

Pastor Mark: All right, fourth and last category. Jesus says, love the Lord you got with all your heart, soul mind, and strength. Heart, emotional life; soul, spiritual life; mind, mental life. This leads to the body and the physical life. The big myth in our culture is that you start with category number four. You sleep together to see if you're sexually it compatible. Let me tell you this. If you're a guy and a gal, you are. All of the engineering is custom designed and it works. You are compatible. You are compatible.

So after you're connected emotionally, you're connecting spiritually, you're connecting mentally and agreeing on what God says and building neural pathways. Then the result is loving in one another physically. So let's talk about this. Loving one other physically includes the sexual relationship. Talk about that. Whatever you want to share from the woman's perspective. This is where it's awkward.

Grace: Yeah. We're not really in a living room. It just looks like it.

Pastor Mark: We're not going to do anything. We're just talking about stuff.

Grace: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Pastor Mark: Yeah.

Grace: Oh my goodness. Anyway, so back to Genesis 2:24, when it talks about holding fast, that means to pursue with great zeal. So this is a part of the relationship that if we aren't pursuing, we're not going to connect. We're going to let that fall off the plate completely. It's an active pursuing of each other. When you're pursuing each other, it doesn't just mean at night when you go to bed, you're going to pursue each other. It means it's an all day thing.

Pastor Mark: Okay. For guys, this is going to be a crazy concept. Nonsexual touch. Guys didn't know this was a thing.

Grace: He doesn't believe in it.

Pastor Mark: Well, I'm praying about it. So just share-

Grace: Pray for me.

Pastor Mark: There we go. All right. Nonsexual touch. I did it. Okay. What is nonsexual touch? For a guy it's always I'm driving toward the red zone. It's always... But what is it?

Grace: I think you should define it.

Pastor Mark: I don't know. That's why I'm asking.

Grace: It's caring about someone and touching them in a way that doesn't always have to lead to sex but it's leading to reaching into their soul at a level that is deeper.

Pastor Mark: So it could be friendship. It could be connection. Could be comfort. Could be compassion. Ministry of presence. Just being there.

Grace: Yeah. The woman feels like, "Wow, he actually cares about me. He's not just thinking about what can happen if he cares about me."

Pastor Mark: Anyone else conflicted?

Grace: I can always see the reader board.

Pastor Mark: Yeah, it's scary. I know.

Grace: No, it's making a connection without having to have that. Sex is not a bad thing. Sex is a good thing. But if you're not making the connection at the soul before that-

Pastor Mark: So you're saying for the woman it's like every time he touches me it's because he wants sex. At that point, it's like he's not connecting with me.

Grace: Yeah.

Pastor Mark: He wants something from me.

Grace: Yeah. You're doing it because you want something instead of doing it just to connect because you love your spouse.

Pastor Mark: And so most men are not like that. Most men are not like, "You just want me from my body. I feel terrible." Most men are like, "All my dreams came true." So, men and women are different.

Grace: Correct.

Pastor Mark: Correct. What would some, for the guys that really need this, simple, nonsexual, physical, service affection, what would that look like for a man? Give examples to a guy.

Grace: Holding hands.

Pastor Mark: Okay. Holding hands.

Grace: Yeah.

Pastor Mark: Okay. I'm doing great.

Grace: Snuggling.

Pastor Mark: Without escalating.

Grace: Correct.

Pastor Mark: Okay. That's what I'm trying to... Okay, other examples?

Grace: Kissing.

Pastor Mark: Kissing without escalating.

Grace: Correct.

Pastor Mark: Correct. Yeah. These are crazy ideas.

Grace: Holy spirit give self control.

Pastor Mark: What other examples? What else? What about the man using his body-

Grace: Chores.

Pastor Mark: Oh, all right. Like dishes?

Grace: Sure.

Pastor Mark: Laundry?

Grace: No.

Pastor Mark: Thank you, Lord. Ladies, write that down. The Lord said no men get to do laundry. Why can't we do laundry?

Grace: I didn't even teach the boys to do laundry. I'm kind of sexist about laundry. I don't know. I'm kind of legalistic about it but men should be able to do laundry. I just am weird about it.

Pastor Mark: Okay.

Grace: I have certain things that I do a certain way and some things don't get washed in hot water. You wouldn't want to know. You wouldn't want the explanation so I don't want you to do it.

Pastor Mark: I'm cool with that.

Grace: And you don't read directions.

Pastor Mark: I do not read directions. No, I do not read directions.

Grace: But other things. Chores around the house. It's not just...

Pastor Mark: You like it when I gas up your car.

Grace: Yeah, because I don't like to have to do that all the time.

Pastor Mark: No one does. He smells like gas.

Grace: Yeah. Just doing things for me that I would normally do. But you notice enough to say, "I'm going to do that for her to serve her because I love her."

Pastor Mark: Okay. So part of this is the sexual, part of this is the nonsexual. It's loving your spouse with the body that God gave you. Sometimes that's snuggling. Sometimes that comfort. Sometimes that's-

Grace: Flowers.

Pastor Mark: Flowers. Okay. What?

Grace: When you bring me flowers.

Pastor Mark: That's an act?

Grace: Yes it's nonsexual. It's touching my heart. It's touching because I like to be able to look at fresh flowers.

Pastor Mark: Okay. Well, okay then you're going to like the end of our event. Serving outside of the bedroom physically, chores, snuggling, holding hands, being friends, running errands. What about serving one another physically in the bedroom?

Grace: Being willing to be creative. Being willing to communicate about it. This is something we struggled with for a long time because of my background coming out of sex is gross. I also didn't want to talk about it or didn't know how to talk about it. That's something that being willing to talk it through, being willing to laugh because...

Pastor Mark: It doesn't always go the way you were thinking. You're like, "I'm sorry. I thought the coffee table could hold us." That's not us. Some people we know. But you got to have a little sense of humor with it if you're friends.

What about if one of you doesn't feel like it and one does? Like if you did and I didn't. Like that. Like that.

Grace: I can't imagine that.

Pastor Mark: Me neither. Yeah, that happens, call 911. We've got ourselves an emergency.

Grace: The Bible says to consider one another and so if there's a valid reason that you're not wanting to, if you're fighting, if there's things that are between you that need to get resolved...

Pastor Mark: So like maybe the emotional, the spiritual or the mental, there's some things that you-

Grace: But you can't use it as a long term excuse to never have sex. You've got to work toward... It's that pursuing with zeal and pursuing healing from the Lord for whatever reason you're not wanting to. Considering each other in that.

Having kids is a hard thing. You're tired all the time, your body is just a wreck. That was a really hard transition for me personally.

Pastor Mark: Five kids.

Grace: Yeah. For me, I had to really... Marriage is about serving each other. You cannot be selfish in marriage. It doesn't work. We both had to be serving each other. Sometimes you had to serve me by just we would take a break or whatever. And sometimes I would serve you by doing things that were helpful for you. You have to work together in it and you can't just be selfish and say, "Well, I don't want to, so we're not going to."

Pastor Mark: So Jesus says love God, neighbor. We're saying spouse is nearest neighbor. All your heart, emotional life; all your soul, spiritual life; all your mind, mental life. The culmination and the result of those things is the physical with all your strength. That's a physical sexual serving in relationship and to close with this.

Dr. Steven Arterburn from New Life Ministries. I'll read this. He says, "Sexual pleasure is one of the most intense human experiences. Physically speaking, when a man or woman reaches sexual excitement, nerve endings release a chemical into the brain called an opioid. Opioid means opium-like and is a good description of the power of this chemical. Apart from a heroin induced experience, nothing is more physically pleasurable than sex. This is a wonderful thing for a committed marriage relationship because it helps to bond two people together and bring joy to living together and building a relationship."

And so if for some reason your physical sexual relationship is just not strong, it's not healthy, it's not well, our encouragement would be start with the emotional. Are you face to face and connecting emotionally as friends and building that warm relationship?

Spiritually, are you worshiping, praying for one another, inviting God the Holy Spirit in to do a healing work and to unify, knit together your souls? Mentally, are you in God's word? Are you under God's authority? Are you coming to agreement on God's intention and blueprint for your life?

If those three things are in order usually what then follows is a healthy, physical, sexual relationship that then God uses to deepen that couple emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and physically. He uses the sexual act. That's why it's the consummation of the covenant. That it is sort of the binding force that God uses to really cause a husband and wife to be one.

That was God's intention in Genesis 2, that they become one flesh. This is why we would just ask you if you are a married couple to look and ask, "How are we doing emotionally, relationally, friendship, listening, warmth, emotional safety? How are we doing Spiritually? Are we worshiping together? Are we serving together? Are we praying for each other? How are we doing mentally? Are we in God's word? Are we seeking wise counsel? And physically, are we serving one another outside of the bedroom with chores and affection? Are we serving one another in the bedroom with a good attitude?"

Anything you'd want to say before we close this segment sweetie pie, and then we'll come back to do some Q and A at the end?

Grace: Well, like you said, sex in the marriage, it makes the marriage stronger. If you're working on all these areas that culminates in that and it builds off the other areas as well. I think one of the important things to realize that the difference between men and women is that sex for a man is a stress relief. For a woman, she has to relieve her stress before having sex because that is what makes her be able to connect and relax and focus just on her husband.

Going into those things, for a man to know that, "Okay, I'm going to help her take things off her plate before so that we can actually connect at this level and continue to deepen our relationship in this way."

It's very important to realize that. And then for a wife to mutually understand that it is a stress release for a man, sex is. That is helpful if she's willing to serve him but also-

Pastor Mark: Be present.

Grace: Yeah, I hesitate to say serve because it's not just about serving him.

Pastor Mark: Being present and involved.

Grace: It should be ultimately mutual enjoyment and that's the ultimate thing that you want to get to.

Pastor Mark: Cool. Well, they're going to have questions. They're going to be very intimate. You can answer all of them, but first, why don't you close this time in prayer, sweetie pie.

Grace: Lord, thank you for marriage. Thank you that you created it for us. It's a beautiful thing and it's a hard thing Lord, but it causes us to depend on you. We need wisdom from you to be able to do marriage well.

Lord, I pray for healthy marriages in this room. I pray that if there's things that they're not willing to talk about, that you would open up those conversations in a helpful, kind, loving way. Lord, I pray that if they need help beyond just wise counsel, if they need counseling, Lord, that they'd be willing to pursue that.

I pray for healing in these marriages. I pray for enjoyment in these marriages. Lord, it's horrible to be lonely in marriage. Lord, I pray against that. I pray against all the lies that come at married couples and that they would be able to resist those and not allow the enemy to divide them but allow you and your Holy Spirit to unite them as one flesh in Jesus' name. Amen.

Pastor Mark: Thank you guys. Love you, sweetie pie.