

## **SEXUAL INTIMACY (SHARON JAYNES)**

<https://fiercemarriage.com/sexual-intimacy-sharon-jaynes>

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**Selena:** Fierce listeners, we have a treat today. We have Sharon Jaynes with us, and she is going to be talking a bit about her book, "Lovestruck: Discovering God's Design for Romance, Marriage, and Sexual Intimacy from the Song of Solomon."

**Ryan:** This was an amazing interview because, obviously, Sharon has written 24 books...well, not obviously. Just so you know, 24 books. [Selena laughs] Because of that, she's obviously very wise. Now she's taken the Song of Solomon. And literally, we're going through it by chapter by chapter and seeing what a beautiful image it is for romance, marriage, and sexual intimacy. Maybe we hovered most around the topic of sexual intimacy.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Mainly we talked about intentionality. We talked about dealing with shame.

**Selena:** Yeah, she really brought to life I think that book of the Bible. In her book, she helps us recognize outside factors that might be causing hurt feelings, and how do we identify those little foxes and pesky fears as she calls them in our Marriage, and what does that look like, and how does the Bible speak to those. It was very illuminating for us, which sound silly.

**Ryan:** We spend a lot of time.

**Selena:** Yeah, we spend a lot of time reading the Bible about sex and intimacy and God's purposes for it, but it was so refreshing the truth that she brought from God's Word to our own hearts. So we pray that it blesses you as well. So without further ado, we have Sharon Jaynes.

**Ryan:** Sharon, thank you so much for joining us. It's great to have you. How are you?

**Sharon:** Great. Thanks for having me.

**Ryan:** Thanks for taking the time out. I think some of our listeners may be familiar with you, with your ministry, with your work as an author and the other professional capacities in which you've worked. But can you give us, for the benefit of those maybe who don't know as much, give us a little bit of your backstory? Where are you today and how did you get there?

**Sharon:** Okay. Well, I was with Proverbs 31 Ministries in the very beginning, helping Lysa TerKeurst get that started. I was actually president for three years while she...after her third child, she needed a little bit of time there. Then I felt like my job there, in I guess leadership capacity, I had done what I had been called to do. I was writing more. Actually, Lovestruck is my 24th book.

**Ryan:** Oh, my goodness. Well done.

**Sharon:** Then I just started working on more on my own things. I had worked with two other groups. Also on a ministry called Girlfriends in God. We have daily devotions of about 500,000 people a day. I give those. I'm back at Proverbs too. Went back to Proverbs four years ago, and write for their devotions, the Encouragement for Today.

Actually, that's how this book came about. I know that's one thing you were going to ask me.

**Selena:** Yes.

**Sharon:** There's an app that Proverbs 31 has. They were going through the Bible, and they got to the Song of Solomon. I had written several books on marriage, and one was called "Praying for your Husband from Head to Toe" that they had used a lot and another one that had a section on sexual intimacy. So they're like, "Let's get Sharon to write this part."

So when they got to the Book of Solomon, I think everybody had called me. And I jumped right in. I've loved writing that part of the Bible study so much that I just kept going. I mean, for months I kept going in it because the devotions for the app are very short. So I just kept studying and kept...I didn't even intend to write a book. But the next thing I knew I had a book. That's kind of how that all started. That one little seed of doing that app.

**Ryan:** Wow.

**Sharon:** I'm kind of spread around. Proverbs 31, Girlfriends in God, doing my own thing at SharonJaynes.com. Those are my three main lobs.

**Ryan:** Then that is the way to write a book, I'll tell you what. I don't know, you've written 27 books before?

**Sharon:** Actually, I turned in number 25 on Saturday. That is the way to write a book because the other one I started from scratch and I don't like that. [Ryan and Selena chuckles]

- Selena:** It's not fun.
- Sharon:** It's a lot of pressure.
- Ryan:** It's a lot of pressure.
- Selena:** Is it. It is.
- Ryan:** Coincidentally we just finished a book. It was submitted last December. This is a couple of months ago. Also, we had our third daughter in October. It's funny the correlation between conceiving and being pregnant and then birthing. It's the same with a book.
- Sharon:** It's very similar. Selena and I will both say that, you know, it is both painful. I call these books my children actually.
- Selena:** Yes, yes, they come out and then they have a life of their own.
- Sharon:** That's right. It takes the same time the birth them.
- Selena:** It does. [all chuckle]
- Sharon:** [inaudible]
- Selena:** Absolutely. Absolutely.
- Ryan:** The book in question here, in case the listeners don't know the whole title, is "Lovestruck: Discovering God's Design for Romance, Marriage, and Sexual Intimacy from the Song of Solomon." So you are hitting a lot of really favorite topics of ours. Because, first of all, talking about it from the Song of Solomon means that you're using Scripture and not just coming up with your own ideas. But you're letting scripture drive the boat, right?
- Sharon:** Right.
- Ryan:** Then obviously God's design for romance, marriage, and sexual intimacy, that's a big topic. So you said you kind of birthed that out of the study that you did through Proverbs 31. But now that you're on this side of it, and the books released and it's kind of getting a life of its own, what is your big hope for those who read it?
- Sharon:** You know what was, I guess, surprising for me...and honestly, I do touch on all three of those subjects. But I know that there are a lot of books on marriage out there today. So a lot of what I do focus on is the sexual intimacy part of

marriage. That's what I was finding there were not that many books written by women on that topic. What has been surprising to me is the number of mature marriages that the sexual intimacy part of their marriage has dried up. I have been surprised by the emails, by the conversations of women pulling me aside. It has broken my heart.

Honestly, I had the younger couple in mind when I was writing the book to kind of give them some instruction about how God approves it, how God made it, how He put a lot into it when He created the human bodies for that, for the husband and wife to enjoy and be the sweet little marriage. But it really has been an eye-opener to me to see the mature marriages...Let me say this: the mature Christian marriages, that this is a huge problem.

It's not just the women, and it's not just the men. There's at least 20% of marriages—and this has been a study that I didn't do, someone else did—where the man is not interested at all. I think that the devil gets just as excited about marriage without sex as he does sex without marriage. Because both ways are not the way God intended it. So that has been something I discovered after writing it and kind of in the end days of writing it. And it has made me more passionate about it than ever.

**Ryan:** It's really interesting.

**Selena:** I love that.

**Ryan:** That's really interesting.

**Selena:** I'm just sitting here absorbing.

**Ryan:** That's good.

**Sharon:** And you know, you guys, what you are doing, I'm sure that you're seeing that if people are being [inaudible] it's through emails that...You know, I constantly get emails from women that this part of their marriage is just totally not there.

**Ryan:** Oh, for sure. As you're talking, my wheels are spinning in terms, okay, you obviously have spent time thinking, studying, writing about this. Now you're getting feedback almost in real-time. For our listeners who might be feeling like their marriage is headed in this bad direction, where their love life, their intimate life isn't everything they had hoped and isn't everything it once was, what are some of the warning signs of an intimate life that's maybe going awry or drying up? What encouragement would you have for that husband or that wife?

**Sharon:** Well, first of all, I want to say that I think that one problem is that marriages today in the sexual arena had very unrealistic expectations. So, they are saying, which I know you probably have mentioned many times on your program, that people looking at the media, you know, movies, television, where they say hello, and then in 45 minutes or less they're already in bed, they have this expectation of what sex is supposed to be like. and it's not realistic. So when they see that their marriage isn't like that, they get discouraged. But we can't let that be our God. If you want to read something sensual, the Song of Solomon it is.

**Selena:** Oh, yeah.

**Ryan:** It is very steamy? Yes.

**Sharon:** But here's the problem with the Song of Solomon. Well, there's a couple of little glitches and one big elephant in the room. But the thing is, the way that it is written with the verbiage that it uses and all the symbolism, most people don't know—and I didn't even know and I've been a Christian a long time—I didn't know half of what they were talking about.

So when you go back and you uncover what do they means by pomegranates, what do they mean by the garden? You know, anytime you see and I'll just tell you right this way while you're listening, that anytime it's talking about fruit, produce, garden, they are not going to the grocery store. [Ryan laughs] Anytime you read anything about that, it's talking about sex. So, you know, there's things like that that are in the book that are kind of hidden. That's what makes the book...it is very sensual, but there's nothing sorted about it.

**Ryan:** Right.

**Sharon:** Of course, it is covered up with that kind of language. That's what makes it beautiful and kind of draws you in once you know what they're talking about. And makes it nothing sorted whatsoever. I can't remember what your original question was. [laughs]

**Ryan:** No, it's all really good. I actually remember, I mean, you're echoing our own thoughts on it. Because, I mean, it is true. That's exactly how it was designed. I mean you do have to go a little bit of extra work to read through some of the analogies. There's a really funny satire article by The Babylon Bee. They had Song of Solomon Sweetheart Candies Now Available. That's from Valentine's Day that just passed. And it says on there, it's like, instead of being like, "I love you," it's like, "Your teeth are sheep" or "You have goat hair." [all laughs] Or like, "Hey, tower neck."

**Sharon:** When you really find out what they mean, it is so awesome. Even talking about hair being like goats coming down the mountain, okay, that is weird for us. We don't raise...Well, I shouldn't say we don't raise goats because so many people are raising goats now. But I was in Israel not that long ago and there were group of high school Israeli girls at one of the same places where I was at. They had just flat, beautiful, shiny hair. I thought of the Song of Solomon. That's the beautiful dark, black goat hair that he sees coming down the hillside. There's just so much in it.

**Ryan:** That's so good. There's so much encouragement to be had from the Song of Solomon, which I love. Again, a lot of listeners are hearing this and it's like, "Man, this is great. I love this picture. It's compelling. It's biblical. It's wonderful. God has made it and designed intimacy to be good, but it doesn't feel good." So what are those warning signs? This, I guess, goes back to the question prior to that was, what are the warning signs that maybe a couple should be looking out for to see when maybe the intimacy is headed in the wrong direction? And what encouragement would you have for them if they feel stuck in that?

**Sharon:** Okay. I promise I'm going to answer that question. But let me tie it back to [inaudible]

**Ryan:** No worries.

**Sharon:** Because if you look at the book, kind of each two chapters is a progression of the relationship. And then they get into a hard spot. Then it goes to a different place. But in the first part, I mean it starts with all that desire. When it starts, the very first verse is "Kiss me and kiss me again." And that's the woman saying it. Or "kiss me with the kisses of your mouth."

So we see in the very first two chapters, there's all kinds of passion. And the woman is the most passionate. The book is really focusing on her more than the man anyway. But she cannot wait to be with this man in every sense of the word. I mean, she wants him and she wants him now. She wants him bad. But she also says, "Don't awaken love until it's time."

**Ryan:** Wow.

**Sharon:** So we know that even though she's longing for him, she is telling her friends that she's with, and herself, "Don't go yet." So that's part of it. But in those first two chapters, the man is talking with her and he says, "Catch for us the little foxes. Now first of all, when he says, "Catch for us the little foxes," who in the world is he talking to? I mean, it's just her and him there. I think he's

talking to God, and saying, "Help us see anything that can come in our marriage and destroy the fruit."

Because remember they're more an agricultural society. The little foxes would come in when they will plant the grapes for the vineyards. And they would particularly like the young grapes, the new grapes. So the man is praying, "Show us anything that's going to be a little fox to come in and still the fruit." Okay.

Now let's just say the fox is what you're mentioning is the apathy in marriage. Then in chapters three and four, they get married. It's beautiful. They have a honeymoon. We get to actually see the honeymoon in great detail, and it is absolutely stunning.

Then, after all that desire, passionate honeymoon, chapter five, the husband comes knocking. And it was very common in those days for the king to have a separate sleeping quarter than the wife. And he comes knocking, and she says, "You know what? I've already got on my pajamas. [Selena chuckles] I'm already in bed. And she is not interested.

So, look how quick did that happen. I mean, I know we've only got eight chapters here, but right after the honeymoon...and I believe this book of the Bible is in here to show us what a marriage can be like and what to look out for. So after the honeymoon, then there's the apathy already. She's just not interested. So that is a warning for us right in the middle of the book.

He leaves and then her friends try to draw her back, say, "Oh, okay, now tell us what you loved about him in the first place?" Listen, that is a great way to keep passion alive in your marriage. Even we see that in the book of Revelation when it says...They're talking about the different churches. One of the churches, he said, "Your love is growing cold. It is the most loving church of all, but yet your love has grown cold." And what did the Scripture tell that church to remember in return? Remember [inaudible] in return.

I can apply it right here into the middle of the Song of Solomon. Her friends are saying, "Okay, well, tell us what you love about him. What did you love about that man in the first place?" Not the friends that will say, "That dog! He shouldn't nah, nah. I wouldn't put up with that." No, her friends are standing for the marriage, encouraging her. then we have this long litany of she's listing all the things she loves about him, about his legs, about his character. Remembering what she loves about him and then she goes to find him.

So, again, it is focusing on her. She goes and finds him, they make up. There is a beautiful section of forgiveness. They have a beautiful picture of forgiveness

in there. She does a dance that is just for him. When you uncover the name of that dance it is...Do you remember in Scripture when Jacob went back to Esau, and [inaudible] but then they made up?

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** They named that place. And that place they named actually became a dance in the Hebrew culture. And it was the dance of forgiveness. So she does a dance for him, and they're reunited. So that's the same for them. So we're seeing apathy happen. He warned, "Don't let it happen." We see it did happen. And you know there are lots of different ways that this story could have shown that a little fox could have come in.

I mean, there's little fox of dishonesty, jealousy, complacency, irresponsibility, guilt. I mean, you name it. There's so many little foxes. But one that the Scripture chose to focus on in these eight chapters was that little fox of apathy.

So then what happens, let's go to the last two chapters of the book. After they've made up, the last two chapters, it shows that he's in the field. The husband is in the field, and she comes to him. I can almost just picture her pulling on his robe. She says, "Come away. Let's get away and go by ourselves. Let's get away by ourselves like we used to. Let's go to the villages like we used to do and get away by ourselves." And she says, "I will give you some of that fruit that you've always loved, and I've got some new fruit that you don't even know about."

Okay, we've already established [Ryan chuckles] they are not going to the grocery store. So you see what they've done there? You see how they've got that pattern there. Watch out for the fox. We're going to call it apathy right now. Passion. After the marriage, apathy came in. And then we see at the end of the book how she is very intentional. I think that is a key word for us in having a strong marriage, don't you?

**Selena:** Mm-hmm.

**Ryan:** Yeah.

**Sharon:** We have to be intentional. We cannot read romance novels or watch movies on television and think that that's just going to happen without being intentional. I mean, even in the intimacy part, we have to be intentional with that. If people who want it to sometimes just be spontaneous, waiting for it to be spontaneous, often are still waiting. [all laughs] We have to be intentional with that and make sure that we are making time for that to be part of our marriage.



**Selena:** I love that. That's so encouraging.

**Sharon:** I wanted to get it all in there. When did you see the progression?

**Selena:** No.

**Ryan:** I've never heard it. I've never really heard it described like this. Yeah, that's good.

**Selena:** No, that's so important. Again, just echoing what Ryan is saying too is we've read through Song of Solomon. I think we've been Christians for a long time, but honestly, I've never heard it illuminated that way. I love that you're just taking God's truth. This is the standard, right? It's like the movies show us glimpses of this but God has designed and purposed it and created it. And here it is in His word, right? So clear, but seemingly unclear at times too. [chuckles]

**Sharon:** Right.

**Selena:** But so beautiful looking at the progression of the book and the story. Going from there, what does the Bible teach us about the purpose of being intimate, being physically intimate with each other? Obviously, in the married space.

**Sharon:** Well, we know that when God created Adam and Eve, and He said the two shall become one, sexual intimacy is part of that. When you come together physically, you're also coming together spiritually. I think that it is helpful for people to see it that way—not just a physical act.

Here's another statistic that is sad, but is true. We have to use this as we're talking about that. "80% of evangelical Christians are not virgins when they get married." So what we need to understand is it is not just a physical act. It is a spiritual act too. That's what makes it so special in marriage and what it needs to be.

Listen, God wants every married couple to have the best physical intimacy possible. That's what He wants. And I think when a husband and wife come together in that way, God cheers. He's like, "Yay, this is why I went through all this trouble to create this, take it away, all your cranial nerves to fire with just a kiss." I mean, He did this on purpose. So when we take that outside of marriage, you see, it's just not God's best.

**Selena:** Right. It's a watered down version of what He's given us.

**Sharon:** And there's not going to be that spiritual fulfillment part when it's outside of marriage. Unfortunately, for our culture today, sex is either a gift or baggage. It depends on when and how you open the box. People are bringing a lot of baggage into a Christian marriage. I just want to encourage everyone who's listening. No matter what has happened in the past, our God is such a God of grace and mercy. He wants the best for you regardless of what your past has been like.

So we simply come to God and bring Him that baggage. We give him that baggage and leave it at the foot of the cross, and start today to experience what God wants us to experience. But don't allow the enemy to make you feel shameful or guilty of your past and bring that into the marriage because it will hinder that part. So I just want to encourage everyone, because I know that most of the people listening, God's ideal is not the majority.

So even though we're talking about this and this is what God's designed for us, and this is what His best for us, I don't want someone to feel more bogged down and more shameful because of their past and let that harm their present marriage. Does that make sense?

**Ryan:** Yeah. I was going to say, to me, that's one of the most striking things about the Song of Solomon is that you don't get a hint of hesitation from these lovers right? Or a hint of shame in these graphic images. They're not sorted, but they are graphic in a sense, right?

**Sharon:** Right.

**Ryan:** So yeah, coming into a marriage, a lot of times you can feel the sense of shame, either it's because it's culturally imposed, right? Because there's this kind of platonic view of sex in marriage, and because it's of the flesh, it's evil. That's not biblical. Sex is a good thing. Or because of your past. You've either had a past sexual encounter or God forbid, you've had abuse and hasn't been worked out. So there's a lot of shame and fear and guilt in this area. So I guess that would be my next question.

So you've shown this picture, this Songs of Solomon is the ideal. We've seen that it says don't awaken love before it's time. Proverbs 5 talks about keeping your well for yourself and for you alone. The well-being your sexual being, your sexual intimacy. And don't let it spill out into the streets, so to speak.

So, like you said, 80% of evangelical marriages have had premarital sex, whether that's with each other with other partners. Or there's maybe even abuse in some cases. So given that that's probably the case for most of our listeners, where they might feel the sense of brokenness and shame, and they

hear you say that God is forgiving, he's a forgiving God, he's forgiven us and He will redeem us. What encouragement would you have for them today? As they go home, and they look their husband or their wife in the face and they still feel that sense of "I don't know how we're going to get through this hard time"? What conversation starters, I guess, would you give to that wife or that husband as they walk in through the doors tonight?

**Sharon:** Well, interesting. I just turned in a manuscript for my next book on Saturday, which will come out in a year. The title of it is "When You don't like your Story." The subtitle is "what if your worst chapters become your greatest victories?" I will tell you that the devil would like nothing more for someone to stay in a shame place.

What I want to say is that we flippantly say in the Christian world, "Confess your sins to God, He'll wipe it away." I think because we say it so quickly and so easily that we don't really take in the gravity of what we're really, really saying. The truth is when Jesus died on that cross and He said, what we call "it is finished" is what most of our Bible translations have it in there...But the word "tetelestai" really means "paid in full." That Jesus paid in full for those mistakes and sins that we've committed. And not just the ones we committed before we came to Christ, but the ones we committed afterwards.

When we say, "Yeah, I know God forgives me but I can't forgive myself," which is that's the shame place, then you're not able to accept God's forgiveness for yourself, and continue to just say, "I can't forgive myself." When we say that, that is like saying of what Jesus did is not enough. I want the gravity of that to really sink in. It's like there's more we have to do. There is nothing more that we can do. We need to accept God's grace and forgiveness and then move forward. I don't want to make little a sin and I don't want to make little afraid.

Back to the woman caught in adultery, which again, here's, again, the situation, He did not condemn her. He did say, "Go and sin no more." So he called sin a "sin." He told her to change her ways. Then she had to move forward in that and to be free of that condemnation. The scripture says, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." However, you can be free and not walk free.

We're hopping on a different book, but this is so important. You can be free, God can set you free and you can choose not to walk free. So that is a decision that we have to accept that grace and forgiveness. We accept God's forgiveness of us and then move forward and be determined, "I will not live in shame any longer." Because if I am living in shame, I am refusing God's grace.

**Ryan:** Yeah. And that's an act of faith many times. Because in our culture, we tend to conflate feelings with faith. Meaning that if I don't feel it, then the faith isn't there. I think that's not faith, right? Faith is walking in the hope that you've received, whether or not you feel it or not. It's a belief action.

And just to echo what you said about when Jesus forgives us we don't forgive ourselves, we're basically saying that Christ died for nothing. Paul talks about in Galatians 2, he says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Usually, people will stop there. But in verse 21, it says, "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose."

It's so funny. It's almost like a posture of shame and fear because you're not forgiving yourself. It almost takes on this mask of humility. But really—and I'm being bold here—it's a posture of pride that says, "God, you can't outdo what I've done."

**Sharon:** Absolutely,

**Ryan:** "What you've said is not true. What I've said is true. What I feel is true. Therefore, what you did on the cross doesn't reach me." I mean, how wicked of a heart posture is that. So I think there's amount of humility that has to come into our hearts that says, "You know what, I'm not my own Savior. I can never be my own Savior. I have a savior." And that's the goodness of the gospel. I love it.

**Sharon:** You said that beautifully.

**Ryan:** Man, man.

**Selena:** Just I think one more question before our last and final question. And it's kind of a more fun one. But this one more question about the title of the book Lovestruck and what are some ways that we can stay lovestruck through our marriages? So maybe just talk about the title and then what that looks like in our marriage.

**Sharon:** I think that going back to that word "intentional" is very important. So we are going to be intentional. So how we're going to do that? Of course, we've heard forever to have date nights. I do think that's important. My husband and I are nesters now but we still need date nights. The other thing, [inaudible] you don't need that because every night to date night. Well, no, it's not. [inaudible] So make sure you do that. One thing that we did is we made sure once a year we always got away together by ourselves without kids around. We did not

talk about children on the date nights or when we would take time away by ourselves.

Another thing that's very important to me because I think the words we say to each other, you know, it says death and life are in the power of the tongue. But I also think death and life of a marriage are in the power of the tongue as well. I think we need to make sure that we are listening to what we're saying to our spouse. What kind of words are we using with them?

This is not something special, but it keeps your marriage strong. It might not be what you're getting at, but yes, the date nights, just getting away. Yes, doing nice things for each other. Making sure that there's not too much time between intimacy—that's very important. That can become an elephant in the room, and then all of a sudden is uncomfortable.

I tell women, if we do get [inaudible] American roof a house and then be ready to go. We get tired. [inaudible] desert compartment, I think. But if it's not a good day for you, then to make sure that not 24 hours will pass before it is a good day. You know, I'm trying to use my words well.

**Ryan:** Yeah, I can sense it. You mean sensitive. That's good. We're big fans of the, I mean, talk around it, be generous toward each other. Again, we see this picture in Song of Solomon that it's not a picture of taking from each other. It's a picture of giving and pursuing each other. Giving to each other and pursuing each other in the name of this amazing rapturous love that they're caught up in. But at no point do you see either the lover or the beloved, the husband or the wife, you don't see them taking and demanding. You see them pursuing and giving.

And I think that's what you're getting at in that, as a husband, if I approached Selena, I give her the sexy eyebrows and I'm saying, "Hey, I just roofed the house so you're good to go." [all chuckles] And if she says, "You know what, I've been taking care of three kids all day and I love you but I'm tired," then as a husband, the way that I can pursue and love her is to say, "That's okay. We'll figure this out when you're less tired. Get some sleep. We'll talk tomorrow type of thing." As long as there's not any coercion or manipulation, I think it's really healthy conversation to have.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Sharon:** It is. I do think, before we get, I need to address the big elephant in the room, because I know somebody is going to say, "Oh, yeah, Solomon! Isn't he the guy with all those wives and concubines?"

**Selena:** It is.

**Ryan:** Let's not ignore that because that is a truth. We don't know when he wrote this. We don't know if he's writing a love story or if this is actually a real wife. We don't know these facts. But here's what we do know. He was called the wisest man on earth, and yet he still fails. Even the wisest among us can still fall. But God made sure that these eight chapters were in the Bible for a reason. Regardless of who wrote them, they're in there for a reason.

If we did have the attitude, "I'm not going to read about David because of what he did," or "I'm not going to read about such as," every single one of the main characters that God tends to highlight to the Bible have had times where they have fallen, and they did not live perfect lives. So we have to look at this book is in the Bible because God wanted it there. And not let that become a stumbling block that Solomon did eventually fall in this area of his life. That's why I refer to him so much as the husband and the wife rather than Solomon and the beloved or the Shulamite. But I didn't want to answer that on the air because...

**Ryan:** That's good.

**Sharon:** ...I knew someone is going to be thinking that.

**Ryan:** I appreciate that. It is such a beautiful picture of, wow, even Solomon wasn't a perfect husband. Still he had this picture that we're given in the Bible as intimacy. Right. So there's, I think, beauty to be seen there. I think it's also very wise of you to bring that up because we tend to read Scripture, we forget its purpose, right? So much they are the Scripture, they're historical books. They're describing what happened. They are describing concubines and things. It's descriptive. It's not prescriptive.

They're not saying, "Therefore you should go get concubines." The Bible is showing us what how the Israelites fell and needed grace. I mean, just read judges and you'll be offended up and down. [all chuckles] So I do appreciate you bringing that up though.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** With that, I think we do have a higher note to end on.

**Selena:** Right. We usually ask...

**Sharon:** [inaudible]

- Ryan:** No, you're good. It's good.
- Selena:** This is great. I hate to end it. Honestly, it's been such a great conversation and I'm so grateful for your wisdom and just all that you're sharing. It's just new light I feel like on the truth.
- Ryan:** Yeah.
- Selena:** You have an advantage on this question because usually, we have a husband and wife on here. But because it's you, you get to pick what your favorite or most memorable date that you and your husband have been on in your whole life.
- Sharon:** If Steve was here, he would say the same thing. It's our first date. Let me tell you what...how much time do I have for this?
- Ryan:** Plenty. Go for it. [Selena and Ryan chuckle]
- Sharon:** Okay. So, I grew up in a very difficult home where my parents did not even like each other. My dad was an alcoholic. He was abusive to my mom. I became a Christian as a teenager. The good story for another day, which I would love to tell you in detail, both of my parents did become Christians after I did within a six-year period. But they never really had a great marriage.

As a matter of fact, I was cleaning out one of my mother's drawers, I was looking for a pin, I think, and I came across this little record. Back in World War II and the Korean War, you've probably seen this in movies, that the soldiers could actually make little records to send home. I found this record my father had made in the Korean War, it's the year [inaudible] and he were married. On this record, he told her how much he loved her, how much he cared for her, how he missed her. I mean, there was so much emotion in his voice, you could just hear it cracking.

This was I'm 30 years later. I held that little record in my hand and I thought, "How in the world did this happen? How did a marriage that started out like this and this man so head over heels with his wife, how did it end to be the horrible marriage that it is today, where they don't even like each other?" So I determined that I was going to marry a Christian.

After I became a Christian in my 20s, I thought, "Okay..." This is really funny. But I had dated some Christians and I thought, "Well, I know they're Christians, and this is what I should look for, but they're just not any fun." Anyway, I walked into this Bible study in college, and my husband was sitting on the floor with these jeans and a red flannel shirt, rolled up his sleeve. You're probably

too young to remember but there was a billboard back in the day with the Marlboro Man. It was a cigarette commercial. He was like the Christian Marlboro Man.

But he had a Bible in his laps instead of a cigarette and I thought, "Man, I hope he asked me out." So he asked out and he asked me to go to hear the missionary. Okay. So I'm thinking, "Oh, here we go. He's handsome and he's a strong Christian." I'm just being honest. [Selena laughs] So anyway, he came to pick me up to go hear the missionary. Then when he came to pick me up...you guys are in West Coast, right?

**Ryan:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Sharon:** We are on the east coast. We have music called beach music that's not like yours. It's secular music. It's more like a Motown and there's a slow dance called the swing. There's is a couple of shag but it's like a swing. So, anyway, he came to pick me up, I had that music playing that we call it beach music. He said, "Do you like that?" I said, "Well, yes. Do you have a problem with that?" [laughing] He said, "No, I like it."

So, the first day, we went to hear the missionary, and then we went out dancing, and I thought, "I'm going to marry this man." The last song they played was "Do you believe in love at first sight?" I don't recommend this at home, but we got engaged three and a half months later. And we had been married, this year will be 40 years.

**Selena:** Wow.

**Ryan:** Wow. So that date was my first day, and I knew at that first date, "I'm going to marry this man."

**Selena:** Oh. That's a good one.

**Ryan:** That's a good one.

**Selena:** That's a good one.

**Ryan:** That's one of the better. So thank you for obviously being on Fierce Marriage podcast, but for the work that you do, for the faithful years of marriage that you and your husband have fought the good fight. I think the blessings that are going to continue to spread out from here but also clearly bless so many. So just thank you for your ministry. Thank you for your life's work really. Keep writing books. It sounds like you're a workhorse. [all laugh]



- Sharon:** Thank you so much for having me.
- Ryan:** Yeah. I do want to ask one more question. It's not a question really, but where can people go to find your resources or to find your books?
- Sharon:** Well, Amazon has them all. ChristianBookDistributors.com and Barnes and Noble. But my website is SharonJaynes.com. It has all the books. Lovestruck also comes with a Bible study guide you can get if you want to do it in groups. That is only found with Amazon and my website—it is a separate Bible study book for that.
- Ryan:** Excellent.
- Sharon:** The other marriage resources are there as well.
- Ryan:** Excellent. Excellent.
- Selena:** Awesome.
- Ryan:** Well, we will make sure to post links to all of those things in the show notes. So listener, if you hear that and you're in your car, make sure to go to the show notes and find it or you go to FierceMarriage.com and find the show notes there as well. But again, thank you so much for sharing. Thank you for sharing, Sharon. [all laugh] Thanks so much for being on the show and for all the work you do.
- Sharon:** Thank you.
- Ryan:** All right, Fierce listeners, we hope this interview with Sharon Jaynes has just blessed you as much as I know, it's blessed us. Do check out and pick up a copy of "Lovestruck: Discovering God's Design for Romance, Marriage, and Sexual Intimacy from the Song of Solomon." You can find that on Amazon or wherever you buy your books. You can also find this book as well as a study guide at SharonJaynes.com. All of her resources are there.
- So once again, thank you for joining us. Again, this episode has been a huge blessing for us. I hope the same goes for you. We will see you in the next few days. And until then--
- Selena:** Stay fierce.

[00:43:00] <Outro sequence>

**Outro:** Thank you for listening to the fierce marriage podcast. For more resources for your marriage, please visit [FierceMarriage.com](https://www.fiercemarriage.com). Or you can find us with our handle at Fierce Marriage on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Thank you so much for listening. We hope it's blessed you. Take care.

[00:43:15] <podcast ends>

**PODCAST NOTES**

- Scripture References.
  - Galatians 2:20-21 NSV
  
- **[00:49:53]**
  - Book recommendation
    - "Lovestruck: Discovering God's Design for Romance, Marriage, and Sexual Intimacy from the Song of Solomon."
  
- **[00:49:53]**
  - Sharon's Website
    - [SharonJaynes.com](http://SharonJaynes.com)

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