

God's Purpose for Sex

By Dr. Howard Hendricks

Announcer:

Dr. Howard Hendricks speaking on God's purpose for sex.

Howard Hendricks:

We are in the process of setting forth some basic scriptural principles which emerge from a firsthand study of the revealed Truth of God. And we're looking together in Genesis one and two. And I have shared with you three of these principles. First, we noted from this passage that marriage and sex are of divine origin. He thought of them. They are not the product of a human pervert. They are the product of a divine plan. Like all of God's gifts, they are good. They are perfect. They are sourced in Him. Second, we noted that marriage and sex were gifts given by God before the fall. Therefore, they are not sin. They may be prostituted. They may become sinful in their youth. But they are not sinful as God designed them for man. It is sin that perverts. It is grace alone that can perfect.

In the third place, we noted that reproduction is the normal, but not the exclusive purpose of sex. And tonight, I would like to build on this foundation and share with you some additional insight on the basis of this passage of scripture. The [unintelligible] that we are creatures of extreme. We are always suffering from the peril of the pendulum. I have often said to my students, you don't have to do anything to move in the direction of an extreme. Just keep going the way you are and you will land there. There is nothing the devil would rather do than to push you in the direction of an extreme. And if he cannot freeze you as a believer, he will make you a fanatic. But in either

case, he greatly limits your effectiveness. Now, this is seen in the area of sex. On the one hand, we have those who seem to think that sex is everything, that all of life revolves around the genital organ. At the other end of the pole are those who seem to teach that sex is nothing. [Unintelligible] dirty, repulsive, to be avoided at all cost. And the truth is, neither represents the viewpoint of the Word of God.

Now, the same thing is seen in the realm of sex with respect to children. One example, there are some who believe in sex, but only for children. Only for a biological end. It's of interest to see that there were some theologians who took that track. I think their number is diminishing, and may their tribe decrease.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

At the other end of the scale is the person who says we believe in sex, but we don't want children. And there is a great deal in our present culture, which is feeding this extreme. Usually under the guise of the problem of overpopulation. And I seriously suspect that the problem is not so much overpopulation as it is self-centeredness. And here is another area in which you need to be careful that the world does not squeeze you into its mold. Two and no more is the current motto. And it might be preferable for you to adopt the two, rather than have your own and complicate the problem.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

Lecture is not only in living color, it is also in sound. I seriously question if God is lying awake at night biting his nails over the problem of population.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

My judgment, God never created a mouth He could not feed. And while as we shall see, on the basis of the scriptures, God certainly never countenances irresponsibility on the part of man. I am convinced that if God gives to you and the marriage into which He brings you children, that He is perfectly capable of supplying all of the needs. My statement is: make sure you are making your decisions on the basis of God blessing in your life, not on the basis of your culture. Make sure it is divine, not human viewpoint. That is your primary concern. I believe that scriptures teach a threefold purpose designed by God in the realm of sex. And we want to look at these tonight. The first purpose is to provide for parenthood. It is the purpose of propagation. I want you to turn in the Word which is alive, to the book of Genesis, chapter one, verses 27 and 28, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him. Male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it.'"

Now young people, that promise has never been canceled or rescinded. Never superseded by any higher truth. That is as true today as the God who revealed it. But He also tells us that we are to have dominion. That is, that we are to have control. God is not advocating irresponsibility in giving birth to children. Everywhere in the Word of God, control is God's order for the day. It's the control by means of the Holy Spirit that is the uniqueness of His ministry in our life. But

make sure that He is the one controlling you, and not your self-centered impulses. Not the person who says "I don't want to have children because they're going to cost me too much. They're going to be too inconvenient. They're going to take away all of my pleasures and privileges." Ladies and gentlemen, as a father of four children, I assure you I have no greater joy than that my children walk in the truth. The greatest God-gift God gave me apart from Himself was the gift not only of a wife, but the product of that relationship. Four children. And if I should die, I will die with complete fulfillment. For I am trusting God that my four children will make a greater impact for Jesus Christ on the next generation than I have been able to make alone on this generation.

We asked God for six children. He gave us six and then took two home at the time of birth. I wouldn't substitute anything for His sovereign leadership in the life of my wife and myself. May I say, young people, and I want to underscore this emphatically in your mind. I do not conceive of my family apart from my ministry. I conceive of my family as a part of my ministry. Throughout the Word of God, childlessness is a curse. But today, having children is the curse. What happened? This is [unintelligible]! What a casualty! The scriptures teach it's a tremendous privilege. This command is repeated in chapter nine and verse one when God reiterates the truth to Noah following the flood. So important is it in His design. But I want to direct your attention to a Psalm. It's the one hundred and twenty seventh Psalm. It's a beautiful Psalm, but we want to look at verses three through five, "Lo, children are the heritage of the Lord," That is divine viewpoint, "And the Fruit of the Loom is His reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth. Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them. They shall not be put to shame when they speak with their enemies in the gate."

Children are a blessing, not a burden. Now the Genesis passage also makes it clear. That God gives to both man and woman the equipment with which to reproduce, but neither of them can reproduce without the other. It is only in a marriage relationship, that which God has designed, that you have the ideal environment, that you have the adequate security essential as a context for a child. Not only into which he is born, but in which he thrives, and develops, and is nurtured. You might jot down the one hundred and twenty eighth Psalm, though we shall not look at it tonight, for it too underscores the privilege of parenthood. And I trust that you will not allow the enemy to rob you of the privilege. Someone asked me, "Have you written any books?" And I said, "No, I'm afraid I have not. It's taken me this long to get to the place where I think I really have something to say." And I would rather have you ask me, why didn't you write a book then why did you?

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

Well, I must confess professionally, that I would rather trade the writing of any book or series of books for the writing in the lives and in the experiences of my children. I've had the privilege of leading many people to Jesus Christ the Savior over the years in the ministry. But I have had no greater joy than to take this hand with my child, and this hand with the Lord, and be the human instrument to lead my children to Jesus Christ as Savior. I was riding on a plane some time ago from San Francisco to Chicago. And as always, I look forward to an opportunity to share my faith. I sat down next to a young business executive. I engaged him in conversation and it seemed that the opportunity was right to broach spiritual things. And the moment I did, he

bristled. He said, "Would you mind if we changed the subject?" Well I said, "I'd be very interested to know why." He said, "I'll tell you why. My parents were Christians. My father was internationally known. He traveled extensively as a Christian businessman, giving his testimony. My mother was a Bible teacher in classes in our community. My parents were so busy leading everyone else to Jesus Christ that they lost their own four boys. And there's not a one of us that's interested. Now, would you mind if we changed the subject?"

My friend, did you ever get anything crammed down the center of your throat? From a human point of view, that's an unanswerable argument. Here are four boys supposedly raised in the environment of a Christian home, and at the end of that, their conclusion is: we want nothing to do with it. My heart cries out to God every day I'm on this campus as I think of the potential wrapped up in each of you. I long that God will give you each one a ministry of distinction. A ministry that will reach throughout the world. But I must confess, I hope it is not at the expense of your own children. If you are too busy for your own home life, you are busier than God intended you to be. You've got a warped perspective concerning the ministry. I can think of nothing more tragic than getting home to glory and seeing hundreds, perhaps thousands, that you were instrumental in leading to Jesus Christ, only to find that you're two, three, four, five children are not there because of your parental neglect.

But there is a second purpose to sex in the Word of God, and that is to prevent fornication. The first reason is for propagation. The second one for prevention. And I want you to turn over to the New Testament to a passage we shall study more in detail later. First Corinthians, chapter seven. But I want you to relate it to the context, it's extremely rich. In chapter six, Paul writes verse 18,

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"Flee fornication. Take off every sin that a man doeth is without the body. For he that commiteth fornication sinneth against his own body. Don't you know that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you? Which you had from God? You are not your own. You've been bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body." What a tragedy to see a young person trying to glorify God in the Spirit and mortgaging his whole ministry by failing to glorify God in his body. Let's suppose that you dear people gave me a briefcase. A beautiful briefcase inscribed with my name, Campus Crusade for Christ, July 1970. Don't get any ideas.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

And suppose you were to visit my home in Dallas. My wife and I invited you to our little pad. And we had [unintelligible].

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

My favorite meal.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

After the meal, you were profoundly impressed, for you discovered that I got up from the table, went into the kitchen to help my wife with the dishes. You almost had a coronary.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

And finally, you said, I must go to see this thing which has come to pass!

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

And just as you arrive in the kitchen, I am taking out the garbage in the briefcase you gave to me.

Now, no one here would criticize me for taking out the garbage. But friend, not in that! That's not what it's designed for! That's the argument of the apostle Paul. Don't, prostitute your body.

It's the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Now he turns from this negative to the positive in chapter seven. And let's look at verse 2, "But because of fornication, let each man have his own wife and let each woman have her own husband." This is a preventive design, because you are living in a world of fornicators, and because you are exposed to them and this temptation. There is a legitimate outlet for the sexual drive which God has given to you. And that's within the sphere of marriage. You see, young people, the scriptures teach that freedom always involves [unintelligible]. You are never free to do as you please. You are free to do as He pleases.

Working with college students, one of the common statements is, "Yeah, but I'm free to do what I want!" And I love to discuss this subject with a man in a building on the twenty second story, for it gives me the ideal setting.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

I say, "My friend, you are perfectly free to do what you want. In fact, you are free to jump out the window. Be my guest. Once you're out the window, my friend, you are no longer free. You are now a hopeless slave, and you are going to be dashed on the sidewalk below by an [unintelligible] law. The law of gravity." He is saying the freedom for sexual release must take place within the fences of a marriage relationship. He underscores this in verse three by saying, "Let the husband render unto the wife her conjugal right," It should be translated, "And likewise also, the wife unto the husband." Please note, this is not unilateral action. There is always reciprocity in the act, by God's design. Furthermore, the wife does not have power over her own body, but the husband. And likewise also the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife. You don't belong to yourself anymore, my friend, if you are married, you belong to your husband and he belongs to you.

That's a mutual relationship and responsibility. "Stop defrauding ye one the other, except it be by consent for a season that you may give yourselves unto prayer, and that you may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency." Will you note that in this entire passage, there is no reference to children or of a biological purpose of marriage and of sex.

[Audio cuts out]

Howard Hendricks:

I believe what the apostle is saying is that it is absolutely essential that every man and every woman in marriage have a magnet. Some time ago, a student came to me and said, "Prof, how in the world can you keep so excited about marriage? Why you fairly froth at the mouth and need to be led away?"

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

And did I ever shake him up when I said, "My friend, it's perfectly obvious you do not know my wife."

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

I have the most irresistible magnet in the city of Dallas on Millmar Drive in a little prefab house that you have ever seen! And that draws me from all over the world! In fact, my greatest claim to fame is that I am that woman's husband. And I thank God upon every remembrance of His gift. You see, when you lose the magnetism within your marriage, then it is very easy for you to seek magnetism outside of the marriage. And it's very available today. Christian businessmen in our city, closely related with the Ministry of Crusades, said to me at lunch not too long ago, "Would you believe there is not one week that goes by for what [unintelligible] proposition at least one, by some woman in my office." The wonderful thing about this man, I happen to know, is that he has the strongest magnet in his home. That takes cultivation. That's why he said this is to be a continuous relationship.

The third purpose is to promote mutual love. The first purpose is for propagation. The second one for prevention. The third one for pleasure. The first passage I want to direct your attention to is Hebrews chapter 13 and verse four. And will you put down beside this reference the RSV? It probably has the most accurate translation. The writer says, "Let marriage be held in honor

among all, and let the bed, the marriage bed, be undefiled. For fornicators and adulterers God will judge." Notice he includes the preventive element, but he adds the fact that the marriage bed is an undefiled place and there is nothing here about the conception of children. Will you turn back in the book of Genesis, to chapter two and verse 24, for again in a context in which there is no reference to the biological purpose of sex? I read, "Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh."

One flesh symbolizing the closeness and intimacy of the relationship. Can I underscore in your thinking three ingredients that spring out of this passage in terms of what is involved in intercourse from God's point of view. There is, first of all, companionship, too intimately related in each other. Two, who give themselves without a string attached to each other, and who cultivate the relationship between each other. I think of nothing that tears me up quite as much as seeing a couple whose children have grown and departed the home, and who--

[Audio cuts out]

Howard Hendricks:

--Now, for all practical purposes, are psychologically divorced. They have built all of their life into their children only. Now that the children are gone, they've lost their reason for existence. They've done nothing to develop the companionship feature of a marriage. I'm thinking of a professional man, a very close friend of mine tonight, whom I love dearly in the Lord. He and his wife have a wonderful ministry for Jesus Christ. Highly motivated to serve Him. Their children are grown and gone, they live in the same home, but not in the same room. They put on all of the front in the social contact, including the church. But they have absolutely nothing in common.

They can't even discuss a subject together. When I am in their home and discuss something with them, it's almost always either with the man or with the woman, never with the couple.

The second ingredient is completeness. And I love this, young people, because this is what stretches your creative imagination, when you realize that it is in this kind of a relationship that one is building into the life of the other. And my primary task as a husband is to build my wife up to the greatest potential of her maturity and development. And her greatest goal in life is to so build into my life, that when I am ministering the Word of God at Arrowhead Springs, I sense it is because someone else has ministered deeply to me in the personal realm. The third element is the element of commitment. And never forget, you never have true marriage without commitment. Sex involves not only the act, but the willingness to bear the consequences of the act. To live with the result of that relationship.

Now the sma-the foundation of marriage is both physical and spiritual. In fact, the physical is a picture of the spiritual. The meeting of two bodies cannot of itself make love. It can only express a love which already exists. And the only time when this relationship is symbolized in experience is in the act of intercourse. I want to direct your attention to several passages of scripture which underscore one basic truth, and that is a legitimate purpose of sex is pleasure. Now, that's hard for some of us to chug down for the simple reason that, as I mentioned last night, many of us are suffering from a hangover from legalism. I don't know how many students come into my office and they say, boy, "Prof, would you help me in this matter of finding God's will for my life?" I said, "I certainly will. What do you feel God is leading you to?" "Well, I feel

God is leading me to this, but I really don't think that could be the will of God." I say, "How come?" They say, "I enjoy it too much."

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

They are still equating the fact that if you are miserable, you must be spiritual. And that's why the average Christian is not enjoying the spiritual life, he's enduring it. You take one look at him and his faith makes a good promise piece for the book of Lamentations.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

I say to him, "How are you, brother?" "Well I'm pretty good under the circumstances." "Well, what in the world are you doing under there?"

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

It's where he spends the bulk of his life. One of the greatest privileges of my life was to be closely associated with Dr. Harry Ironside, great saint of God. But plugged into reality. I remember one day I used to chauffeur him. He had to go to Tyler for a meeting one night, and I was involved in some other commitments. So I said, "I'm awfully sorry, doctor Ironside. I won't be able to drive you there, but I'll see if I can find another student." So I went to a student and I said, "Would you drive Dr. Ironside down to Tyler and back tonight for a meeting?" "Well, bro-

[Audio cuts out]

Howard Hendricks:

"--ther," he said, "I think I better talk to him about it." I said, "Wonderful." So he came, they said, "Dr. Ironside, what is this that you would like me to do?" "Well," he said, "Son, I wonder if you would drive me down to Tyler and bring me back for a meeting tonight." "Well, Doctor, I will have to pray about that." And I can still remember him saying, "Forget it, son. God's liable to lead you to take me down to Tyler and then not lead you to bring me back and I'd be hung!"

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

We had some very pious students on campus in those days, and I remember one came up to him one day and said, "Dr. Ironside, I understand that you get up very early every morning, and pray, and study the Word." "Oh yes," he said, "I've been doing that for many years." "Well, how do you manage to do it? Do you pray about it?" He said, "No, I get up."

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

One of the great impressions he left upon my life was the statement, "Son enjoy your Christian life." And he enjoyed it to the hilt till the last moment. May I direct your attention to several verses of Scripture which teach very clearly the pleasure principle as designed by God in this relationship? Will you turn, first of all to Genesis 18 and verse twelve? Genesis 18 and verse twelve. This is an intriguing story. You'll remember the angels visited Abraham on the Plains of Mamre. Let's begin reading at verse nine, "They said unto him, 'Where is Sarah thy wife?' And

he said, 'Behold, she's in the tent.' And he said, 'I will certainly return unto thee when the season cometh round. And lo Sarah thy wife shall have a son.' And Sarah roared in the tent."

[Howard Hendricks and audience laugh]

Howard Hendricks:

She was listening through the keyhole.

[Howard Hendricks and audience laugh]

Howard Hendricks:

Now, why did she roar?

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

Well, the scriptures give us two reasons. First of all, in verse eleven, "Now Abraham and Sarah were old, and well stricken in age. It had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women." It was biologically impossible for this woman to have a child. She had passed the menopause. And therefore, she laughed. Why that is an impossibility. But look at verse 12, for there is a second reason why she laughed. "Sarah laughed within herself, saying 'After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure?'" Underline that word, for that word can and often is translated to refer to the gratification of sexual desire. "Shall I have pleasure? My Lord, being old also?" Not only was it a biological impossibility, but from her point of view she had ceased to be sexually attractive. No chemical reaction here. That's why He tells you she was well stricken in age.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

But Sarah knew if you didn't, that it was a pleasure to relate to one's husband or wife in this act designed by God according to his specifications. Turn over to Genesis twenty-six and verse eight. This is a humorous incident. This is Isaac and his encounter with Abimelech. God had told him not to go down into Egypt, verse 6, Isaac dwelt in Gerar, and a man of the place asked him of his wife. And he said, "She's my sister." Where did he pick up that line? Exactly. He picked it up from his father. You see, Abraham had used that gimmick, and I think this is one of the most effective passages in all of the Bible to convince you that you communicate more to your children, not by what you say, but by what you do. He never said to his son, "Now, son, if you ever get caught in this kind of a rhubarb, I got a perfect out. Tell em she's your sister."

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

But he learned his lesson very well. "For he feared to say my wife, 'Lest,' said he, 'the men of the place should kill me for Rebecca.'" Extremely high motive. Because she was fair to look upon. Now notice verse 8, "And it came to pass when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked out a window and he saw and behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebecca." That's a lovely translation.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

You know what it means? It means to fondle, to make love to. Actually, he was Isaac-ing her, for it's the same root. He was playing with her. How graphic can he make it? And when Abimelech saw that, he said, "Man, you don't do that to your sister."

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

Some time ago, it was my privilege to bring the devotional to the Cowboys in Dallas before a number of their games. And I remember particularly before one of the critical Cleveland games, a reporter outside of the meeting hall said to Tom Landry, "Tom, would you be willing to settle for a tie?" He said, "Absolutely not." He said, "Settling for a tie is like kissing your sister. I want to win, that's like kissing my wife." You know, this is exactly what is happening here. You see what Abimelech saw, that he had proof positive that they were married. And you'll notice from this passage the wife is to enjoy, not to endure the relationship. This isn't a penalty. It's a pleasure. There is a third passage. Oh, yes. You must get this one down.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

Deuteronomy, chapter 24 and verse five. Now, I know you think man has made great progress, we're on the move now. But after you study this verse, you wonder if we made any progress. It seems to me we have regressed. In verse 5, "When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out into the hold," That is, he shall not go into the military, "Neither shall he be charged with any business. He shall be free at home one year."

[Audience laughs and applauds]

Howard Hendricks:

[Unintelligible]. What's he going to be doing that year? "He shall cheer his wife." Isn't that lovely?

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

You know what that means? He shall pleasure his wife. It is the same word translated elsewhere for sexual gratification. He shall pleasure his wife, whom he has taken. And my friends, we're really not that enlightened today. I want to share with you two principles that I hope--

[Audio cuts out]

Howard Hendricks:

--Will go deep down into your thinking on the basis of this verse. Number one, this tells me that it takes time to develop an adequate and a mature relationship. And our society doesn't help you at all. We're living in such a rat race age that we really don't have time to enjoy life, and particularly the things that God has created in life to be enjoyed. You know, years ago when the people out here in the West missed the stagecoach, they said, "That's okay, we'll get it next month." Today, if a guy misses a section of a revolving door, he's in a tizzy.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

God knows, my friend, that it takes time and that you cannot take two people who ostensibly have had no relations whatever, and if they have had them in some unprofitable type of

circumstances, bring them together in a hotel and suddenly bring about revolutionary change. This is a relationship that must be cultivated. This is a relationship that must be developed. This is a relationship that takes time. And if you do that, my friend, after you're married 20 some years, you wonder what in the world you were excited about the day when you were married, it will be so wonderful. But there's the second principle I see here, and that is, God is saying to me, it is difficult to adjust to two relationships at the same time. And this is what we are frequently trying to do. I have students who come and say, "Prof, I'm planning to get married." "Oh, really? When are you planning to get married?" "This summer."

And I usually head them off at the pass by saying, "And I hope you are planning to be married the first part of June." "Why?" "I suspect that you were planning to be married the end of August." "Yes, we were thinking about that." I said, "Did it ever occur to you, my friend, that this is the worst context in all of the world in which to bring a new bride?" But it happens every year. And I've seen marriages decimated right before my eyes. Somebody gets married out here in California, the last part of August, and school starts the first part of September. And they take one of these flash rides across the desert and come into Texas. No job. We got to go out, look for a job, no place to live. And all of a sudden, we're plunged into the seminary study where we don't think anything of asking you to read a book for tomorrow morning's class. You don't think much of it either.

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

And a guy gets home and he's immersed in his Kittel, and in his Greek, and in all the rest of his books, and his dear wife is sitting in the other room saying "Goodnight. What was so exciting about this?" And I say, "My friend, if you're planning to be married, you better back up the time so that at least you have a good summer to build a healthy relationship. And then you are prepared to make a second adjustment." I would say that to any campus crusader. You planning to come on to the staff in January? Then my friend, perhaps you ought to be thinking about marriage, if that is your plan, in September, so that you have a period of time to adjust. But I've seen the same thing happen to staff members of Crusades. And the guy gets an assignment and he also gets a wife, and they both land, and here he is in the midst of all of the boxes and the rest of it trying to make contact. Still got some support to get in, out here on the campuses. "Oh, I'm sorry wife I don't have time. I got to share the laws."

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

It is impossible, my friend, in a healthy relationship to make two adjustments at the same time. God knew that, especially when one of them is the most important relationship you will establish in your life on the human realm. Now, I wish I had time to go into another passage, but I'll simply refer to it and invite you to study it on your own.

[Audio cuts out]

Howard Hendricks:

It's the book of Song of Solomon. Now, don't read any books on this book, read the book. I've heard sermons all of my life on Song of Solomon and I've read dozens of books, and I found

most of them are practically worthless. They take one or two bounces on the springboard of the text, and off we are into some speculation, some spiritualization, with the result that a person would never understand what the message of the book is all about. They would never come to grips with the fact that this is a manual on married love, two individuals intoxicatingly in love with each other, and unashamed of the fact. Throughout the book he's describing the beauty of that lovely person God has given to him, and he describes it from the top of her hair to the bottom of her feet. And every part of her body is magnetic to him. And she, in turn, responds in poetic language until every part of that man becomes indescribably appealing to her.

My colleague and I are in the process of translating this book. And friend, when we get through, you will know what it says. I tried a little on for size not too long ago, I had a couple in my office with problems in this area, so I took a little section we had translated and I had my secretary type it on a piece of paper and I read it to him. I said, "Now I want you to read this to her." So he read it to her and the two of them were just about falling off of the chair. Every now and then, she would exclaim, "Beautiful!" And he would say, "Fantastic!" And when we finally got through, he says, "Man, that's terrific. Where did you get it?" I said, "Out of the Bible."

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

"Oh, come on. You're putting me on!"

[Audience laughs]

Howard Hendricks:

I said, "No, that's exactly where it came from." He said, "Man, I never knew the Bible had anything to say about subjects like that." And that's exactly why there are many people who never consider the Christian view of love and marriage a live option. God has spoken, young people, and He has not stuttered. He was never ashamed to reveal His purposes. And it is always without stimulation, without perversion. It is always in the sacred context of His infinite purpose. How wonderful to know this truth. How much more wonderful to experience it in your life.

Our Father, thank You for the Word of God, which is alive. Sharper than a two-edged sword, able to probe and penetrate deep into hearts, and light even the most intimate aspects of our life, and there bring forth fruit to the eternal praise of your glory. We pray that in these days, Lord, the Spirit of God will be saturating and brainwashing our minds. We've picked up so much of the garbage of our generation, so imperceptibly that often we're totally unaware of its impact upon our life. We pray that during these days You will realign our thinking and readjust our experience, that both may conform to Your image, to Your design. Because we ask it through Jesus Christ. Amen.