

# KEEPING THE MARRIAGE BED UNDEFILED

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Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.  
Hebrews 13:4

God created sex between the man and woman for good reasons – mainly for procreation and pleasure. God also gave certain parameters so that the man and woman could enjoy this gift with the blessing of God. God’s way for an undefiled bed is to be followed if the couple seeks the blessing of God. In contrast, the wicked have perverted this blessed gift and have done a diligent work of making their perversion of what God intended pervasive in the world.

Just because God says the marriage bed is undefiled, this does not mean that simply because a couple is married that every sort of sexual perversion is acceptable to God. The marriage bed is not an “anything goes” sort of activity. Few believers would contend that because a “same-sex” (i.e., sodomite) couple is “married,” that what they do is undefiled before God. Just because a particular state approves of “gay marriage,” that does not make their bed undefiled.

In addition, Jesus said these words:

Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.

Luke 16:18

Jesus shows us that if a man divorces his wife for unbiblical reasons and marries another woman, he still commits adultery with that second woman, although he may have married her. One could argue the wedding ceremony in that case did not sanctify the marriage bed.

There are limits to what a married couple should do in bed. And if a Christian couple desires to maintain an undefiled marriage bed, they ought to be careful to do certain things, and not do certain things. In this paper the author hopes to gracefully explain these things.

## **A Godly Marriage Represents the Relationship of Jesus Christ and his Church**

We read in Ephesians 5 this well-known passage in respect to the husband and the wife:

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.  
32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.  
33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Ephesians 5:22-33

This passage reveals a lot on the subject of an undefiled bed. This passage applies generally to the *whole* marriage relationship – but it does not *exclude* the marriage bed. So, for this study on the subject of the marriage bed, let's consider how this passage would apply to that relationship. Notice first (v. 23) that the husband is *the head* – he is the one responsible for the leadership of the wife. He is the one who will give an account as to how he leads his wife in the marriage relationship – and how he treats his wife in the matter of the sexual relationship.

Then notice the husband is to love his wife, and give himself for her (v. 25). When a man loves his wife he makes sure she is not harmed or abused in any way. He gives himself as required to provide whatever things she needs. One can see how this would apply to her particular needs in the marriage bed.

Looking at verses 26-28, we can say the man uses *his words* to sanctify and cleanse his wife. A married couple's "love talk" should always be respectful, loving, encouraging, and God-honoring. A man should never degrade or insult his wife in the marriage bed. That is not edifying to the marriage relationship.

Then a man is to nourish and cherish his wife. These words have the meaning of a man "bringing up" and "warming" his wife. This shows a care and gentleness of a man toward his wife.

### **The Wicked Pervert the Marriage Bed**

God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness (Genesis 13:13; 19:24; Jude 1:7). God killed Onan because he spilled his seed rather than obey the law (Genesis 38:9, 10). (An "Onanite" is a word that has been used by people to describe a man who spills his seed.) God said he would judge adulterers and whoremongers (Hebrews 13:4). In the New Testament, Paul warned against fornication (1 Corinthians 6:18; 10:8; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:3). Jesus Christ will judge fornication (Revelation 2:20-24).

Along with the above-mentioned perversions, the wicked defile the godly relationship by involving multiple partners, children, inanimate objects, strange paraphernalia, animals, role playing, pornography, and other vile and filthy practices. There is no limit to the perversion the wicked will go to defile that good and beautiful thing that God created.

God calls them *filthy dreamers* who defile the flesh:

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

Jude 1:7, 8

As believers, we ought to be careful to avoid bringing the world's corruption into the marriage bed.

## **We should use the Bible as our Instruction in the Marriage Relationship**

Just about every Baptist preacher I know would agree with me that the way to have a good, godly, and successful marriage is to follow the teaching of God as revealed to us in his word.

We who are saved and live by that holy Book know it has the answers for all things – including how to have an undefiled marriage bed.

With that thought, I have prepared a list of scriptural and practical things to help the married couple enjoy their God-given gift. These points are mainly directed to the husband, who is the head of the wife.

### 1 Stay with the natural use of the woman

God made the man and woman a certain way. There are certain physical differences, and these differences are intended for the purpose of procreation. A body also has other parts with other purposes.

Even nature shows us the proper use of the male and female organs. Consequently, the man has the liberty to use that particular organ of his wife with his God-given organ. A couple may with mutual respect experiment with a variety of positions, but the members involved are limited to *one thing* for the man and *one place* for the woman. That is where the experimentation should end. That is the natural use of the sexual organs.

All members of the body have a purpose (Romans 12:4); and each member ought to be used for that purpose. The member of the body used to purge the dung (Mathew 15:17), purges that which is considered unclean (Deuteronomy 23:10-14). That member of the body should not be used when a man and women come together. In fact, it is the ungodly who tend to use this part of the body for what is called vile affections:

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

Romans 1:24-27

I would also say that using the mouth in conjunction with the sexual organs is not the natural use of these organs. One should consider the godly relationship of a man and a woman. Who wants to kiss a mouth that has been used unnaturally?

I would also say using any type of paraphernalia should be avoided. These are inventions of vile minds, and they have no place in a godly home.

The married couple should avoid all manner of perversion, for this is destructive to the marriage relationship. More than one marriage has been ended because the wife or the husband is a pervert. I state before God that a woman or a man ought not to participate in any act that violates his or her conscience. That partner ought to refuse vehemently such participation in an ungodly act if so suggested. A brute beast can force a woman (this is called rape); but a godly man respects and honors his wife. She is not his play thing – she is the wife of his covenant.

God knows what truly brings pleasure to a man, and he has provided such pleasure through a man's wife when the relationship is pure. Solomon wrote this in Proverbs 5:

15 Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.  
16 Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.  
17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.  
18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.  
19 Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.  
20 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?  
21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.  
22 His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.  
23 He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

Proverbs 5:15-21

In this passage God shows us a number of things that will promote pleasure in a man who has been faithful to one woman for a long time:

- Be faithful to, and love one woman (v. 15-17).
- Live so as to allow God to bless you and your wife (v. 18)
- Rejoice with the wife you had when you were young (v. 18). This shows the benefit of making love to a woman you really have learned to love for who she is, based on a long relationship.
- She becomes more and more beautiful (v. 19)
- Her breasts will satisfy, her love will ravish (v. 19)
- It is folly and sin to go after another woman (20-23)

The marriage bed ought to be maintained undefiled, for God has called us to holiness. Read this passage from 1 Thessalonians 4:

3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:  
4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;  
5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:  
6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.  
7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7

You will note the part about possessing your vessel (your body) in sanctification and honor, not in lust (v. 4, 5). For God hath called us to holiness (v. 7). Married couples can and should be holy.

## 2. Render due benevolence to one another

Once a couple is married the drive for physical relations will not only be met, but the drive will likely increase. God understands this and instructs those who are married to not defraud the other. Plainly stated, when a man or his wife has the need for physical intercourse, it is incumbent upon the spouse to supply that which is needed. It is not good to deny the other that particular desire.

Read what the apostle Paul wrote in Romans:

1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.  
3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.  
4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.  
5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.  
6 But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.

1 Corinthians 7:1-6

Included in this *due benevolence* is the fact that the spouse should help and enable the other to reach *full* satisfaction. That means, the marriage bed is not intended for the self-pleasure first, but the pleasure of the other primarily. If this standard was observed, in most cases, the woman would have her satisfaction before the man has his. The woman has the same needs as her husband, and the husband ought to be mindful of his wife's needs.

As a side note, a person of either sex will need "stress relief" at certain times. When the man is contentious, or if the woman is emotional or contentious; it is likely a manifestation of their need for pleasure. Remember this little rule: *A satisfied wife is a happy wife. A satisfied husband is a happy husband.*

Due benevolence also gives the sense of being kind and gentle, thoughtful and respectful.

### 3 Avoid adultery and fornication and pornography

The marriage bed is undefiled, but God will judge adulterers. The obvious application of the verse is that a married person having relations with a person he is not married to is a serious sin. Not only will God judge, but the effect on the married couple's relationship is devastating. A man wants to know his wife has been faithful to him; and a wife wants to know her husband has been faithful to her. This is a fundamental element to a good marriage relationship.

However, something that is too often overlooked is the lust of a man who is involved in pornography. Pornography is a vile ill that plagues many relationships. Marriages have been broken over this type of wickedness. It causes the man to lust and commit adultery in his heart. Pornography damages his own soul, and harms the spirit of his wife. No wife ought to endure a husband who engages in such bad behavior. She ought to talk to her pastor or pastor's wife. If a man with this fault refuses to repent, he ought to be shamed.

A man with such inclination to pornography mistreats his wife, he is an adulterer. And a wife can never be certain the man is not imagining he is with another woman when they have relations. Jesus said this in Matthew 5:

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:  
28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.  
29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.  
30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Matthew 5:27-30

Pornography is the looking upon a woman to lust after her. The eye is evil (and sometimes the hand). The eye offends. It is better to be blind than to be in such a situation.

#### 4 Maintain good hygiene (cleanliness) and a pure mind

It is important for both the husband and the wife to be physically clean when enjoying the marriage bed. I recommend a bath for both, so that all areas of the body can be cleaned well. Additionally, the use of perfumes and fragrances are helpful, which is the next point.

I know of relationships that suffer because the man or the woman has bad odor. These have not realized the ill-effect of their personal hygiene on their spouse. The human sexual organs are used for urination. They are also close to where the body eliminates waste. These areas are usually kept clothed and are not usually ventilated well. They tend to sweat because of hair. Consequently, special effort needs to be made to clean well the groin and underarm area two or three times in a hot bath to make sure the whole area is clean and free of bad odor. The author understands this is a particularly touchy subject. However, it is more than needful for married couples to hear.

This reminds me of how the potential brides were prepared for king Ahasuerus in Esther chapter 2:

12 Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with other things for the purifying of the women:)

Esther 2:12

Back in those days the women really took care to purify themselves for the king. They had reverence for their king.

The whole body – including the teeth, breath, hair -- needs to be clean and sweet smelling. Read what the Shulamite thought of her husband:

His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Song of Solomon 5:16

Additionally, a clean mind, free of perversions, is needed. A man should have his wife's pleasure on his mind. A wife out to have her husband's pleasure on her mind. Neither should be thinking evil.

Read what Solomon wrote of his love:

1 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.

2 Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.

3 Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4 Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

5 Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

6 Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

7 Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

Song of Solomon 7:1-7

6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!  
7 This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.  
8 I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;  
9 And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.  
10 I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.  
11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.  
12 Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.  
13 The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

Song of Solomon 7:6-13

This man indeed had a great love and respect for his wife.

#### 5 Use pleasant odors

As a preacher I was amazed on how much the Bible speaks on this subject. I do not think I have ever heard it taught or preached; but it is “Bible” nonetheless.

Allow me to list a few passages on the subject using Song of Solomon showing cleanliness, sweetness, and good smelling fragrances:

12 While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

Song of Solomon 1:12

6 Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

Song of Solomon 3:6

10 How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!

11 Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.

12 A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

13 Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,

14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

16 Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

Song of Solomon 4:10-16

1 I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

2 I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.

5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

Song of Solomon 5:1-5

1 Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

Song of Solomon 6:1-3

14 Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

Song of Solomon 8:14

What a contrast to having smelly bodies, unclean members, dirty sheets, and stinky sex.

A man and his wife ought to smell good! Invest in some nice fragrances, take a good bath, use the perfume, have a clean bed and mind; then enjoy what God provided.

## 6 Use nice words

This point is easy to show. A man ought to speak kindly and lovingly to his wife. A woman responds to man's words; and a good husband will learn how to speak to his wife. He will be courteous, polite, considerate, and sweet. He will refrain from brute expressions and demeaning remarks toward his wife. For this kind of speech is not conducive to an undefiled marriage bed.

And what should I use for my text? You have read it already in the point before. Read again how lovely the words of Solomon were toward his beloved.

## 7 Enjoy your wife alone

A man ought to learn to make his wife very important in his life. He should make her an integral part of his life. He ought to behave himself considering her best interests. In the law, God commanded this to newly-married husbands:

When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

Deuteronomy 24:5



Even in the law we see that a man had a responsibility to build a relationship with his wife. This relationship is the basis for good physical relations. And as the spiritual relationship grows closer, the marriage bed gets better and better. For that is the blessing of God. And the mutual pleasure between husband and wife is better understood.

A man who wants time away from his wife, or only comes around when his needs are to be met; is not a man who is promoting a good relationship with his wife. Love-making is a personal relationship time that supplies a return commensurate with the time and energy invested. A couple ought to take time apart alone (we did this even with kids) and have that special intimate relationship God intended for the couple. The kids grow and move on, but the husband and wife relationship lasts until death.

### Homework

Go shopping together and buy and use sweet-smelling soap and perfumes

Make sure the bedding is clean

Read *Song of Solomon* together

The author has been married for more than 25 years to his first and only wife. Together, they had eight children in their first ten years of marriage, and have raised these children – by God’s grace – in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Both the author and his wife, before being married, were saved in their twenties. As lost persons, both had previous sexual relationships with other people. As a married couple, the author and his wife have strived to maintain a godly marriage, and still enjoy an undefiled marriage bed. With such experience, they understand the difference between a defiled and an undefiled bed.