

Highlights from Week #1

(For students who miss the very first class)

The following points and excerpts are to help you know some of what was discussed the first week of class. It will help “catch you up” with the rest of class.

1. This class is all about **sex and intimacy in marriage!** From the very beginning we will be talking about God’s design for sex in your marriage.
2. A huge percentage of what we talk about in class is **not** covered in the reading material. Try not to miss. You should never “skip” class because you were not able to complete the homework activities. Your presence in class is a valuable part of this study and you are encouraged to be present. Plus, there’s a **great deal of material** discussed in class that is **not** covered in *Intimate Issues* or in the articles in your workbook.
3. **You need to plan ahead now for Week #4.** For this class, a CD from the Intimate Issues Conference will be played which discusses past sexual sins. It is a very powerful message to help you deal with any sexual sins from your past. Do your best to be present.
4. Each week there is a verse to memorize. These verses are included near the end of the lesson. When you walk in each week, there will be an index card at your seat. When you sit down, write the memory verse on the card and **sign your name**. Then your card will be collected.
5. No matter what shape your marriage is in...
 - If you are willing to learn
 - Have a teachable spirit
 - Follow God’s leading
 - Will take Him at His word through what you will learn...then God can take your marriage—whatever state it’s in—and grow the two of you closer together and bless your marriage in ways you may not be able to imagine right now.
6. God designed and gave you the gift of sex for your marriage and declared it a good thing.
7. This will not be a class of comparing what your relationship with your husband is like to someone else’s. Instead, this class is meant to:
 - Educate you on what God desires for your marriage
 - Provide a safe place for learning about sex in marriage
 - Bless you and your husband as you work through this material
8. In a book entitled, *Making Sense of the Men In Your Life*, Dr. Kevin Leman writes all about men. He shares how to work with the male ego, how a man’s relationship with his father affects his marriage, and how to fulfill his sexual needs. In Leman’s book, he shares different “laws” that apply to men and has numbered and scattered them throughout. Here is his 32nd law:

Men hate it when their wives talk about them behind their backs, but they rarely tell their wives they hate it.¹

What is even more surprising, however, is Dr. Leman says that your husband just *expects* you to know that he doesn't want you to share personal things about your life together with others.² He feels safe and free to share things with you that he wouldn't with anyone else. He doesn't want the private and secret things that he shares with you to be shared with anyone else.

The challenge for us in this class is to make sure we keep secrets to ourselves that we know our husbands wouldn't want us to share. There's a fine line between **discussing a topic we are studying together** and **betraying our husbands' confidence**. This class is meant to provide a safe place where we can share and learn with each another without upsetting our husband's confidence in our relationship.

This class is meant to give each of us a chance to share from our hearts some of the struggles and hurts we may have experienced in our pasts and issues we are dealing with now. While we want to be very sensitive and respectful of our husbands, we also need a safe haven to verbalize and ask questions here, because there may be *no other place* to be able to have our questions addressed and answered. This class can allow two women who are experiencing the same struggles to acknowledge them and discuss them with one another without giving intimate details.

9. A **Prayer/Question Basket** will be provided each week in order to allow you an opportunity to ask questions and/or make prayer requests. Index cards will be made available for you to write on and place in this basket. If you have a question you're not sure you want to share out loud, but would like to have explained and discussed in class, then drop it into the basket each week. *Signing the cards is optional.* Most likely you will hear the answer to your questions in a future lesson or class discussion.

10. Now that Kevin Leman has helped you realize how important it is to your husband to maintain confidentiality in your relationship, you need to let him know that you are aware of how he feels. Your *homework* for this week is to have a talk with your husband about respecting his need for privacy. Reassure him of your promise not to share intimate details in class about your relationship. Then both of you sign the **R.S.V.P.** section in the workbook found near the end of this week's reading.

11. You are encouraged to share some of the things you learn from this class with your husband as we study together. Here are a few ideas women have shared of how this could be accomplished.

- You could choose to read some of the chapters and articles out loud to your husband.
- You could have some wonderful conversations together about your sexual relationship.
- Making sure you do the assignments meant for the two of you.

What you do is up to you and your husband. The more the two of you communicate about the topics we discuss in class, the closer it can bring the two of you together. Even if you don't have much time to share with your husband, you will be spending time with **you**. This class is specifically designed for wives and finding ways we can change to help improve our part of the sexual relationship with our husbands.

12. As you study and learn things about your sexual relationships with your husband, *test what you hear with Scripture*. If you have any problem accepting something you read or hear spoken in class, you are encouraged to compare them with what God has to say in His Word.

13. Here's something very important you **need** to know about your husband. The following is a quote from Kevin Leman's book, *Making Sense of the Men in Your Life*:

My home church in Tucson asked me to speak at a steak fry...More than 150 men showed up. They were committed Christians, by the way; for months they had attended a weekly Bible study that met at 6:00 a.m....

I handed out a piece of paper to every man in attendance and asked each one to answer a single question: "How many times a day do you think about sex?"

The answer might surprise you. Remember, we're not talking about convicts, hedonists, or your average beer-guzzling, skirtchasing Joes. We're talking about guys who go to Promise Keepers events and most likely have well-worn Bibles.

The average number of times these committed Christian men thought about sex was *thirty-three times a day!*³

That's 1.4 times an hour in a 24-hour day! However, if you subtract out the seven to eight hours used for sleeping, which brings the total number of hours he's awake down to 16 or 17. So then this averages out to these men thinking about sex two times an hour! And how long are we apart from our husbands most days?...about 9 to 10 hours a day. That means, at the end of the day, your husband has had anywhere from 18 to 20 sexual thoughts since the two of you were together that morning. And if your husband travels, well...you do the math! Kevin Leman continues:

[Y]our husband is not a pervert for being seemingly obsessed with sex...He's not sick for being turned on at 6:00 a.m. when he sees you coming out of the shower, naked, even though you've just had a tsunami of an argument. He's not a sex fiend. He's your normal, average, everyday man. And the sooner you become comfortable with your husband's desire for more and better sex, the sooner you'll be on your way to a happier marriage.⁴

14. As you study and learn this material about God's design for sex in marriage, you are also going to come to understand **you** have a great deal of **power** in your relationship, especially in the area of sex. Statistically, a wife is **OFTEN** the partner in control of the sexual relationship.

Maybe you're one of the few women in this world who have chosen to never say "no" to your husband; however, if you're like most women, you've probably found yourself saying no to your husband's sexual advances at different times in your marriage. A quote from a chapter entitled, *Sex: Better Than Chocolate*, helps to illustrate this idea of power.

The one who has the ability to fulfill or to deny the request for intimacy is holding the power. The person in marriage with the most power in this situation is never the one pursuing; the pursuer is, after all, the one who is risking rejection"⁵

15. Some women are in a sexual relationship where they have a higher desire for sex than their husband does. Statistically speaking, this tends to be lower than a relationship where the husband

has a higher sex drive than his wife. While this does happen, it is not the norm. However, if this is your situation, *don't worry!* There's probably nothing wrong with you.

16. 15% to 20% of marriage seem to struggle with the husband having no desire sexually for his wife. It may be higher than this. As you go through this material you may find yourself thinking:

- “*I wish my husband thought about sex a lot.*”
- “*I wish my husband would desire me. I've tried everything!*”
- “*I think about sex more than my husband does.*”

Please be encouraged. These are things we will touch upon in the weeks ahead. If you are married to a man that doesn't desire you enough sexually, you may find this class difficult—maybe even painful. Here are some excerpts from a testimony written to me by a lady who took this class. She writes:

Dear God's Priceless Woman:

There's no doubt about it—*An Invitation to Intimacy* has made a magnificent and positive impact on marriages and wives. Every week [the class] was inspiring. Every week was incredible. Every week revealed God's true and pure definition of the marriage bed. Every week I learned a new nugget of God's truth about His pure view of sex. It was awesome! Every week I faithfully attended. Every week I faithfully completed the assignments. And every week I cried out in anguish because my marriage bed was a far cry from the typical marriage bed of my fellow classmates...

You see, each week sitting in class and devouring homework was like a stab in my heart and assault on my soul. My husband was addicted to pornography. Unbeknownst to me, this addiction started long before we met. The cold realization was his desire was never for me. [Your class] was a weekly, if not a daily reminder of what I wasn't experiencing and perhaps might never experience in our bedroom. It hurt deeply! I can't express how deep.

After the very first class, on the drive home, I felt like never returning. What could this class possibly hold for me?...Would this class pour more salt into my wounds? My husband preferred the “false intimacy” found in pornography, lust and self-pleasure. Thoughts flooded my mind. Run—run fast—bolt now and run the other direction. In that moment, I do what always works—I stopped, dropped, and prayed! I prayed like never before for God to show me what to do...God answered my prayer by instructing me to stay and continue with *An Invitation to Intimacy*. It was my choice because God is a gentleman. I chose obedience to God and boy am I glad I stayed! I would have missed a blessing! Taking [your class] was a path to growth and healing in ways I can't begin to express on paper.

I would venture to say that there is, sadly, at least one woman in your class whose husband is addicted to pornography. If she's brave enough to confide in you about this and feels she needs to drop out, PLEASE, PLEASE encourage her to stay...

Tell her this—it is what God whispered into my soul the night I cried out in despair and prayed for direction. God has a special message for you tucked inside this 13-week class. He'll only reveal it to you as you faithfully pore over and devour His class materials. It's as if God said to me, "Let Me show you what is possible after you confront your husband's corrupt behavior while still showing him respect according to My Word in Ephesians 5:33..."

Vickie, then tell this exquisite woman...you will be empowered in a supernatural way that will always point to God and enable you to conquer the evil existing in your marriage. In your obedience, in your resolve and in God's supernatural way, you will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Jesus to create the pure marriage bed as designed by God Himself.

Be a female fighting for her marriage. Settle for nothing less than God's best for you, your marriage and your marriage bed. Accept no counterfeit! Stand firm! Stay put! Stay in class!...

Now I am informed, empowered, and enlightened. I would have never arrived to this point by running away. Our marriage bed is much better. Numerous and positive changes have taken place. Not as fast as my timetable would have it, but on God's perfect timetable...I am happy to report that just this past October, while my husband and I were reading Dr. Emerson Eggerichs' book, *Cracking the Communication Code*, my husband pointed to a paragraph that said, "This is you! This is my wife. You did this!"

Here is what's on page 240 of his book:

Then her husband's hunger for the Lord began to grow...He became the spiritual leader in their home and eventually stood before over one hundred people to testify that his wife's faith in God and her unconditional respect for him had allowed God to change their hearts and their marriage. As she heard the man...she could feel a hug from God and hear Him whisper, "Well done, good and faithful servant."⁶

I wept...[This class] is all worth it and reaping bedroom benefits across America. This class is valuable to every woman blessed to attend! I am living proof.⁷

So to you, God's priceless women, I say:

- Pray for God to intervene in your marriage as you study
- Fight for your marriage because it's worth everything you've got
- Stay in class. There's some valuable and life-changing information yet to come.

No one would deny that marriage is hard work. However, marriage was God's idea—it's a good thing—it's worth fighting for. With you and God working together, change is possible!

17. A quote from Daniel Akin's book, *God on Sex* to give you an overall picture of what sex in marriage can be:

Maximum sex is marriage sex. The best sex is believers' sex. Why? Because through a relationship with Jesus Christ, you see sex as one of the most beautiful aspects of life. You come to understand that it is more enjoyable to give than to receive; that bodily pleasure can also be spiritual, that men and women have equal rights to sexual pleasure and that the quality of a sexual relationship is more than just physical pleasure, but it is not *less* than physical pleasure. God has given us a great gift. Let us enjoy it as He designed it. You will find the delights to be greater than you ever imagined!⁸

This is the goal for marriage. This is what God desires for your marriage.

18. Consult your workbook and complete the assignments for the next class.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at:

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¹ Dr. Kevin Leman, *Making Sense of the Men in Your Life*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2000), 199.

² Leman, *Making Sense of the Men in Your Life*, 199.

³ Leman, *Making Sense of the Men in Your Life*, 129-130.

⁴ Leman, *Making Sense of the Men in Your Life*, 130.

⁵ Susan Devries and Bobbie Wolgumuth, *The Most Important Year in a Woman's Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 114-115.

⁶ Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, *Cracking the Communication Code*, 240.

⁷ Used by permission from a former student, January, 2008.

⁸ Daniel Akin, *God on Sex* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 52-53.