

## WHAT IF MY HUSBAND HAS A LOW SEX DRIVE?

<https://fiercemarriage.com/what-if-my-husband-has-a-low-sex-drive>

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**Selena:** But if my husband desires it, I can do that. That is kind and loving and sacrificial. All things good of me to do that.

**Ryan:** A husband shouldn't be asking that of his wife. Wife shouldn't feel like she has to allow that act. That is a depraved act. It's very clearly painted as such in scripture.

**Selena:** The Journal of Sex Research in 2022 says that couples with strong emotional bonds report 40% higher sexual frequency.

**Ryan:** You know, I think the Lord has given us lots of freedom in the marriage bed to do lots of things so long as it's to the edification of one another. I don't believe pain is on the table for married couples. And without faith in Christ, without knowing what He did, we're powerless. We're dead in our sin. We need to be made alive in Christ. What do you do if you're a husband and you find yourself not desiring sex as often and your wife still does?

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**Ryan:** Okay, today we're going to talk about everyone's favorite topic. And that is what, Selena?

**Selena:** Sex.

**Ryan:** Why do you... I don't understand.

**Selena:** It's private.

**Ryan:** It is private. Very private. That's good. But talking about it is important because, you know, it's not something to get right. Excuse me. It's not something that's easy to get right. It can be a challenge.

**Selena:** It can be complicated.

**Ryan:** And so what can happen is you take this very important aspect of a marriage. It's very important. So important, in fact, that it's a command as we'll read today. And it's very important, but it's also very private. And it's very important that it stays private.

So what can happen is you have people that feel isolated. They feel shame. They don't know how to deal with stuff. They don't necessarily go to the right places to find answers. And so people are surfing the internet trying to find answers.

**Selena:** Yikes.

**Ryan:** Because they don't want to be known in that way because there's maybe some shame or some dysfunction. Well, today we're going to answer a question. I don't think this question comes from a place of shame or dysfunction.

**Selena:** No.

**Ryan:** I think it comes from a place of just wanting to do what we're talking about, is talk about this important thing in a way that's healthy in a forum that does honor to God, it does honor to the institution of marriage, it does honor to what sex is and what it was intended for and the purposes that it accomplishes in marriage.

So today we're going to talk specifically to marriages where the husband has had a reduced sex drive. What do you do if you're a husband and you find yourself not desiring sex as often and your wife still does? What are you to do if you're a wife and your husband hasn't been desiring you or hasn't been initiating like he used to? What do you think about that? How do you process that? How do you grow? So we're going to talk about that on the other side.

[00:02:53] <music>

**Ryan:** All right. Welcome back, listener, viewer. It's our forever joy to do the Fierce Marriage Podcast.

**Selena:** It is.

**Ryan:** We've said this before and I'm just going to keep saying it. There's not a lot of new things that we can talk about on the podcast when it comes to marriage, but we've realized that our whole mission is not to always have the new thing to talk about. It's to show up so that you've got somewhere to go where you can get a new conversation that is on a timeless topic, which happens to be marriage and God's perspective on it.

**Selena:** I think I would add, if I can-

**Ryan:** Please do.

**Selena:** ...that our job is to highlight the old truths of Scripture that outweigh and go further than any new doodads or-

**Ryan:** Doodads. Don't bring the doodads into the sex conversation.

**Selena:** My bad.

**Ryan:** It's not that kind of podcast.

**Selena:** Oh boy.

**Ryan:** Although, you know, maybe we should talk about doodads and we can title it that. Sex and doodads in marriage.

**Selena:** Oh my. Here we go.

**Ryan:** Here we go. Anyway, if you want to be a part of this mission, go to [fiercemarriage.com/partner](https://fiercemarriage.com/partner). That would mean the world to us. This is in part because of our complicit fellows, people that say, "I want to be on mission with them. God is doing something. Let's do it together." And we thank you. If that's you, cheers and amen.

**Selena:** Cheers and amen.

**Ryan:** Okay, so we have a question today from a listener, and this particular listener, I think, has a very valid concern. We're going to read the question and we're going to go through and give you, I think, two broad categories to think through how you might tackle this and how you might process this in your marriage. So Selena is going to read it because it's a lady question.

**Selena:** It's from a wife.

**Ryan:** A lady listener.

**Selena:** Okay. "Society has us to believe men just want sex and affection constantly. I guess my question is, does a change in affection or sex drive change with stress, weight fluctuations, and can it happen as early as 40s? Or is it usually a result of attraction, emotional bond, or low testosterone? My husband lost his feelings for me last year after years of arguing and me not having the desire

to be intimate frequently. By God's grace and our desire to work on our marriage and grow closer to Jesus and grow closer together, our marriage is stronger than ever. We had to be stripped of ourselves. We treat each other more sweetly and are more patient and loving. My husband is a man. I knew Jesus called him to be. We do make love more frequently, but there are some erectile dysfunctional issues, and he told me he thinks he might have low testosterone, but doesn't really think it requires going to the doctor. He assures me it's not me, but I feel like something's wrong with me. I have sex, excuse me, I make sex such a big deal because of this and act like the man would normally act trying to make it better and or right. I feel so selfish about it because I couldn't ask for a more loving, sweet, hardworking, thoughtful, logical, giving, faithful, and encouraging husband. Just wanted to see if this does happen to faithful men who still desire their wives romantically, or should we see a doctor? He initiates, I initiate, and he tells me he still wants me, just not all the time since he entered his 40s. Thank you."

**Ryan:** I just gotta say, what a sweet way to frame that question. And I love that she's saying that he's thoughtful, hardworking, and then "logical" is in there. So well done. You know, well done to the husband and the wife for recognizing logic matters. I can imagine this guy right now. I feel like I've already met this guy.

Man, you're alone. I'll say that age is real, right? And we're going to read some studies and we've got a whole bunch of data and things we're going to throw at you today. But for sure, I mean, I would just say at the outset, yes, age is real. So like to have a hunch that, okay, we're now in our 40s and things are changing, yes, it's in some ways to be expected.

Now, does that mean it's a given? No, not for a hundred percent of men that there's going to be a, well, just erectile dysfunction, or there's going to be maybe a loss of testosterone or libido. But I just want to put at least that aspect of this question at bay.

**Selena:** Well, you know, being in my 40s and all, it is a conversation amongst my friends. And one thing one of my friends did say was that you start to... it's okay to acknowledge and understand that these issues might be starting, but we don't live our life by those issues.

**Ryan:** Sure.

**Selena:** So just an encouragement there.

**Ryan:** Are your friends worried a lot? Worried by?

**Selena:** The low libido of their husband? No. I mean, the desire, I think they are concerned. Yeah.

**Ryan:** I've heard that ladies get more ravenous as they age.

**Selena:** Buckle up, Frederick.

**Ryan:** You'll cougar claws. It's the wild west out here. Send water. Okay. So how do we tackle this question? I think there's two ways that you need to think about this. And the first way outweighs the second. There's a lot of ways in there. But I would just say there's two ways to think about it. And that's duty and desire.

So what is the duty of a husband and how does desire factor in? Duty and desire don't always match. What do we mean by duty? Well, we're going to read the passage out of 1 Corinthians here that you've probably heard us say already. There are duties that come along with marriage and then they have to do with loving one another. They have to do with being faithful. They have to do with all the things we read about in scripture. Well, sex is one of those things.

And we need to, as Christians, really not just give, you know, token homage to that idea, but really acknowledge that this is a duty for a reason. It's for the goodness of our marriage. It's for the glory of God. It's so that we can go back and look up and know. So it's called the benefits of sex. It's so that we can hedge against temptation, which we'll talk about today. It's so we can be comforted. It's so that we can enjoy one another. It's so that we can honor Christ, we can reflect the gospel and being fully exposed and still fully loved, fully known.

And so there's a duty and the desire, but when desire is not there, the duty still remains.

**Selena:** Right. And that's okay and good, I think to acknowledged because often we feel like, well, if I don't feel like doing it, then I don't have to do it. And it's like, well, but if my husband desires it, I can do that. That is kind and loving and sacrificial and all things good of me to do that.

**Ryan:** So it sounds like this couple or this wife who wrote in that they are responding to that imperative that we're going to read.

**Selena:** And it's a desire. Sorry, backing up to my thought. It's a desire. My husband desires me. He's not demanding it of me. I think that I just want to make that clarification because it's so easy to be like, "Well, he wants it, so I got to give

it to him." Well, kind of, yeah. But you're not demanding it of me and I'm not like, Fine!.

**Ryan:** Well, you make it so easy for me because you're very willing.

**Selena:** Well, I'm saying as a wife though, that the Bible outlines that this is the standard of how we come together and how our hearts should be oriented towards one another, whether we feel it or not.

**Ryan:** Yeah. So let me read this from 1 Corinthians 7. This is Paul talking to them, of course. He says, "Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: 'It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.' But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband." This is the first thing he says after that.

"The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

So I like how the first thing he says is the husband is to give to his wife her conjugal rights. Because it's so often the stereotype is different. It's the wife that's needing to be reminded to give to her husband his conjugal rights.

**Selena:** She's withholding.

**Ryan:** Right. But he's talking to the husband first, which I find obviously appropriate for this conversation, but telling as well for the role maybe a husband and a wife, the roles they play in the marriage. And then it says, the wife has authority over her husband's body. And of course, the husband has authority over the wife's body. I am not my own. When I got married, I gave myself to you.

So if I am not desiring something and you're needing it... I mean, we can say this about meeting anyone's needs in the marriage. You need to connect. You need to talk. You need to have time where I am giving you my full attention. And if I know that and I deprive you of it, I'm sitting against you. If the way you feel connected is through physical intimacy, and I know that, and I'm not going out of my way to meet you there, to provide that need for you, then I'm sitting against you. I'm withholding from you.

And so there's a duty that is attached to sex in the Christian life. It's a beautiful thing because it's not... People will say like, "Oh, that's just mechanical. It's whatever." Not all the time. There's something happens when you start the engine, as the engine warms up and the RPM start getting a little higher. Maybe you start off and it's more dutiful and then it turns into desire as you go.

But the point is that when you treat the duty as a duty and you do it obediently, gladly, not begrudgingly, the duty has a way of bearing good fruit because you're doing it in faith. You're doing it in love. You're doing it out of trust for God and His word.

So to the couple that's struggling with this, a very quick advice that I'll give you, and you can shut the podcast off after this, is just read this passage together and talk about that and talk about the impact that this would have on your lives if you gave to one another freely in this area, regardless of your desire.

With that being said, desire is very important. So the question then we would have is maybe the second line of questioning we would go down is, so if you understood the duty and you're putting weight in God's word and you're choosing to do it out of faith, you're doing all the things we just talked about, well, you still want to have the desire. You still want...

**Selena:** It's a good desire to have.

**Ryan:** Right. So then you need to go down another line of questioning, which brings up how do you diagnose it? What are the reasons behind it? And for this, I would tend to think categorically. So, physically, age, diet, low testosterone as a result of age.

**Selena:** Yeah. I don't think there's anything wrong with going to the doctor and getting your labs done and having a baseline to at least start from so you kind of know where everything is. I think that's wisdom, especially if you're struggling in a certain area.

**Ryan:** There's other factors. That's the age factor, the physical factor. That could also be maybe your lifestyle is unhealthy and maybe you've gained weight or you've not been active and working out and things. That will affect this for sure. And there's lots of studies to that effect. And there's emotional and mental.

I know for sure that if I'm under a heavy mental, emotional stress, a heavy load, that a lot of times I'm just too emotionally waxed to wax on, wax off. I

love the look on your face. I won't smile when it gets serious. I just got to throw in a little curveball once in a while.

And then there's a spiritual aspect as well, which we'd be fools to ignore. Sin is real. And if sin is flourishing and thriving in your life, it will kill your marriage. In other words, if you're sinning against one another or there's a habitual porn use or chemical addiction of some sort or alcohol addiction, drunkenness, all that kind of stuff, that's going to have an effect not just on your physical body, which it will, it will have an effect on your spiritual man and your soul, which will inevitably make it harder for you to connect or to desire one another.

So we compiled some research. It backs this stuff up again. This is all couched in the duty conversation, in the idea that sex is good. There's nothing inherently wrong with it. In fact, it's inherently beautiful. It's not shameful.

**Selena:** It's in the marriage bed.

**Ryan:** It's to be pursued. But now you're trying to diagnose the desire aspect of it. So physical desire. What can cause physical desire to fluctuate?

**Selena:** We talked about age, hormones, and health. So if you're past your 40s, your hormone, testosterone levels might be fluctuating. We have a couple of studies here showing, what, 40%-

**Ryan:** So the Cleveland Clinic in 2022 said 40% of men over 45 report erectile dysfunction. So 40% of men over the age of 45, it's almost half, report erectile dysfunction. Testosterone contributes to that in 20% to 30% of those cases. So of half of the men, say 40% of the men, 20% to 30% of those guys have low testosterone, which is affecting their ability to perform in the bedroom.

The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology in 2019, look at us, research, testosterone levels drop 1% to 2% annually after age 40, reducing sexual desire in 35% of men by 50. So that's a little bit more of an optimistic study.

Journal of Urology, I believe, said in 2021 that 50% of men with ED report improved function with lifestyle changes or testosterone therapy. So I will just say this. When we were in our 30s, we're in our low 40s right now, for now.

**Selena:** Low 40s.

**Ryan:** We're 42. So when we were in our 30s, I remember going to the gym and I could just like go and I would lift for two hours and you know, I'd be sore and I could... but your muscles just responded like you would expect them to respond because you've never been older. You've always been younger.



And of course, COVID didn't help because like the past five years, the gyms got crazy, and then habits got weird and we moved and all kinds of stuff happened. And you get back into it, you're like, wow, my muscles aren't responding like they used to.

**Selena:** 30-year-old muscles are not doing what they used to do.

**Ryan:** They're not recovering the same way. They're not growing the same way. They're not...

**Selena:** Age is real.

**Ryan:** This is not there. It's injuries remain that sort of thing. So the age factor is very real. Don't discount age and don't discount the physical aspects of it. Now, people might ask, should we take the old, the little blue pill?

**Selena:** Oh.

**Ryan:** Okay. We're Christian here. We can talk about this. It's helpful. I'm of the school of thought and I could be convinced otherwise, I'm of the school of thought that medicine is a common grace of God, that we can use compounds and things to make our bodies heal, to make our bodies function in ways that... because of the fall and the degradation of age and things like that can, by the grace of God, bring about a more fruitful life.

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay. So I would fully be dead right now without modern medicine. I would fully be dead.

**Selena:** We would have no children.

**Ryan:** And we would have no children. By the grace of God, they fixed my heart when I was 23 years old and we were able to have a life together. So I think this falls into that area. Now, people could get into, well, you know, what about other sorts of medicines like opiates and things like that? Well, I'm not going to go down that rabbit trail right now, but I think there's a line to be drawn and it has to do with Deuteronomy 18 and the Pentateuch or not... Yeah, the Septuagint and what they call Armikea, which is where we get our word pharmacy, which is also closely related to witchcraft.

So there are types of drugs that aren't purely healing drugs, but they have more of a mental altering your mental state to sort of effect. That's a little bit

more of a, I don't know. It's not super easy to know where those lines are once you start thinking about.

And I've been through the semi-ethics studies and so it's... anyway, I think it's okay. The blue pill I think is... you're not sinning if you go and get a prescription for that.

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** Prove me wrong. All right. If you've got a strong case, otherwise on YouTube, leave a comment. Write us a friendly note. Go to [fiercemarriage.com/ask](https://fiercemarriage.com/ask) and feel free to leave a comment there.

**Selena:** Would this be the place that you address the wife and the husband that maybe things are not always consistent in the bedroom and maybe you can get creative?

**Ryan:** Oh, you mean like spice things up a little bit?

**Selena:** Spice things up. Try some new things maybe that might have everybody, have all of them enjoy each other.

**Ryan:** Maybe you haven't waited deeply enough. The lovers' waters may think there's many places to explore.

**Selena:** Goodness.

**Ryan:** That's leave it up to you. Here's the thing we say about the marriage bed. Keep it pure. Don't introduce anything into it. So what I mean by that is any sort of image of other people. And a lot of times doodads tend to be imaged after other people.

**Selena:** Right.

**Ryan:** So I'm not against doodads. That's going to stick. I'm not against it, but there are certain ones that I think are off-limits for Christian couples. And so you need, you need to read here between the lines friends, because I don't want to speak overtly about these things. It doesn't make me feel good.

And then in terms of trying new sexual acts, I think the Lord has given us lots of freedom in the marriage bed to do lots of things so long as it's to the edification of one another. I don't believe pain is on the table for married couples. And believe it or not, people push back on that point whenever I bring it up. I won't even get into some of the weird questions we get.

And I'm just going to add, we always draw a hard line on sodomy. Never okay. A husband shouldn't be asking that of his wife. A wife shouldn't feel like she has to allow that act. That is a depraved act. It's very clearly painted as such in scripture. Whereas other acts aren't. In fact, you can make a case in Song of Solomon that things like oral sex and things like... well, that's the only other one and obviously different positions and things like that. Those things all fall in line with keeping the marriage bed pure.

Anyway, if that's what you're getting at, Selena, then I think, yeah, this could be the place to talk about that. That can maybe overshadow the entire conversation because if you're emotionally fatigued and this will revive your, the emotional aspects of it, how you feel. Anyway, do you have anything else to add?

**Selena:** Nope.

**Ryan:** Are you sure?

**Selena:** I think so.

**Ryan:** Positive?

**Selena:** Yeah.

**Ryan:** Okay. I spoke a lot there.

**Selena:** It's okay.

**Ryan:** Okay. So we talked about physical desire. Let's talk about emotional, sorry, desire. I went to go touch your arm and you moved it and a little bait and switch there. It's all right. We're married.

**Selena:** I think the computer hid.

**Ryan:** Okay.

**Selena:** In the graze.

**Ryan:** I've got a little feel.

**Selena:** Good.

**Ryan:** Intentionally. This is an appropriate episode to do such things. So physical desire can be a factor. Physical desire is God-given, song of Solomon 4:7, which is, I think... I forget what that passage says, but I have it in the notes. So it's okay to pursue one another.

Emotional desire. Let's talk about that a little bit. How might emotional desire be factoring in?

**Selena:** I think, you know, emotional intimacy just drives physical desire. Conflict or disconnection can diminish it. When I know that, I mean, and you know this, when I'm feeling emotionally connected to you, it's like, oh, well, then I want to physically connect with you more. Right?

**Ryan:** Not always.

**Selena:** Not always. I know. There's no magic formula here. You know this.

**Ryan:** I've tried every formula.

**Selena:** You just want a formula. You want A plus B to equals C, and it's not.

**Ryan:** 7,342. Iteration seven was not successful. Moving on to iteration eight. I will crack the formula. And you know what? You're never going to see us again.

**Selena:** You have a formula.

**Ryan:** The podcast will end... You'll know I've cracked the formula because the podcast ends and we're busy.

**Selena:** No, you are a formula man, though. You're pretty straightforward with... yeah.

**Ryan:** And you have buttons and knobs that move around.

**Selena:** That's one way to put it. Okay. Are we going to share all this data? I don't know. We need to share all of it.

**Ryan:** Yeah, sure. Let's go for it. People are listening. All right. So Gottman Institute in 2019, they did a study and they found that high emotional attunement increases sexual satisfaction 200% to 300%. Imagine that.

**Selena:** Men's Health in 2020 said 60% of men say emotional disconnect as primary libido suppressor.

**Ryan:** Oh, there you go. 60% of men.

- Selena:** So you have emotions.
- Ryan:** At times.
- Selena:** The journal of sex research in 2022 says that couples with strong emotional bonds report 40% higher sexual frequency.
- Ryan:** I don't know. Like none of this is groundbreaking. And by the way, all of these are not Christian resources. So when you factor in the Christian aspects of a marriage, I would say all of these are skewed and skewed higher.
- Selena:** Absolutely.
- Ryan:** Psychology today, Ooh, a bastion of biblical truth and wisdom. Sorry, my dad's a psychologist and he'll even tell you they're kind of a joke. But anyway, here's their thing. They said, "Emotional neglect predicts 25% lower sexual desire in long-term marriages."
- Selena:** How about 26%?
- Ryan:** Well, how about 26%?
- Selena:** Just kidding.
- Ryan:** Oh.
- Selena:** It just feels like the number I threw out. Anyways. Right.
- Ryan:** They just made it up. Imagine that, though. When you are not being nice to one another, your desire goes down.
- Selena:** Your desire goes down by 25%. So looking at this through a biblical lens, you know, emotional unity reflects the one fleshness that we hear about in Genesis 2. When you talk about unity all the time, we talk about oneness, we are sinners. We're going to sin against each other. And in order for us to experience that oneness, experience that forgiveness and be unified, you know, in one flesh, we're going to have to forgive one another. We're going to have to go to one another humbly and admit our sin and extend grace and forgiveness.
- Ryan:** Good.
- Selena:** So emotional desire is a thing.

**Ryan:** Okay. So emotional desire, work that out. Mental desire. How does that factor in? Well, you have stress, anxiety, you got mental health issues, things like depression, things like, I don't know, other things, I don't know, but they can suppress your desire.

I would add to mental and this can be tied to the soul clearly, but hopelessness. So if your husband feels crushed by maybe a lost opportunity or some other thing, maybe on the career side or on the relational side, it could be in-laws, it could be they're his own parents, it could be if you've had the loss of a child, any sort of thing that's caused a loss of hopefulness, loss of hope, that's going to be... I would put in this category alongside the spiritual stuff.

So the Verywell Mind in 2023 did a study, they found that chronic stress raises cortisol, reducing testosterone by up to 15%. So if you're chronically stressed, that's going to be a factor.

The American Psychological Association, another bastion of biblical wisdom and insight in 2021, said 25% of men report stress-related libido issues by age 40. Now you're getting down to the 30s. A quarter of guys said that stress created sex drive issues. The Journal of Psychosomatic Research... I'm sorry.

**Selena:** Didn't you look this up?

**Ryan:** Yes. It's like psychosomaticism is like you talk yourself into feelings. I'm sorry. I didn't know there was a journal of this thing. What does it say? In 2020, they found that anxiety disorders correlate with 30% of higher ED rates.

Finally, Frontiers in Psychology in 2022 said, "Mindfulness practices reduce stress-related libido issues by 20% in men.

**Selena:** Mindfulness.

**Ryan:** Yeah. What does that even mean? Mindfulness.

**Selena:** It's very new agey.

**Ryan:** It is new agey.

**Selena:** Let's reclaim this mindfulness. What would the Bible say about this?

**Ryan:** I mean, a strong sense of who you are made in the image of God, focusing on what's good, right, true and beautiful and giving it all to Christ, making every thought captive to Christ.

**Selena:** Renewing the mind.

**Ryan:** So let's talk about biblical mindfulness people and how it can spice up the marriage bed.

**Selena:** There you go. There you go. All right. Spiritual desire.

**Ryan:** I've been biblically mindful today that we should go upstairs.

**Selena:** Biblically mindful. Wow. We need to wrap this up, Frederick.

**Ryan:** Yeah, I know. Okay. Finally, spiritual desire. We mentioned this earlier. Listen, I know I'm not under any illusions that Christian men don't sin and Christian men don't struggle with pornography and that doesn't affect their sex life.

I will say I have no data for this, but I would say 9 times out of 10, if a couple is struggling with their sex life and it's because the husband lacks desire for the wife, that he's finding fulfillment elsewhere, or he has gone so far in down that path that he is now unable to-

**Selena:** He no longer desires his wife.

**Ryan:** Well, what happens is your desires... porn changes your mind. Like, the physiology of your mind. It reroutes your pathways toward pleasure, toward desire itself so that you're now unable to find arousal by anything other than just the most extreme things that you've-

**Selena:** Gosh.

**Ryan:** ...sought online. And so, yeah, that will affect your marriage, and it'll affect his drive or his wife. So my first question for guys that have a low sex drive is always, where are you at with this? What's this? What history do you have? Maybe you're not struggling with it today, but what history do you have with it. Because that's gonna still affect you today. Now, their full healing is on the horizon, but maybe you're not there yet.

The Barna Group in 2016 said, 64% of Christian men view porn monthly. That's two-thirds. Think about that. Monthly, habitually. 15% report addiction impacting their marriage. And these are probably self-reporting people. Right?

So I would say whatever these numbers are, skew them up because there's shame around it, and people are in denial, I think.

The Journal of Sexual Research, Selena is on the board there. In 2020-

**Selena:** Oh my.

**Ryan:** ...said, Porn addiction correlates with 50% higher ED rates and 35% lower marital satisfaction. Man. So you're telling me that you've got two-thirds of Christian men are viewing porn monthly and that 35% of those addicted people are gonna have lower marital satisfaction.

**Selena:** Covenant-

**Ryan:** Ad now those are gonna have ED problems.

**Selena:** Covenant Eyes in 2023 said 70% of men seeking porn recovery report improved marital intimacy after six months of abstinence. It's like a cleanse.

**Ryan:** And that's gonna be a challenging six months. You're gonna go through all sorts of temptation withdrawal. So what do you do? Well, you get some accountability. You obviously confess your sin to Christ, to your wife, to brothers, to your elders, your pastors, people who are in charge of your eternal soul, and say, "I wanna be free of this." And if it's not porn, if it's some other sin, then do the same thing. Sin is sin.

Now sexual sin has a way of rotting us out from the inside. And all sin does. But I would say sexual sin uniquely does this. Lust violates purity of desire, Matthew 5:28 and 2 Timothy 2:22, we are called to flee temptation and to pursue righteousness.

I was reading in Proverbs 7 this morning that the foolish man, young man, was walking on the corner where the temptress was. Well, the whole point of that proverb is he was where he shouldn't have been. Don't go to the Red Light District and then wonder why you saw something you shouldn't have seen or went somewhere you shouldn't have gone. Flee temptation, pursue righteousness, get accountability, get spiritual disciplines, and Lord willing, the desire will return, it will return for your wife, and for your own marriage.

We've covered a lot of ground here today. We've covered some research, but the most important thing, I think, is looking to scripture, seeing sex as a good... it's prescribed by Paul. What did Paul say again? I wanna revisit that passage because I thought it was so important. He says, "Do not deprive one another." Do not deprive one another. We need to take that seriously. I am no longer



mine. You are no longer yours. We belong to each other. I have no right to not give my body to you.

**Selena:** Sure.

**Ryan:** And vice versa.

**Selena:** And to pursue what it might mean to be giving of one another in those ways, wherever your body is at, the agency is at.

**Ryan:** Yeah. And you can stir the pot of desire. That's what I think the last half of this was, is how can you be aware of the various categories and how can you stir the pot and get things back into solution, if you will. So it's now part of the water you're swimming in and not the desire has gone away and settled to the bottom of your marriage.

**Selena:** Right. Right.

**Ryan:** But instead, it's actually part of your daily life, you're desiring one another. And, of course, there's all sorts of practical things you can do, friends. Go find places to do dates. Do new things together. Experience life together. Talk. The more you can talk, the better.

In fact, I wasn't gonna do this, but I'm going to.

**Selena:** Oh.

**Ryan:** We have books called Husband in Pursuit and Wife in Pursuit. And the whole point of it is there are some things that are out of my control, but there are some things that are in my control, and that's where I pursue. I have the ability to act a certain way, to do certain things, to live out certain biblical truths. And so those two books are written with that specific goal in mind. 31 days that you would pursue one each other, you know, in a unique way.

And the two books actually intertwine. So, like, when there's chapters about intimacy, you're both planning your intimacy all day knowing, like, today's the day.

**Selena:** Today's the day.

**Ryan:** And, hopefully, there's more than that single day. Thirty-one days. But the point is there are other things. They're all designed to give you the ability to pursue one another. So, like I said, we've covered a lot of ground. We've talked about the Bible's vision for sex. None of that makes sense unless we know who

Christ is and we know that He was the word. He is the word. He is the truth. He says "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

When we say these things from the word, from God's word, we're saying them trusting that Christ is in them. And without faith in Christ, without knowing what He did, we're powerless. We're dead in our sin. We need to be made alive in Christ. If you're dead in your sin, and you've never placed your faith in Christ, we want that for you. We always recommend talk to a friend who's a Christian and say, "Hey, they mentioned being dead in my sin. What does that mean? Talk to me." Your friend will probably wanna talk to you about that.

We have a website. It's [thenewsisgood.com](http://thenewsisgood.com). There's more information about the gospel there, but also there's a church finder. Find a good church. Go talk to one of the elders. Come on. You gotta be a little brave. Talk to somebody you don't know and say, teach me who Jesus is. We want you to walk with Him because we want you to be made alive in Christ.

Let's pray. Father, I pray for the couples who are listening to this. Lord, they would know keenly the Holy Spirit you are there with them, or that you have, in maybe in some way, spoken to them. You're using this time to refine them. I pray that you give them hope. I pray that you would give them a renewed sense of desire for one another, desire to understand your word, to implement it, to be glad in their marital duties.

Lord, I pray that their marriages would flourish. I pray for the husbands who are feeling the effects of a lowering desire for their wife. Lord, I pray that they would be reinvigorated with desire. And I pray for the wives who are dealing with this issue as well, that you would give them a new sense of hope. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

**Selena:** Amen.

**Ryan:** Okay. Well, anything else for the good of the order?

**Selena:** Mh-mm.

**Ryan:** [Fiercemarriage.com/partner](http://Fiercemarriage.com/partner). Why are you the way that you are? Selena is tired.

**Selena:** Yep. So this podcast-

**Ryan:** This is where I drag it off.

**Selena:** Here we go. Here we go.

**Ryan:** Don't do my thing.

**Selena:** Okay.

**Ryan:** You got your thing.

**Selena:** All right.

**Ryan:** All right.

**Selena:** Close it.

**Ryan:** I'm just gonna hang out. Well, anyway, this episode of the Fierce Marriage podcast is—

**Selena:** In the can.

**Ryan:** We'll see you again in about seven days, Lord willing. So until next time.

**Selena:** Stay fierce.

**PODCAST NOTES**

- **Referenced scripture**
  - 1 Corinthians 7
- **Recommended resource**
  - [thenewsisgood.com](https://thenewsisgood.com)

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