



Solomon on Sex

Avoiding Marital Disaster

Small Group Work Sheet

February 12, 2012

Part 1 - Ice Breaker

- Have you given away *Solomon on Sex Invitation Cards*? To whom? How did it go?
 - How has this series influenced your marriage (if you are married) or your approach to dating and marriage (if you are single)
 - Have you heard any life-changing stories during this series?
1. What homework have you accomplished from earlier messages in the series?

Part 2 - Sermon Review

2. Review the homework from the sermon handout. Which assignment is most important for your marriage?
3. The umbrella theme of the message is the importance of guarding your thought life for the health of your marriage. Is this a new concept for you? Do you think it is easy for fantasy to turn into reality?
4. Read Genesis 8:21. What does it tell us about our thought life?
5. Read Romans 7:21-25. What does it tell us is the *only* way to get our thought life under control?
6. Read Hebrews 4:12. What role does Bible reading play in a pleasing thought life?
7. Are you problem centered or solution centered? What do you need to address if you are to become a solution centered person? When you get problem centered, do you give your spouse the freedom to challenge you in this area?
8. Before this message, did you consider a crisis to be a chance to take a big step forward in your marriage, not backward? Have you ever used a crisis to help your marriage? Share your story?
9. What is one healthy action step the group can hold you accountable to take in your marriage?

Part 3 - Digging Deeper

Save Yourself For Marriage. Enjoy a Better Sex Life.¹

In 1993 it was reported that sixty-eight million Americans had a sexually transmitted disease. Approximately 15.3 million Americans contract an STD annually. One in four of the victims is under age twenty. Five of the eleven most commonly reported infectious diseases in this country in 1998, the last year for which data are available, were STDs. And that doesn't include the most common STDs, herpes and human papilloma virus (HPV); the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) don't collect data on these. HPV causes over ninety percent of cancer and pre-cancer of the cervix, which, in turn, is causing the deaths of approximately five thousand American women yearly.

The number of lifetime sex partners is highly correlated with the likelihood of contracting an STD. Studies from the CDC clearly show that, on average, the younger a person is when he or she starts to have sex, the more partners he or she is likely to have. Hence, delay sexual activity until marriage and avoid STDs. Furthermore, the likelihood of contracting an STD during marriage is negligible. Thus, more marriage means fewer STDs. And keep this in mind: many STDs are incurable; others can render you sterile; and some are potentially fatal. It is an amazing reality to think that if we would simply do sex God's way, one man with one woman within the covenant of marriage for life, every single STD would disappear from the planet in one generation.

We now know sex is more satisfying for those who wait until marriage. A survey of sexuality, which was called the "most authoritative ever" by *U.S. News & World Report*, conducted jointly by researchers at State University of New York at Stony Brook and the University of Chicago, found that of all sexually active people, the people who reported being the most physically pleased and emotionally satisfied were married couples.

One writer was rather straightforward, "Promoting marriage in America will mean for a lot more happy men and women." Sex in America reported that married sex beats all else. For example: "Married women had much higher rates of usually or always having orgasms, 75 percent, as compared to women who were never married and not cohabiting, 62 percent." And, the researchers wrote, "those having the most sex and enjoying it the most are the married people."

Not only is sex better in marriage, it is best if you have had only one sexual partner in a lifetime. We now know "physical and emotional satisfaction start to decline when people have had more than one sexual partner." God knows best about sex. God knows best about *marriage*.



Cohabiting Before Marriage May Ruin Your Marriage.²

Married people have healthier unions than couples who live together. Research from Washington State University revealed, "Cohabiting couples compared to married couples have less healthy relationships."

Married people are generally better off in *all* measures of well being. Researchers at UCLA explained that "cohabitators experienced significantly more difficulty in [subsequent] marriages with [issues of] adultery, alcohol, drugs and independence than couples who had not cohabited." In fact, marriages preceded by cohabitation are fifty to one hundred percent *more* likely to break up than those marriages not preceded by cohabitation.

"Wife beating" should more properly be called "girlfriend beating." According to the *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, "aggression is at least twice as common among cohabitators as it is among married partners."

Married people enjoy better physical and mental health. Dr. Robert Coombs, a biobehavioral scientist at UCLA, conducted a review of more than 130 studies on the relationship between well-being and marital status, concluding that "there is an intimate link between the two." Married people have significantly lower rates of alcoholism, suicide, psychiatric care, and higher rates of self-reported happiness.

¹ Akin, D. (2003). *God on sex: The Creator's ideas about love, intimacy, and marriage*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers. Chapter 6

² Ibid.