Intimacy – Lesson 10

- Lessons of the Married for Life course.
  As the lesson progresses all the previous lessons of the course will be mentioned. Have a grid of brick outlines waiting and add each brick (lesson) as it is mentioned:

  ![Diagram](image)

  - Covenant - is the basis for Intimacy
  - One flesh – within covenant we can be totally vulnerable (Gen 2:24)
  - Roles – Jesus used as an example of an intimate husband by caring for the church
  - Sowing and Reaping – woman is created to respond to man’s love – as he loves her she will respond with more love.
  - Forgiveness – need to forgive all who have wounded us sexually
  - Flowing together – we need to fight together spiritually against any past problems
  - Faith Vision and Trust – we need to believe God for any changes that need to take place
  - Praying Together – we need to pray for our sex lives too
  - Agreement – we need to stand in agreement to guard our sexual relationship from anything or anyone who would hinder it.

Explain that we may consider our intimate relationship as separate from our everyday and spiritual one, but this brick wall shows that all these aspects of our lives are involved with our sexual one too. God does not wait outside the bedroom door, any more than he does not enter any other part of our lives.
- Have a TV tray set up with a doily, flowers, candle, champagne glasses and a card etc. Talk about the fun and beauty of romantic love. (If you wish you could send the couples home with one of each of the things above).

- Make a chart to visualise ‘counterfeits’.

- Repenting of Sexual sin / restoration
  ‘Marriage as God Intended’ Selwyn Hughes p128-129 has a good examples of:
  - Repentance
  - Temptation not being wrong but giving into it is
Dr. W.E. Sangster described the process of temptation like this:

A sinful thought comes and knocks on the door of the heart, but it brings a blush to the cheek and the door is slammed against it. But it comes again and again, gets fingered and looked at from other angles and is briefly considered...and then entertained; slowly it gets inside... until the sin is done. No blush now, no slammed door. The thought that once crimsoned your cheek stalks into your mind and takes its ease like a familiar visitor or an old friend.

Learn to recognise the difference between a thought that knocks at the door and one that is admitted and entertained. If an adulterous thought has been ‘entertained’, and the imagination has been used to conjure up a sexual act with another person other than your partner, then this must be repented of without delay. Repentance means telling God you are sorry for your sin, and not just for the sin but for the self-centredness that prompted it. The root of all sin is selfishness. It is wanting to have your own way even when your own way is diametrically opposed to God’s way. And unless you repent of that – the desire to want your own way – then you have not really repented. It is not enough to lop off the branches – the axe must be applied to the root of the tree.

From chapter 7, Wandering Affections

- Make a caramel / toffee onion (instead of a toffee apple) and present it to one of your couples. Have them take a bite. Talk about how Satan disguises and deceives us by making sin appetizing on the outside.

- Soul ties. Have two balls of clay, with different colours representing the husband and wife. Mix other colours with the H and W clay, to represent outside relationships we become involved in – adultery and pre-marital sex. Now mix the two main balls together and share how our marriages are composite of all the relationships we’ve had mixed together into one. Only Jesus can bring purity again.

- Use a Barbie and a Ken doll, dressed beautifully. On the outside we look beautiful, great, sexy – representing a ‘good image’. Undress them and show that their bodies are covered with Band-Aids / Plasters. The plasters represent covering up and hiding sins and scars. Remove one plaster and explain that transparency will bring healing.
Use two boxes of cereal – one as it is and the other covered with plain brown paper. Ask the couples which one they would choose. Most will say the store-bought box with appeal. Satan creates ‘consumer appeal’ with sin, designing things to entice our appetites.

Have a nail, board and hammer. The nail represents sin, and the board our life. Drive the nail into the board only enough to make a dent. Pull it out and sand over the top. Sin if caught early, can be dealt with quite easily. Drive the nail in deep and try and pull it out. It is much tougher. When sin goes deep without repentance, you can’t get it out. With repentance, it is still tough. When the sin is removed it has left a deep scar that’s hard to remove. Deep scars require the miracle healing power of Jesus, just like an electrical sander would be needed on a deep nail hole.

Use a cheap white shirt, talk about the purity of our lives before sin – spotless. Spill a little grape juice on the shirt to stain it. Try to wash it out in a washing up bowl. It is difficult to wash. The stain of sin is hard to remove. It’s easy to stain; it happens quickly and without much effort but removing it takes time and effort.

Learn to make love again
Talk about positive steps to rekindle romance such as: Holding hands, touching in non-sexual way, saying loving words, romantic evening / weekend, going on ‘dates’ with each other, buying flowers for no reason, showing respect, not being so predictable.

Languages of Love
In ‘The Five Languages of Love’ by Gary Chapman it describes the fact that we communicate our love by one or more of 5 languages. We tend to ‘speak’ in the language we want to be ‘spoken’ to in. (If I speak English and you speak Chinese, it would not be much good me communicating to you in English – I would need to talk to you in Chinese to get a response, even if I preferred to and was better at speaking English. You would still prefer my pidgin Chinese.) We need to know what language our spouse prefers and speak to them in that language.

The five languages are:
- Loving Words
- Service (doing things for them)
- Time (spending quality time with them)
- Touch (often non-sexual throughout the day)
- Gifts (of any type!)
Suggest that the couples write the list down and at home separately write down their preferred order and the order they think their spouse has. Then compare and see how much they understand each other. Suggest they make efforts to speak to each other in the language the spouse wants to be spoken to in.

- Sexual myths
  People often believe the following:
  - Great sex is always spontaneous (children, phones etc. will never interrupt!)
  - We are the only ones with problems – many couples have problems in certain cycles of their lives, problems with what to do, problems of when, and how often etc.
  - Often sex life is over – after all our problems we can never enjoy it like we used to – need to rebuild our affection, love etc.
  - Sex isn’t always wonderful – like in the movies (can read ‘a honeymoon to remember’)

- Ian and Ruth Coffey use the example of hamburgers and banquets. When we are in a hurry we may dash into the local hamburger shop to get something simple to eat and satisfy our hunger quickly. This is fine to do now and then, but we need to eat more wholesomely too. Sometimes we have lots of time to spare and go out for a wonderful meal and spend the whole evening enjoying it. This is great, but we wouldn’t expect or need a banquet everyday. Our sex lives can be the same!
Tony and Claire are good friends of mine. Of course, those aren’t their real names, but with that slight change the rest of the story unfolds exactly as it happened:

When they finally got to the hotel it was eleven o’clock at night. It looked smaller than it had appeared in the brochure and Tony felt his heart sink. Just about the only contribution he had made to their wedding had been the choice of ‘The Esplanade’. It had been a long a day but apart from the agony of listening to just under ninety cards being read, and the best man making Claire’s mother cry, the wedding had gone pretty well. But this was their wedding night. He desperately wanted this to be a memorable occasion.

His spirits rose a little as they entered the room and he saw a ray of moonlight beaming through the window. This was going to be just perfect.

And it may have been, had not the ray of moonlight illuminated two single beds. Tony rushed for the telephone and asked for the manager. ‘This is our honeymoon, and this is meant to be your honeymoon suite!’ The manager was apologetic; there had been a double booking and the couple who had arrived at eight were well ensconced in the deluxe room with the four-poster bed and trouser press.

‘But there are single beds in here.’

And it was then that the manager suggested a solution, which made Tony think that it was not the first time that ‘The Esplanade’ had dealt with this particular problem.

‘I’ll send up some rope and you can tie the beds together.’

‘Send it up fast!’ said Tony.

And it was on the night that he had dreamed of for so many years, with the moonbeams still flooding through the window, and in the middle of his very best efforts, that the beds parted. They crashed to the floor. Tony gazed up at a cracked ceiling and wanted to die right there and then, but Claire whispered to him, ‘Darling … I think I felt the earth move.’
Quotes:

“Making love is more for Christians than the joining of their bodies, it is also the joining of their spirits. It is true that some Christians see it as sordid and suffer from inhibitions concerning sex but, seen in its proper light, and within the bounds of marriage, it is one of life’s more pleasurable and enjoyable experiences’.

Selwyn Hughes

“What makes intimacy great is not technique but safety. Are we safe with each other in our nakedness and imperfection?”

‘Wit and Wisdom for Your Life Together’ by Mike Yaconelli p.9

“Sex in the movies is intimidating – it is either wild, uncontrolled passion characterised by ripping of clothes, the smashing of furniture, and throwing of food, or it’s sex of perfection with perfect bodies, perfect love-making and perfect orgasms. The real sex of marriage is imperfect, inconsistent, and often interrupted by telephones, children and clocks. Good sex makes lousy movies and great marriages”.

‘Wit and Wisdom for Your Life Together’ by Mike Yaconelli p.25

“Love isn’t made in bed, as though sex could manufacture what didn’t already exist; rather an existing love makes sex a lovely thing. Good sex won’t save a marriage. Bad sex is seldom the primary cause of a marriage failure”

‘Wit and Wisdom for Your Life Together’ Walter Wangerin p.31