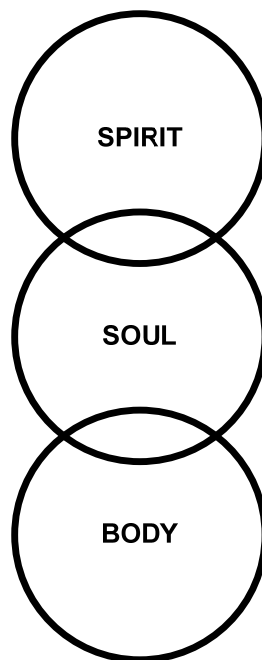


## TWO BECOMING ONE

*“...And the two are united into one.”* **Genesis 2:24** (NLT)

God created you as a three-part being. You are a spirit, you have a soul, and you live in a body. God designed marriage so there would be unity or intimacy in all three of those parts of your being.



**Q1.** Do you feel “one” with your spouse? Explain.

The phrase “becoming one” or “two united into one” is about *intimacy* between a man and woman in a marriage relationship.

*“But because there is so much sexual immorality, each **man** should have his own wife, and each **woman** should have her own husband.” 1 Corinthians 7:2 (NLT)*

An intimate couple is affectionate, close, and loving. The man and woman share their bodies with each other. They share what is in their souls (minds, emotions, and wills) with each other. They share spiritual intimacy through having a mutual relationship with God.

### **Spiritual Intimacy**

When the spirits are connected, the husband and wife have spiritual intimacy. It is based on a common *devotion* to Jesus Christ. The couple believes Jesus died for their sins and they are a part of God’s family. The Holy Spirit fills them with God’s love.

*“...For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.” Romans 5:5 (NLT)*

- Q2.** Do you and your spouse have this common devotion to Jesus Christ? Explain.

Spiritual intimacy is centered in a *devotion* to God and love for the other person. This love comes from the Source of love, God Himself. Sharing a mutual spiritual commitment is the most important part of a marriage, because it is the permanent part of the relationship that can stand alone if necessary.

When you were married, you made a vow before God to be committed to each other. The Christ-like part of you wants to remain committed to your spouse and that vow.

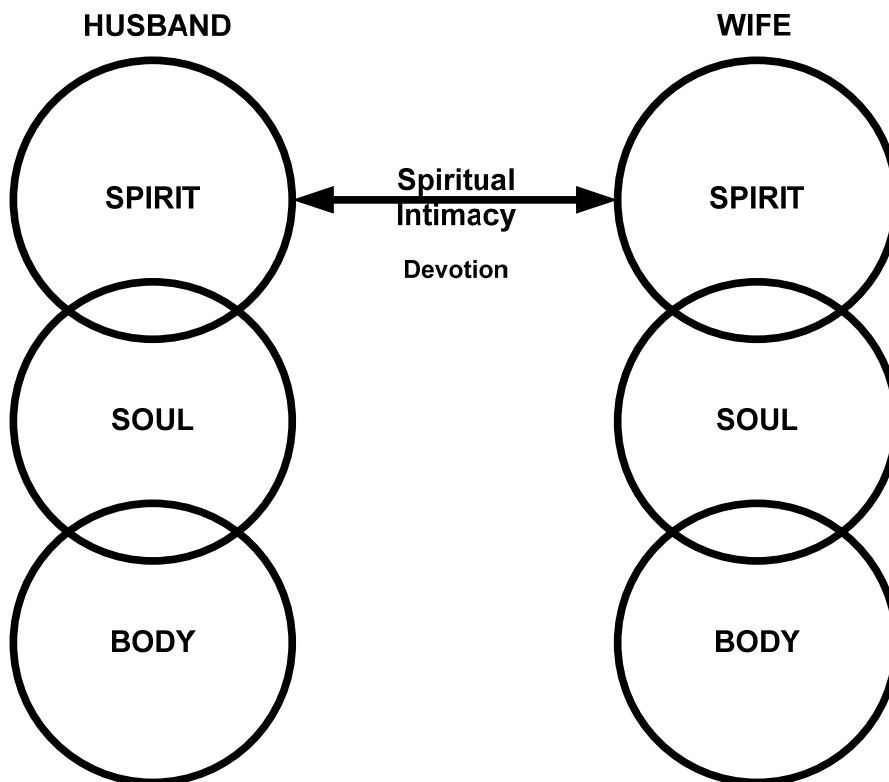
*“A man who makes a **vow** to the LORD or makes a pledge under oath must never break it. He must do exactly what he said he would do.” Numbers 30:2 (NLT)*

*"But once you have voluntarily made a **vow**, be careful to do as you have said, for you have made a **vow** to the LORD your God."* **Deuteronomy 23:23** (NLT)

God's love is able to exist without receiving anything in return.

*"I will gladly spend myself and all I have for your spiritual good, even though it seems that the more I love you, the less you love me."* **2 Corinthians 12:15** (NLT)

- Q3.** How do you feel about having made a vow to God when you married your spouse?



This diagram represents a Christian husband and wife. Jesus has made their spirits alive. Spiritual intimacy or spiritual oneness is missing when one or both of the partners are not believers. Believing that Christ died for your sins and receiving His life is what makes you alive spiritually. *(This is a very important part of your marriage; therefore, we have dedicated an entire chapter to the subject of spiritual intimacy.)*

If you are married to a *nonbeliever*, the following verses are important to consider.

*“...If a Christian man has a wife who is an unbeliever and she is willing to continue living with him, he must not leave her. And if a Christian woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he is willing to continue living with her, she must not leave him. For the Christian wife brings holiness to her marriage, and the Christian husband brings holiness to his marriage...”*

**1 Corinthians 7:12–14** (NLT)

**Q4.** Are you and your spouse experiencing spiritual intimacy? Explain.

### **Psychological Intimacy**

Another part of oneness comes when a husband and wife have psychological intimacy by sharing their souls (minds, emotions, and wills) with each other. Sharing your soul means telling each other what you are thinking, feeling, and wanting.

Communication is vital for building psychological intimacy in a marriage. This communication involves both spouses speaking and listening effectively. The goal of communication in marriage should be to gain shared understanding.

Psychological intimacy requires shared *understanding*.

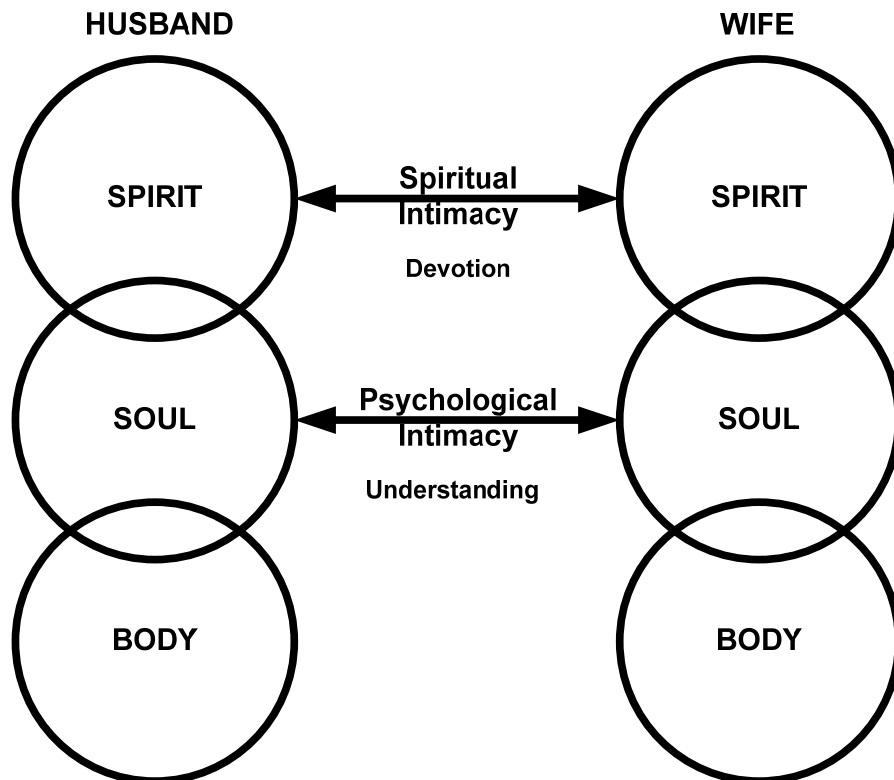
*“Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife...Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous.”*

**1 Peter 3:7–8** (NKJ)

- Q5.** Do you withhold sharing your thoughts, emotions or desires from your spouse? Explain.
- Q6.** If you don't share these things with your spouse, do you share your soul with someone else? Explain.

If you are psychologically intimate with someone else at work, one of your parents, or a friend, you are cheating your spouse out of that special gift of intimacy. The following verse communicates the universal longing for psychological intimacy in a relationship.

*"O my beloved, lingering in the gardens, how wonderful that your companions can listen to your voice. Let me hear it, too!"* **Song of Solomon 8:13** (NLT)



*(Psychological intimacy is an important part of your marriage. Therefore, we have dedicated an entire chapter to it.)*

### **Physical Intimacy**

Lastly, a husband and wife share physical intimacy by sharing their bodies with each other. This physical intimacy includes living together in the same home, touching one another, and sex. The physically intimate couple experiences *satisfaction*.

God created you and your spouse to enjoy physical intimacy. It is willed and designed by Him. It is an important part of becoming one with your spouse.

*“Honor marriage, and guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between wife and husband...”*

**Hebrews 13:4** (MSG)

Physical intimacy begins with a desire for the other person. Marriage is the right place for that physical desire or drive to be fulfilled or satisfied.

## Free in Marriage

You can be free to share your body without shame.

*“The two of them, the Man and his Wife, were naked, but they felt no shame.”* **Genesis 2:25** (MSG)

- Q7.** What emotions do you experience when you share your body with your spouse?
- Q8.** Do you hide your body from your spouse? Explain.

Don't deprive or withhold physical affection from each other or refuse to satisfy desires that can be righteously fulfilled in marriage.

*“The husband should not deprive his wife of sexual intimacy, which is her right as a married woman, nor should the wife deprive her husband.”*  
**1 Corinthians 7:3** (NLT)

- Q9.** Do you withhold physical intimacy from your spouse? If so, explain why.

## Hindrances to Physical Intimacy

Little or no physical intimacy in the marriage causes the couple to feel distant. The temptation to look for intimacy outside of the marriage may become a problem. Don't withhold your body from your spouse.

A common situation is for a husband to be *only* interested in physical intimacy, which results in his wife possibly becoming dissatisfied. She may look for other relationships to fill her need.

It is just as important for the husband not to withhold psychological (soul) intimacy as it is for the wife not to withhold physical intimacy.

Withholding physical intimacy from your spouse can be connected to premarital or extramarital sexual involvement. This kind of sexual

involvement, consensual or otherwise, falls short of God's best for His children.

*“There is a sense in which sexual sins are different from all others. In sexual sin we violate the sacredness of our own bodies, these bodies that were made for God-given and God-modeled love, for ‘becoming one’ with another.”*  
**1 Corinthians 6:18** (MSG)

God designed sex to form a bond between you and your spouse not others.

*“Don’t you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which belongs to Christ, and join it to a prostitute [or anyone other than his wife]? Never! And don’t you know that if a man joins himself to a prostitute [or anyone other than his wife], he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, ‘The two are united into one.’”* **1 Corinthians 6:15–16** (NLT)

Therefore bonds that were made with others prior to or outside of your marriage need to be broken through confession to God, forgiveness and turning away from those deeds.

*“...Our bodies were not made for sexual immorality. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.”* **1 Corinthians 6:13** (NLT)

Another reason for withholding physical intimacy from your spouse may be revenge. For instance,

- Your spouse hasn't met your expectations or done things your way.
- Your spouse has said or done things that are hurtful.

**Q10.** Have you withheld sex as a means of seeking revenge for how you have been treated?

*“Never seek **revenge** or bear a grudge against anyone, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”*  
**Leviticus 19:18** (NLT)



- Q11.** What does this verse say to you concerning seeking revenge against your spouse?

### **Understand What Your Spouse Wants Sexually**

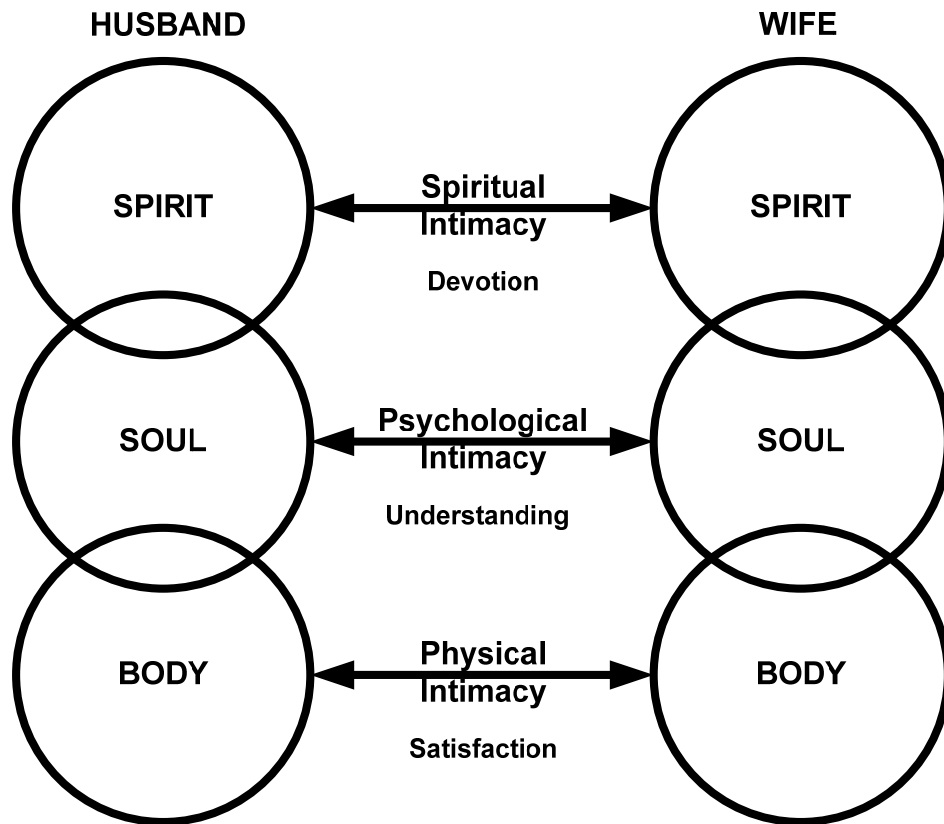
God created everyone to be unique. Understanding your spouse and your spouse's preferences takes time. Find out what kind of physical intimacy your spouse likes and honor that preference.

- Q12.** Do you understand your spouse and know what he or she likes or doesn't like sexually?

*"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife..." 1 Peter 3:7 (NKJ)*

Since your love is exclusive, your thoughts are centered on your spouse not others.

*"...Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise." Philippians 4:8 (NLT)*



### Loving Your Spouse with Your Physical Appearance

Making yourself as attractive as possible is one way of showing your spouse that he or she is important.

**Q13.** Do you make an effort to keep clean and be well groomed?

### Loving Your Spouse with Your Words

Physical intimacy is enhanced when your words express love and admiration of your spouse.

*"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them."*

**Ephesians 4:29** (NLT)

**Q14.** What words would your spouse appreciate hearing?

### **Loving Your Spouse with Your Attitude**

An unselfish attitude is important in physical intimacy. Focus on your spouse and consider him or her as being more important than your wants or needs.

Selfishness is a problem for everybody. It can be seen in not wanting to be imposed upon or not caring about how the other person feels.

*“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves...”* **Philippians 2:3** (NASB)

### **Valuing Your Spouse**

Valuing your spouse is respecting or cherishing his or her entire person (spirit, soul and body). It is about providing a safe environment for your spouse. For example, if a wife is shy about exposing her body to her husband, he needs to love and accept her each time she does.

She will begin to feel safe and she won't be as self-conscious. However if he says things about her weight or compares her to other women, she won't feel valued or safe in sharing physical intimacy.

Likewise, if a husband is insecure about sharing his inner thoughts, feelings, and desires with his wife, she needs to listen and affirm him each time he does. But if she doesn't like what he says and criticizes him, he won't think it is safe and may keep his thoughts to himself the next time or share them with others who do listen and value him. He won't want to share psychological intimacy with his wife.

Your spouse is a gift from God to you. Thank Him for your marriage and spouse.

*“Find a good spouse, you find a good life – and even more: the favor of God!”* **Proverbs 18:22** (MSG)

**Q15.** How are you valuing your spouse, God's gift to you?

## Sex is for Marriage Only

A man and woman can become spiritually and psychologically intimate before marriage; but ideally, physical intimacy should begin on the couple's wedding day.

The need for sexual purity before and during marriage is very important. Involvements in premarital sex, adultery, flirting, making sexual advances, or indulging lustful thoughts undermine physical intimacy with your spouse.

*“Drink water from your own well – share your love only with your wife. Why spill the water of your springs in public, having sex with just anyone? You should reserve it for yourselves. Don’t share it with strangers. Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you. Rejoice in the wife of your youth. She is a loving doe, a graceful deer. Let her breasts satisfy you always. May you always be captivated by her love.” Proverbs 5:15–19 (NLT)*

- Q16.** Have you gone outside of your marriage for physical intimacy? If so, explain.

## Conclusion

If you have not followed God's plan in the sexual area of your life, **agree with God** that what you did was wrong.

**Confess** your sin to God now.

**Repent** and stop doing what you have been doing or for looking for physical intimacy outside of marriage.

*“I pondered the direction of my life, and I turned to follow your statutes.” Psalm 119:59 (NLT)*

**Thank God** for His forgiveness.

**Ask God** to help you follow His plan for physical intimacy.

**Confess** your actions to your spouse and ask for forgiveness.

*“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.”*  
**James 5:16** (NLT)

**Ask the Lord** to help you with the words to use to approach your spouse in gentleness and humility.

**Q17.** Will you take these steps? If yes, when?

When a husband and wife are close to each other in their spirits, souls, and bodies, they experience whole person intimacy. They have “become one.”

**Q18.** Do you experience spiritual, psychological, and physical intimacy with your spouse?

**Q19.** What needs to happen so you and your spouse can work on these areas?

## Two Becoming One

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*Diagram*

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*Notes*