

PART ONE: I'M NOT GETTING IT

“I’m not getting it” and by IT, we meant *needs*. As in, “I’m not getting my needs met!”

Although many of us might feel this way, we learned to seek to *meet* needs before seeking to *have needs met*. Ask yourself questions like, “Have I truly listened to my spouse today?” Or, “How can I be a better friend to my spouse today?”

BIG IDEA: Intimacy is destroyed by selfishness, but rebuilt by selflessness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think about some popular movies, TV shows, songs, and websites. Based on what you are seeing and reading, what are some current rules in our culture regarding love, sex, and dating? Which of them do you agree with? Disagree?
2. (*If married*) If you were suddenly single tomorrow, how do you think you would handle the dating scene the second time around? Why?
3. (*If single*) If you were suddenly married tomorrow (to someone you loved), what would you miss about your singleness? What would you miss the least? Why?
4. As you look back on your dating and marriage, what are some of the moments you remember with fondness? What are some of the experiences and struggles you are thankful to have made it through?
5. *Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-5.*

Now regarding the questions you asked in your letter. Yes, it is good to abstain from sexual relations. But because there is so much sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband. The husband should fulfill his wife’s sexual needs, and the wife should fulfill her husband’s needs. The wife gives authority over her body to her husband, and the husband gives authority over his body to his wife. Do not deprive each other of sexual relations, unless you both agree to refrain from sexual intimacy for a limited time so you can give yourselves more completely to prayer. Afterward, you should come together again so that Satan won’t be able to tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 (NLT)

6. Why does Paul think it is good for a person not to marry? (*See 1 Corinthians 7:1-9*) How has immorality complicated this matter for Paul and the Corinthian Church?
7. What are the physical, emotional, and sexual responsibilities of husbands and wives in marriage?
8. What does verses 3-5 teach about sexual expression in the marriage relationship?
9. When is it appropriate for a couple to abstain from sexual intimacy?
10. Paul says that after a couple has been apart for a time, they should ‘come together again.’ One reason for this exhortation is so that they will not be tempted by Satan. What problems and temptations can a couple face when they refrain from sexual intimacy for prolonged periods of time?
11. *Read Ephesians 5:21.*

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:21 (NLT)

12. Paul refers to mutual submission. What does mutual submission look like in the context of a romantic relationship?
13. To fight for your marriage, you have to start with what’s wrong with you. Why is it more important to focus on your issues, rather than your spouse’s issues?

MOVING FORWARD

Feelings grow best out of conversation, so that is where we need to start. Couples must devote themselves to talking—about anything, everything, important things, mundane things, pleasant things, disturbing things. Romance begins with knowledge of one another, and the key to knowledge is open, honest, consistent communication.

In the coming month, have each of you plan an evening out. Set a dollar amount you are going to limit yourselves to and then be creative. The person planning the date should let their spouse know what time to be ready and how to dress (casual or formal). As you plan the date, think creative. Think romantic. And put your spouses needs above your own. While on the date, ask your spouse this question: “How can I love you more? How am I doing? Am I meeting your needs? On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you think we’re doing? What can I do to take it closer to a 10?”

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Do not merely look out for your own needs, but put other people’s needs before your own. You must have the same attitude that Jesus had. Philippians 2:4-5 (NLT)