

***FamilyLife Today*[®] Radio Transcript**

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Biblical Intimacy

Guests: Bill and Vonette Bright, Juli Slattery, Tim Gardner, and Barbara Rainey
From the series: 25 Years of Radio (Day 1 of 3)
Air date: February 8, 2017

Bob: There are many married couples today who would say that their marital intimacy is disappointing. Dr. Juli Slattery says there's a spiritual reason why.

Juli: We've really allowed the enemy to have a foothold here. We have allowed him to tell us lies—like: “I can't trust in your love; you may reject me,” or lies that “I have to perform for you to stay with me,”—those are underlying our marriage. Let's, as a couple, just get on our knees and ask God to break all of that—that happened before we got married—and to renew what we are doing here.

This is *FamilyLife Today* for Wednesday, February 8th. Our host is the President of FamilyLife[®], Dennis Rainey, and I'm Bob Lepine. Are there some things we can be doing in marriage to help get our marital intimacy back on track? We're going to talk about that more today. Stay with us.

And welcome to *FamilyLife Today*. Thanks for joining us on the Wednesday edition. One of the things that is going to be happening later this year is that you and I are going to be celebrating, Lord willing, 25 years of broadcasting together on *FamilyLife Today*.

Dennis: Silver Anniversary!

Bob: Our 25th birthday comes up in November. In fact, here in a couple of weeks, we are being recognized, at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention, as the “Christian Radio Program of the Year”—which is a very kind acknowledgement from our peers. We are very honored by that.

Dennis: It is indeed. I just want our listeners to know that this is really Bob coming through; because we won this award, early on, when we had *FamilyLife Today* being produced out of a closet.

Bob: We were in tight quarters; yes.

Dennis: We were in a converted closet.

Bob: It was a storage room that we made into a studio.

Dennis: We won that award twice from that closet. I have been after Bob for a decade, going, “Hey, Bob, can we do that again? I got you a real one here.”

Bob: “We’ve got real studios.” I just kept telling you, all along, “It is content, not studio, Dennis.” [Laughter]

Dennis: Ooooh! [Laughter]

Bob: Well, I had to slide that in.

Dennis: Yes; you did.

Bob: Here’s, here’s what we—

Dennis: Congratulations, though, Bob—you did it.

Bob: Congratulations to you as well. Here’s what we thought would be fun to do this year.

Dennis: You no longer work here! [Laughter]

Bob: We thought that during the year we ought to take some of the themes that we have addressed over 25 years together and just hit some of the highlights from the people we have had on / the subjects we have explored: “Let’s just visit some of the things that have been highlight moments for us on *FamilyLife Today*.” With Valentine’s Day just around the corner, we thought: “Let’s talk about love, and romance, and intimacy, and sex in marriage. Let’s talk about it from the perspective of what’s been shared with us for a quarter of a century, here on *FamilyLife Today*.”

Dennis: “Let’s let some folks share about it that have been married for a number of years.”

This first pair of voices you are going to hear today on our broadcast—many of you will recognize—the co-founders of Campus Crusade for Christ® / now Cru®—Bill and Vonette Bright. They just have a sweet story, Bob, of when they were married over 60 years ago. I forget at the point we interviewed them—how many years they had been married then—it had to be 45 years or so years. But it’s a sweet story of what occurred on their honeymoon.

[Previous Interview]

Bill: While we were saying, “Thank you,” to all in the reception after the wedding ceremony, tin cans were being attached to the car and all kinds of signs. We took off

with a lot of noise and enthusiastic farewells. When we got a sufficient distance from Vonette's home, where the reception was held, we took all those off.

Then we arrived at the Mayo Hotel, which is the leading hotel in Tulsa, which is 30 miles away. We went in and we acted very nonchalant as though we had been married for years; you know. [Laughter] We did not want to anyone to give—after all, I was 27—so I could have been married for years. Vonette was a child. [Laughter]

Vonette: I was all of 22.

Bill: So we went in and registered. We thought we had pulled it off until we got up to the hotel room and discovered we were covered with *rice*—rice in our hair and—[Laughter]

Vonette: It was red, green and white rice, as a matter of fact, that I had prepared for a friend who had been married a year before. At the time of her wedding reception, her mother or the maid / somebody had put it away where it couldn't be found. That rice was thrown on us at our reception—red, green and white!

Bill: You can imagine how we felt when we thought we had pulled it off—very sophisticated, old-time married couple—here, we had rice in our hair.

Vonette: Today, brides and grooms arrive at the hotel in their wedding dress. What we were trying to cover up?—I do not know! [Laughter]

[Studio]

Bob: Fun to hear Bill and Vonette Bright sharing about their honeymoon.

Dennis: Sounded to me like they got married at Christmas, with red, green—

Bob: It was right after Christmas—it was December 30, 1948.

Dennis: That was a great year.

Bob: '48 was—why?

Dennis: That was the year I was born.

Bob: We'll mark that down.

Bob: February 11 of 1948.

Bob: I remember being at my very first *Weekend to Remember*[®] marriage getaway. One of the things that was shared at the getaway that weekend that was one of those I've-never-thought-about-that-before moments for me was when the speaker said, "Sex was God's idea." It's not like I had thought differently—I just had never stopped to

consider that God was the Creator of / the Designer of how men and women come together and what intimacy looks like in a marriage relationship.

Dennis: It reminds me of what my mentor and friend used to say—Dr. Howard Hendricks—he said, “We should not be ashamed to discuss that which God was not ashamed to create.” I think today, more than ever, those of us who are followers of Christ—and who believe the Bible and who want to represent the Bible—need to be talking about sex in the most respectful way. We ought to be educating our children—training them how to think about sex but also training them to protect their sexual innocence until marriage.

Bob: Dr. Juli Slattery agrees with you. She is an author and a speaker. She was with us, recently, on *FamilyLife Today* and said this is something we need to be talking more about.

[Previous Interview]

Juli: The church’s reaction has been: “God really doesn’t want us talking about this,” when, in fact, God created it. If you read the Scriptures—from Genesis to Revelation—you will see sexuality addressed over and over again in different contexts; but we skip over those passages / we get uncomfortable.

I think what has happened is—that the church has not talked about this for probably hundreds of years. Now, all of a sudden, we realize what a crisis we are in. We feel ill-equipped—it is like: “How do you jump into the deep end when you’ve never even swam with the water wings on?” Pastors and leaders do not know where to begin.

Then you add to that, Dennis and Bob, just the average Christian wife, who doesn’t know how to enjoy sexuality, whether it’s physically painful or she’s filled with shame and guilt about this issue / she can’t forgive herself for things in the past. It’s not only the shame that you bring into marriage— that’s a big part of it—but it’s also how you view sexuality.

You add all those together—and even things I am not mentioning—maybe her husband is involved in pornography or has been unfaithful. You are talking about a *vast* majority of women, in churches, I would even say, who have these hidden issues and nowhere to go to ask the questions; because they are not invited to ask.

[Studio]

Bob: That’s Dr. Juli Slattery again, talking about the importance of a healthy conversation on issues of intimacy and sexuality. This is something we’ve got to figure out how to deal with appropriately.

Dennis: It is. It is hard, Bob, because the culture—one person said: “What God designed, man has degenerated,”—he has made fun of it / he has used it with crass language / crass jokes. That’s not what God had in mind when He created sexual intimacy for a husband and a wife to enjoy with one another.

In fact, if you think God is down on sex, I would encourage you to dust off the Song of Solomon in your Old Testaments, right after the Psalms and the Proverbs—just read through that book. It’s magnificent as it describes attraction, sexual delight and pleasure. In fact, let me just read to you what Solomon said of his bride—he said: “You have captivated my heart, my sister, my bride. You have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace. How beautiful is your love my sister, my bride. How much better is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your oils, than any spice. Your lips drip nectar, my bride. Honey and milk are under your tongue.” The French did not invent the French kiss.

Bob: I think we’re going to have to wrap up. I need to—

Dennis: —get home? [Laughter]

Bob: Here is what is important, here, though. We do need to figure out how we have conversations about this subject—in church; as Christians; and more importantly, as husband and wife. We’ve got to figure out how to talk about this with one another so that our physical relationship can be all God intended it to be.

Dennis: We need to have conversations about this and we need to talk about it when we’re not tired and when we can better understand one another. We had a guest, here on *FamilyLife Today*, who talked about the importance of communication between husbands and wives in this area.

Bob: Yes, Tim Gardner is a speaker and a writer. He wrote a book called *Sacred Sex*. He made an important point about the fact that our sexual relationship is really tied to how effectively we are communicating with one another in marriage.

[Previous Interview]

Tim: In the business world, we talk often about meta-communication, where that’s not just how you communicate—it’s what you think about communication / it’s what you think the purpose of communication is. I started thinking about that in connection to sex. We have to realize that everything that wanders through our days and our minds affects what we think about sex or even how we experience sex.

So meta-sex is understanding that what goes on at breakfast affects our sexual intimacy. What I think about sex during the day; what I see during the day; what happened to me 15 years ago, if I have not dealt with it—all of that affects sex. Meta-

sex is realizing that everything I think, do, and respond—everything that I have created in my mind—impacts the sexual experience.

Dennis: For you and Amy, as your marriage progressed, there was something taking place in your marriage that was causing her to be able to keep her focus off of marital intimacy and oneness.

Tim: I appreciate you bringing that up. [Laughter]

Dennis: Well, you were the one who wrote about it! That's one of the problems about being—

Bob: —with her permission, I might add; right?

Dennis: —being an author. You tell these stories, and then you are going to be asked about it by some radio interviewer. [Laughter]

Tim: It is out there forever—that is exactly right. I look back on Amy—and we are getting close to 20 years—I was a real clod in this whole area for a lot of years—still a clod in a lot of ways. I was fascinated, as wives will think their husbands are, with sex—but learning about it—“What was God saying?”—and always reading books on it.

My wife, being much more practical and grounded than me in a lot of ways, was always concerned about our finances. She was a school teacher / I was a youth minister—so we were always keeping an eye on things. She would say: “What about the budget? Have you—we need to talk about the budget. What about this?” I would always say: “Yes; yes; yes! But let me tell you about what I read about sex.” One day, it was the proverbial board between the eyes when she said, “Honey, I wish you cared as much about our finances as you do about our sex life.”

That was the stop-me-in-my-tracks comment of: “You know what? She's right! She's exactly right. I need to deal with what is important to *her* / important to our family. But this is an issue that I am ignoring—that she is trying to get my attention.”

What I had to understand was that was hurting our sex life, that was hurting our intimacy, that was hurting our entire relationship; because I was not paying attention to something that was vitally important to her.

[Studio]

Dennis: Yes, I can imagine there is a guy listening to us, right now, who's going, Bob: “I balance my checkbook. I am cool—I got that covered! I'm taking care of my wife.” Well, if that is not her need, then what is? Is it for you to pray with her on a daily basis?—or lead your family, spiritually?—or maybe just ask her the question: “Sweetheart, what are your top two or three needs, right now, that I can pray for you about?—that I can maybe

think about meeting? Would you share with me the top three needs you have so I can better understand who you are and nourish, cherish, love and honor you?"

Bob: It may be simple things like: "Did you take out the trash like I asked you to?" or "Do you put away things after you get them out of the refrigerator like I've asked you to?" This matters when it comes to our intimacy relationship, because it all gets mixed together for our wives; doesn't it?

Dennis: It does. I am kind of debating on whether to tell this story or not—if I can tell it appropriately.

Not that long ago, Barbara and I had set aside some time to be together—kind of on the topic of what we are talking about here. We are laying there—I had kissed her a couple of times; we had some conversation; and I kissed her a couple more times—and she said, "When are you going to get your knee operated on?" [Laughter] I looked at her and I burst out laughing. Now, Bob, she was *dead* serious; okay?

Bob: Yes

Dennis: I was not making fun of her question; but instantly, she kind of realized the humor of the moment as well. [Laughter]

Here is what I want some of you newlyweds to hear: "Four decades later, you are not going to have this whole thing figured out at all;" okay? There are random thoughts that ignite, electronically, across the gray matter of the brain—or maybe it did not come from the brain of all—I do not know where it comes from; but anyway, you have to maintain your sense of humor. You know what? Just enjoy one another and the relationship and do not take yourself or your spouse too seriously.

Bob: Being in the moment can mean different things to different people; can't it?

Dennis: It can. [Laughter] Sometimes, getting to that moment can take a little longer.

Bob: In fact, that reminds me of a story you and Barbara shared about one time when you were trying to set the mood. The mood just did not get there for Barbara; right?—is not that how this happened?

Dennis: That's exactly how it went down. You know, it is just really interesting—telling a story on radio and then to having to live it down. It is a part of our story though.

[Previous Interview]

Barbara: For us, we really discovered how different we were, romantically, when we were invited to go on a trip to Mazatlán, Mexico, with some friends. We thought: "This is

going to be a *great* trip to get away. We really need the time away.” We found someone to keep our two kids.

Bob: You could rekindle the romance!

Barbara: Yes! We took off on a plane. It just felt like: “This will do it. This will be okay.”

Dennis: “Leave our problems behind.

Barbara: Yes.

Dennis: “Get some—

Barbara: And we both felt a sense of hope, I think, as we flew off into the sunset, that the difference in circumstances / the difference in location was going to be enough to spark what we had had before. We got there—I think we got there late at night—put our stuff in the hotel room, went to bed, slept in the next day, got up and did sight-seeing with this other couple, just hung out on the beach—but we would be with somebody else. We didn’t have a lot of time, as I remember, to actually talk and connect—just the two of us that day—which, for me, is really, really important.

Dennis: As a man, this is where I first missed her; because: “Hey, you know, we are together with another couple. We are in a romantic place. I mean—

Barbara: “What more do you need?”

Dennis: That’s right! “We’ll have dinner together tonight; we’ll talk.”

Bob: I’m guessing that you were thinking: “Romantic location at the beach...”

Dennis: Oh my goodness! I mean, it was spectacular!

Barbara: You thought it was a piece of cake because of the location—where we were, we removed from the stress of life.

Dennis: —or removed from the kids—I mean, that is how you spell “romance.”

Bob: And you were probably thinking, “We’ll probably have a romantic dinner together.”

Barbara: We had a nice dinner with our friends, and we really did have a good time. And we, you know, the weather was perfect, and the breeze was blowing off the beach, and there’s this little band playing music. I mean, it really was movie-like in supplying the ingredients that we all think need to be there to have romance.

The difference is that I still needed to connect, emotionally. I wanted to talk—I wanted to feel like we could connect and that he could hear what I was feeling. I was looking for time to talk about all the things and for him to hear me say some of the things that I needed to say. I was not even sure what they all were either, to tell you the truth.

Dennis: And meanwhile, here I am, taking a look at the waves—I am going: “Let’s surf!” It was magnificent—I do remember this.

Barbara: I do too.

Dennis: The evening—

Barbara: —it was beautiful.

Dennis: —was just—it was the stuff, as Barbara said, that movies are made of.

Bob: Yes; so what happened?

Barbara: We got back to the room. I knew enough, having been married five years—I knew enough to know that my husband wanted to make love. I knew that we needed to. Deep down inside, I knew this was—that we did and we needed to connect again. What I didn’t realize is how difficult that was going to be because I still—even though we’d had all the wonderful ingredients that Hollywood says you need to have to have romance / even though all that had been present—I still didn’t feel connected to him on an emotional level.

What I learned, in hindsight, is that I need to feel connected with him and to feel a sense of intimacy *before* I engage in physical intercourse; whereas, he engages in physical intercourse to get that intimacy. We’re both just coming at the same need—which is intimacy in a marriage—we’re just coming at it from opposite directions. We are going the same way / we’re just coming from opposite directions.

That night, in the hotel room, even though I *knew* that that was what he needed and what we needed, I just couldn’t get there. It was like I was two dimensional. Part of me wanted to be there but part of me could not get there. I did not know how to reconcile the two.

Bob: It seems to me, as you shared that story with me, did not something get thrown in the hotel room?

Dennis: A bottle of lotion got tossed—

Bob: Tossed! [Laughter]

Dennis:—with vigor—I was angry. I did not handle it as an adult should have handled it.

Here is what I'd like to say to the guys: "Men, your wife spells *romance* R-E-L-A-T-I-O-N-S-H-I-P—relationship. When you try to spell it "sex," you are spelling it the way *you* spell romance. Speak your *wife's* language."

Ladies, it would be well for you to know what language your husband speaks.

[Studio]

Bob: We will spend some time the rest of this week trying to help you with that as we dig back through the archives and listen to some clips from the past 25 years of *FamilyLife Today* as we get ready to celebrate our 25th birthday later on this year.

I was just thinking, "For husbands and wives, who are looking for a creative way to invest in their marriage relationship, something special you might get one another for Valentine's Day this year—we always recommend the *Weekend to Remember* marriage getaway as a *great* activity for couples to do together. There are a lot of couples who aren't able to make it because of crowded schedule, or distance, or just the logistics of life don't make it possible for you to join us at a *Weekend to Remember*."

Well, we had a one-day event recently called *I Still Do*®, where Dennis Rainey and Alistair Begg, Crawford and Karen Loritts, and Alex Kendrick all spoke. We had thousands of people who joined us at the live event, and we had thousands more who joined us off-site, watching it as a simulcast. Now, we have taken the messages from that *I Still Do* event, and we are making them available On Demand. You and your spouse could watch these together during the month of February as a way to strengthen your marriage, or you could watch it with a small group, or watch it with your whole church if you want to.

When you sign up for the *I Still Do* On Demand, you get 30-days' access to these messages to watch however you like. And we will send you an additional gift when you order *I Still Do*—we will send you a copy of our "Simply Romantic Nights" resource as an extra special Valentine's gift. That is something you can enjoy all year long. Find out more when you go to our website, FamilyLifeToday.com. Click the link for *I Still Do*. You can order online at FamilyLifeToday.com; or call if you have any questions at 1-800-"F" as in family, "L" as in life, and then the word, "TODAY."

Now, we also want to say a quick "Thank you," to those of you who make this daily radio program possible—those of you who partner with us in the ministry of *FamilyLife Today*. We appreciate your financial support—that is what enables us to make this program available to people, all around the world: online at FamilyLifeToday.com, through our mobile app., through all our resources that are available, here at FamilyLife. *You* make that possible when you support this ministry, and we are grateful for the partnership we have with you.

If you can help with a donation today, we would love to send you, as a thank-you gift, Dennis and Barbara Rainey's devotional book for couples called *Moments with You*. It is our thank-you gift when you donate online at FamilyLifeToday.com or call 1-800-FL-TODAY to make a donation.

And we hope you'll join us back tomorrow when we are going to talk about a wife's five romantic needs. Hope you can tune in for that.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, along with our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our host, Dennis Rainey, I'm Bob Lepine. We will see you back next time for another edition of *FamilyLife Today*.

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