enjoy his creation, and sex is part of his creation. *But marriage is the necessary context in which sex reaches its supreme beauty.* A woman presenting her naked body to her husband in the privacy of their bedroom is a thing of beauty, intimacy, and loveliness. A woman walking naked through an airport makes us shudder and assume something is wrong with her mentally. Context is everything. Take sex out of its intended context, and a beautiful thing can become an agent of destruction.

The biblical context for a flourishing sex life is *marriage and love.* Since God is a God of love, we know that every healthy act of sex must be rooted in love, must be governed by love, and must be an expression of love.

The fact that God created sex tells us quite a bit about him, not the least of which is that he is the kind of God who approves of pleasure that feels transcendent. When we clearly know and love God, we can accurately see and understand sex. When we accurately see and understand sex, we can freely enjoy it.

As we will discover in God’s Word, *God loves sex, and therefore we should too.* Scripture affirms time and time again that sex in marriage is not only God’s plan but also a splendid gift that is ours for the taking, and one to be enjoyed throughout our married lives.

## The Song of Songs

God is a giver, and his gift-giving ability and creativity are stupendous. As I get a bit older, I value the gift of friendship. I treasure the wisdom that pours from the pages of Scripture. I marvel at a grandparent’s infatuation with a grandchild and would have laughed at myself years ago if I had known that a photo of our precious little Anna would

become my screen saver. My wife and family relish the savor and smell of exotic foods. Adrenaline-soaked pursuits, creative endeavors, musical delights, the exercise of the spiritual gifts—it's amazing how many good things God gives us to enjoy.

And yet none of these good gifts receive a title like the distinctive one given to a long poem explicitly celebrating sexual intimacy between a man and a woman: the Song of Songs.

While some translations prefer “the Song of Solomon,” the Hebrew title for this book of the Bible is translated Song of Songs, and that's significant because “something of something” is a powerful and poetic ancient Near Eastern phrasing that leads to an astonishing conclusion.

Let's consider the phrase that describes God as “King of kings.” What does “King of kings” mean? It *doesn't* just mean that God is the strongest of kings, the wisest of kings, or the mightiest of kings. It goes beyond that to mean that if you put all the kings of the universe together, God would still be King of those kings. There is no equal; there is not even a close rival. He's different *in kind*, infinitely beyond comparison.

So when describing the sexual relationship between a man and a woman as the “song of songs,” the Bible doesn't call this physical union merely the most powerful human experience, the most pleasurable human experience, or the most celebrated human experience—it's called the experience beyond all others. In this book we will discuss everything this sexual intimacy entails—the spiritual analogies behind sex, sex's ability to create human life, the pleasure two bodies can make each other feel in a fallen world, the spiritual connection that is fostered, the way our brains are rewired during sex to desire and celebrate the one we're having sex with—and we will see that no other human experience could hope to rival the “song of songs.”

Think about all the songs in the Old Testament that could have assumed this name: the song of Israel celebrating deliverance after the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 15); the song of Deborah celebrating victory after God delivered the Israelites from the Canaanites (Judges 5); the song of Samuel's mother celebrating parenthood after the dedication

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of her promised son (1 Samuel 2); the song of David celebrating success after he defeated Goliath (1 Samuel 18:7). A nation delivered, enemies defeated, a child conceived, a victory won—none of these songs are called the *song of songs*. None of them receive the title given to sexual intimacy in marriage.

Before the writer of this celebrated poem uttered a single point of instruction, his title alone preached a powerful sermon about God’s view of sex.

And what an explicit song it is!

Modern readers may not understand *how* explicit this Song of Songs is because it’s an “idyll”—a stylized, romantic form of poetry that brilliantly conveys clear erotic truth to any adult who picks it up and can “read between the lines,” while not scandalizing any ten-year-old who comes across it and who will be clueless about what those pomegranates, grape clusters, and henna blossoms are really all about. In fact, the ability of Song of Songs to be *so* explicit to the married and *so* innocent to the uninitiated may make it one of the most brilliant acts of authorship ever produced.

### A Woman’s Highest Pleasure

Jocelyn started attending a women’s Bible study, only to be shocked at how regularly some of these Christian women bashed their husbands.

“And the worst,” one woman said, “is when I come to bed with my robe on and am reading my book, and he actually thinks I might be interested in sex! Honey, this robe is your clue that the store is closed for the night!”

Most of the women laughed, but Jocelyn grieved. “Danny and I have a strict ‘no clothes in bed’ policy,” she said out loud—and the laughter stopped. “And sex is *always* on the table.”

The women looked at Jocelyn like they had heard the most bizarre thing in the world, like she had uttered something profoundly offensive.

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“Sex isn’t a chore,” she explained. “It feels so wonderful. Why wouldn’t you want to have good sex? If it’s not great, work at it and make it better. I’d much rather come to bed naked and enjoy a good climax at night and then wake up feeling close and connected to my husband in the morning. I’ll put on a robe to make breakfast for my kids in the morning, but I would never put on a robe to tell my husband to keep his hands off me at night.”

The very next day, Jocelyn received a phone call from one of the leaders. “Jocelyn,” she said, “we’ve been thinking that maybe it’s time for you to start your own Bible study. You’re so honest and open—maybe that’s what God is calling you to do.”

You read that right: talking positively about her sex life got Jocelyn thrown out of her first married women’s Bible study.

Though it may have been uncomfortable for the Bible study women, Jocelyn was acting and talking very “biblically.” The second verse in Song of Songs offers God’s fundamental statement about sexual satisfaction for a woman, essentially saying that there’s nothing else like it: “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—for your love is more delightful than wine.”

In spoken Hebrew, the words for “kiss” and “kissing” sound like someone kissing (like the word *moo* tries to imitate the actual sound of a cow). The Song isn’t a technical treatise; it’s a sensual retelling of bedroom antics. And the repetitive “let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth” may sound redundant (what else is he going to kiss her with?), until you realize that the kissing may involve *his* mouth but not always *hers* (meaning he’s also kissing elsewhere). She wants his mouth all over her.

Why does she want this?

She wants her husband to keep kissing her because it is one of the supreme pleasures in her life. The Hebrew word describing the husband’s “love” is *dod* and refers to acts of lovemaking, not to the emotional feelings. She is explicitly saying that his oral and physical caresses are “more delightful than wine.”

To explain the astonishing power and revelation behind this

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assertion, let me ask you to go back three thousand years and try to imagine what life was like for an ordinary Middle Eastern woman. There was no cup of coffee and certainly no caramel macchiato in the morning. There was no air-conditioning in the desert at noon. There was no dark chocolate in the afternoon (it hadn't been invented yet). And there was no bed to lie on at night—she slept on a mat or blanket.

She didn't get to wear cashmere. Silk had been invented in China, but it wouldn't have been found in the desert. Virtually every luxury that modern women enjoy today was denied to a woman living back then, except for one:

*Wine.*

To an ancient woman who enjoyed precious little entertainment, there was no more celebrated pleasure than wine, except, apparently, for sex with a generous, creative, and thoughtful husband.

A modern reader comes across the phrase “your kisses are better than wine” and isn't stopped in her tracks because she has catalogs of pleasure to compare wine to. She might not even like wine! But three thousand years ago, this was a shocking comparison.

So the Bible's book on marital sex *begins* with a woman confessing that one of her highest pleasures in life is being kissed all over by her husband. If it were pictured in a movie, it would go like this: the husband approaches his wife with a full glass of wine and she purrs, “Put that wine down and get busy.” The Song says sex isn't just for the husband or even primarily for the husband. The first person to be pleased is *the wife*. The Bible celebrates and sanctifies the pleasure women get from sex.

When Jocelyn was first married, she enjoyed sexual intimacy, “but,” she says, “I didn't realize it could keep getting *better*.” What helped her value Danny's kisses “more than wine” was growing in understanding.

“Fifteen years ago, I didn't know what I didn't know. I never imagined it would take me a decade and a half to enjoy the best sex in my life. In fact, early on I thought it was great and would have asked myself, *How can it get any better?*—but it does! It's like learning a new sport or playing a new instrument: you hone your craft.”



## Married Sex

Jocelyn was truly surprised by what she discovered. “When I was a teenager, you’d hear boys talking about masturbation and porn and wanting sexual stuff from girls, but my friends and I never talked about sex like that; it was a whole different level of interest, so I grew up thinking sex was for boys, not girls.”

Fifteen years of marriage have radically changed her mind. “When wives push away their husbands, what amazes me is how much *the wives* are missing out. How do you not want to have that release? It feels so good. You sleep better, and the way it brings you closer to your husband that night and the very next day—well, I suspect they’re just not having an orgasm, because I don’t know why a woman would turn that down.”

What helped Jocelyn get to this place? “It wasn’t just becoming more knowledgeable about sex. Most importantly, I learned *me* better. I have to turn off the rest of the world and focus on the moment, refusing to think about children and work and the house. At the start I’d remind myself, *This is good. This is what the Lord wants for Danny and me.*”

### NOTE FROM DEBRA

I love Jocelyn’s attitude about sex with her husband. But as a licensed counselor, I also know that reaching orgasm and engaging in a fulfilling sex life often take much more understanding for a woman than for a man. I’ve worked with many women who struggle to enjoy the act of sex because their bodies aren’t letting them enjoy it. If you find yourself regularly experiencing pain during sex, facing an ongoing lack of sexual desire, or coping with an inability to reach orgasm, there are often both physiological and psychological issues that need to be understood and addressed. I don’t want you to read this chapter and think you’re not being a “biblical wife.” I want you to soak in the pages of this chapter as an invitation to hope, to see that it is possible for you to work

toward a fulfilling sex life that is just as enjoyable for you as it is for your husband. I want to pause here and promise you that we will address both the physiological and psychological barriers together in later chapters of this book. You don't have to figure this out alone. We're here to help you get there.

## Turbocharge

Song of Songs 1:2 presents quite a picture for wives, but let's venture just a few verses further into the Song of Songs until we hit verse 9 of chapter 1 and find the fundamental statement the Bible makes about the pleasure *a husband* gets from sex: "I liken you, my darling, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariot horses."

When these words were written more than three thousand years ago, the hearers knew Pharaoh's chariots weren't pulled by mares. Only stallions fulfilled that function. Back then, the pharaoh was like the king in a game of chess—if the king went down, the battle was over. Stallions were the strongest, fastest horses in the kingdom, so they were the preferred animals to empower the leader's chariot.

Enterprising Egyptian horse handlers discovered a way to make a stallion go even faster, however. Put a mare among the stallions, and her very presence and even scent could whip the stallions into a sexual frenzy. Sexually excited stallions are stronger and faster than nonexcited stallions. This was how you literally boosted the "horsepower" thousands of years before we could inject additives into combustion engines!

Song of Songs 1:9 presents the picture of a man who glories in his wife's sensuality and who assures her that their lovemaking is an energizing force for good in his life. Remember how Jocelyn described what sexual intimacy did for her? She has seen this same benefit for her husband, Danny. "His personality bends him toward being connected

to people. He tends to feel rejected and not loved. When he is loved by me sexually, it's like he blossoms into this other person.”

Danny concurs. “Being sexually desired means I'm accepted and appreciated and that someone wants me. The way my brain works, if my wife doesn't want me sexually, then she doesn't want me *period*—and that makes me feel alone and rejected. It affects my identity.”

It's worth pointing out that Danny goes out of his way to make sure their sexual relationship isn't primarily about him. He glories in the times he brings Jocelyn to climax and then they both slip off to sleep without him “finishing” or even being inside her, something he thinks every husband should do from time to time.

“It's really not just sex that Danny wants and needs,” Jocelyn explains. “It's me being interested in and enjoying sex. Danny certainly doesn't want it to come across like it's a chore. If that's my attitude, I may as well not bother.”

They both laughed about a recent morning when Danny literally skipped in the hallway as he walked into work (they work together) after a morning of making love.

“You can see he holds his head a little higher,” Jocelyn says, “and his whole day is different.”

“Starting out the day like that gives you a sense of confidence about yourself,” Danny explains. “I bring a new force and confidence and even creativity to the office when I know Jocelyn and I are connecting.”

## Intoxicated

One of the things that scared Jocelyn the most about sex early on is also one of the most surprising admonitions in Scripture about sexual intimacy: its *intensity*. For instance, Song of Songs 5:1 (ESV) reads, “Eat, friends, drink, and be drunk with love!”

This is biblical encouragement to let ourselves be carried away by our passion and desire for each other, even to be “intoxicated” with each

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other. It's God's way of saying, "Feast on your desire; let your passion carry you away." *Within marriage*, this is a safe and holy journey, a divine celebration of the power of sexual passion to make us forget everything else.

As her and Danny's sex kept getting better, Jocelyn was actually getting a bit worried because she didn't like the "out of control" feeling.

"I don't like to lose control because I'm so used to controlling everything: our money, schedules, homework, the kids' meals, their closets, you name it. It's not comfortable for me to be out of control. But to reach orgasm, a woman has to let go. It's scary at first, but the reward is so overwhelming that once you learn to do it, it gets a lot easier."

God apparently designed sex on this earth to give us otherworldly experiences through our bodies (metaphorically speaking, of course). Take Proverbs 5:18b–19: "May you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love."

The Hebrew word for "rejoice" is a fascinating choice. It's used elsewhere in the Bible to describe how joy is manifested "in joyful frolicking (Jer. 50:11), in stamping the feet and clapping the hands (Isa. 55:12; Ezek. 25:6), and in dancing, music, and shouts of joy (e.g., 1 Sam. 18:6; 2 Sam. 6:12, 14; 1 K. 1:40, 45; Neh. 12:27). The joy is so effusive that one is beside oneself."<sup>3</sup>

The sensual delight a man takes in the beauty of his wife's body leads him to dance! Imagine what that must make a woman feel like—to be so celebrated and cherished. And then Proverbs gets downright sensual, referring to a husband's being *enthralled* by his wife's breasts. This strong attraction is presented as a blessing. The Teacher hopes the husband will continually, throughout his days, be "intoxicated" by his wife's naked body and that the wife will enjoy having this magnetic allure over her husband.

Another couple with whom Lisa and I have become great friends, Darrell and Joanne, use Proverbs 5:18b–19 as they work with married

couples. Darrell and Joanne have been married for more than twenty years, but Darrell will quickly say, “I am more captivated today by Joanne’s body than I was even on our wedding night, and it’s not that my eyesight is getting worse as I get older.”

At this point Joanne jumps in and says, “It’s true. I’m twenty pounds heavier; my body has aged; and I’ve got some gray hair now, which Darrell calls highlights, but he is even more enthralled with my body than ever. And now to see Darrell continue to be captivated by my body above all others gives me absolute confidence that this will be true for the rest of our lives.

“When we got married, it felt a little awkward that Darrell loved my body so much. I mentioned it to my mother, who asked me if I would want it any other way—and of course, I wouldn’t. She went on to say that I should enjoy entralling him. Not just that he was enthralled, but that I should actively enthrall him.”

“I will always be captivated by her body,” Darrell continues. “Fast-forward another two or three decades from now, and I’m certain that her body will continue to excite and intoxicate me. God truly knew what he was doing when he created her body and then wired my mind.”

When Darrell and Joanne work with couples, they challenge the newlyweds to try activities such as naked night (no clothes after 6:00, except maybe an apron while cooking). Darrell reports, “It’s surprising that this is outside many couples’ comfort zones. We encourage the couples to appreciate each other’s body and to be 100 percent unashamed and uninhibited. We point out that this is God’s design. We recite Proverbs 5:18–19 and parts of Song of Songs. Eventually, they start to understand.”

By creational design and divine revelation, God clearly wants a wife’s beauty to enthrall her husband. In Song of Songs 7:5, the king says he is “held captive” by his wife’s *hair*. In 6:5, it’s her *eyes*: “Turn your eyes from me; they overwhelm me.” “Captivated” and “overwhelmed” are beautiful and true poetic descriptions of a wife’s beauty that arrests her husband’s attention.

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We are emphatically *not* reducing a woman's power over her husband to her sexual appeal alone. That would be grossly inaccurate. But to deny this power entirely and not seek to understand its creational design is to choose ignorance about the way marriage is designed to work and thus to miss a significant aspect of sexual intimacy between husband and wife. It is a good thing, a holy thing, and a divinely ordained reality for a man to be smitten by the wonder of his wife's body.

The Hebrew word for "intoxicated" (*tisgeb*) is explained by a classic Old Testament commentary as a "morally permissible love-ecstasy."<sup>4</sup> Dr. Michael Fox, an American biblical scholar, comments, "The term connotes no disapproval here, but perhaps it bears a slightly 'naughty' overtone by suggestions of 'straying' deliciously dazed in the ecstasies of lovemaking."<sup>5</sup> Dr. Bruce Waltke points out that the father here "*admonishes* that inhibitions be left behind in the marriage bed."<sup>6</sup>

Have you ever given yourself over to sexual enjoyment and desire to such an extent that you feel intoxicated?\* Doing so may sound scandalous (and would be outside of marriage), but within marriage it's *biblically commanded as a blessing*.

We pastors have spent thousands of years warning young people to say no to sex outside of marriage; the biblical record is just as strong that married couples need to ramp up the intensity of their "yesses." It's okay to let yourself go in each other's arms, to experience the dimensions of pleasure and enthrallment with each other that God designed us to feel.

We will never understand sex in marriage if we ignore the scriptural truth that it is good, holy, and sacred for us to be captivated by each other's bodies. God wants husbands and wives to have this power over each other, to intoxicate and to be intoxicated.

The biblical record presents a God who reveals to us the sacred power behind sexual passion in marriage and who urges us to explore

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\* We realize that not all marriages are healthy, and the thought of "losing control" in a potentially abusive situation is (and should be) terrifying. This advice isn't absolute—it's specific to a healthy marriage with both spouses committed to the truth of 1 Corinthians 13:4–7.

it to the very depths. God is letting us know with explicit language: “I’ve created something wonderful, powerful, and delightful for wives and husbands to enjoy together. Take advantage of it, use it, and honor me by honoring it.”

### Making Up for Lost Time

A pastor called me after I had led a Sacred Marriage seminar at his church. “Thanks for giving me the most awkward pastoral counseling conversation of my life,” he said.

“What happened?” I asked.

“After your talk on sex, a seventy-one-year-old woman in our church said it was like God flipped a switch in her brain. She said no one had ever told her in church that it was okay for women to enjoy sex, that in fact God *created* them to enjoy sex. Her very tired-looking husband who was standing next to her got a big smile on his face. ‘She’s been making up for lost time,’ he said, ‘and I’m not sure I can keep up.’”

The pastor finished with these words: “She was actually quite angry about all the years that had been stolen from them as a couple because they had never heard the biblical basis for sexual pleasure.”

Our prayer is that couples will hear and take to heart this instruction long before they turn seventy. We’ve seen many couples blessed by the sexual intimacy that flows from their union. Their fulfillment in the bedroom colors every aspect of their marriage and relationship. It brings joy, peace, contentment, and a special shared intimacy because they regularly do something together that they share and talk about with no one else. Many have affectionate “code language” that creates a unique bond. They can say something seemingly innocuous in public, like “stapler,” and nobody realizes they’re using a sexual innuendo unique to them (I can’t figure it out either). This code language gives them a secret, shared intimacy that nothing else can match.

### NOTE FROM DEBRA

I love the idea of having a unique phrase that signals our intimacy. It's a lighthearted way of sharing something special and communicating desire. My husband, John, and I have defaulted to a certain phrase, but if I shared it with you, it wouldn't be our special code word anymore! Over the course of time, I've asked married couples to tell me the code word they use with one another to communicate that they want to have sex.\* Here are some of the unique and hilarious phrases couples shared:

- *One of us will say, "Do you want a back rub?" \*Disclaimer: He found out that sometimes she actually does just want a back rub!*
- *We say, "Let's have some grown-up fun!"*
- *"Stuff." As in, "What do you want to do tonight? Stuff."*
- *One of us says, "Do you want a night out in Funkytown?"*
- *We say, "We need to pay the bills."*
- *One of us will say, "Wanna wrestle?"*
- *One of us says, "Do you want some Skittles?"*
- *We call it "magic mornings"!*
- *My husband tells me he wants to go to Disneyland, where we ride all the fun rides!*
- *One of us asks, "Is it Wednesday?" Because Wednesday is usually the day we end up having sex, so that's our term!*
- *We say, "Salsa time!"*
- *We refer to it as "time for us" or just good old "let's have sex." No need for code when we know what's coming!*
- *One of us says, "Can I interest you in having sexual relations?" We are both big nerds!*

\* See appendix 1 for research information.



- *One of us says, "Rubby!"*
- *One of us says, "Bow chicka bow wow."*
- *We simply found ourselves saying, "I've missed you," to mean we want to have sex!*

It's fun to hear the different ways couples refer to their sex life. But the key to remember is that it's less important what you call it and more important that you learn to communicate about it. Because, as Gary mentions, depending on how you approach it, sex can become the greatest blessing in your life, or it can be the biggest burden.

We have also witnessed how sexual intimacy, created to be a blessing, has become a heavy burden for many couples. Few pains are felt more intensely than sexual pain, and few rejections are felt more personally than sexual rejection. Perhaps no offense stings quite like sexual betrayal. It's as if one or both of the spouses know they're missing out on something profound, and so they grieve it all the more.

The reason Debra and I chose to begin this book with the biblical record is that too many books and discussions about sex begin with what the couple wants, enjoys, and "needs" from each other. For Christians, sexual intimacy should begin with what *God* wants us to enjoy from sex. He designed it, after all, and it's clear from his Word and his creation that sexual pleasure is a good thing. Our bodies are designed to experience sexual climax.

Since that's the case, let's move forward, committed to being sexual explorers, people eager to search out this amazing "land" that God has created. We don't need to separate our faith in God from our desire to be sexually intimate. Quite the opposite is true: our marriages will be best served when we care about sex as much as God does.