Bob: When a husband and wife come together for a time of marital intimacy, it’s a wise husband who makes sure his wife feels safe and secure. Here is Joy Downs.

Joy: Some practical things we can do is just know where those distractions are. Where are the kids? Is our door locked? You know, Tim has just made a habit. He knows that I’m going to ask, “Is the door locked?” so he automatically locks the door. And to this day, even the kids are in three different states, but he locks the door.

(laughter)

Tim: Yeah, man, ‘cause she can hear them in different states.

(laughter)

Joy: I can. Oh, you never know when they’re coming home, right ladies? You never know.

Bob: This is FamilyLifeToday for Tuesday, June 21st. Our host is the President of FamilyLife, Dennis Rainey, and I’m Bob Lepine. We’ll hear from Tim and Joy Downs today about how we can understand and appreciate one another’s differences when it comes to the area of marital intimacy.

And welcome to FamilyLife Today. Thanks for joining us on the Tuesday edition. You know, I’m just thinking about how simple I thought it was going to be –

(laughter)

Bob: -- and how complicated it actually is.

Dennis: How naïve I was when I got married.

(laughter)

You’d think that the whole act of physical intimacy would just be like two people helplessly falling off a cliff, under the control of gravity.
Bob: Well, that’s what Hollywood makes it look like. It just feels like all the inertia is moving you in that direction. You get married and you find out “We are really different.”

Dennis: It’s like swimming upstream, and we’re going to hear today from a couple who are really good friends of Barbara and mine, and they speak at our Weekend to Remember® Marriage Getaways, authors of a number of books including the Bugman novels. Some of the Bugman readers know I am speaking of Tim Downs and his wife, Joy.

We had the privilege, as you know, Bob, of going on a cruise with over 1100 couples. It was a four-day cruise around Valentines, and I want to tell you something. I don’t think this message by Tim and Joy Downs could be any better.

It was tasteful, it was entertaining, it was funny, but most importantly, it was biblical. It was God’s view of sex and intimacy in marriage, and I think really equipped the couples in attendance with God’s view of sex. That’s why we wanted our listeners to be able to hear it.

Bob: Tim and Joy are going to be with us again next year on the Love Like You Mean It cruise, which will happen Valentine’s week of 2012. In addition to Tim and Joy, you and Barbara are going to be on the cruise, Voddie Baucham and his wife are going to be there, Gary Thomas and his wife are joining us.

Dennis: You’re going to be there.

Bob: That’s right. We have a number of musical artists who are going to be with us as well. I’ll give you more information about the cruise before we’re done here today. But here, talking about some of the ways that we need to be sensitive to one another and adjust to one another in the area of intimacy in marriage, are Tim and Joy Downs.

Tim: So, our first difference: different attitudes towards sex. Here’s the second: the different ways that we’re aroused. Now this is going to come as a surprise, but men tend to be stimulated visually.

You know, I’m always ready for bed 15 minutes before my wife is, and that’s because I can’t think of anything else to do. I brush my teeth, I drop my clothes on the floor, I’m out of ideas.

(laughter)

I got 15 minutes to kill every night while I’m waiting for my wife to come out of the bathroom and change clothes, and that is the highlight of my day. Sometimes what I do is get all the pillows and stack them up on the bed. I make a kind of observation deck.

(laughter)
Joy: He has a very boring life.

Tim: It's the highlight of my day. The skybox, I call it.

(laughter)

Tim: Season tickets on the fifty yard line. And I love this: I just watch my wife change clothes. Sometimes I'll even go, "Whoo! Go back and do that part again."

You know, I got to thinking one night, "Hey, I am really being selfish here. I mean, if I enjoy this so much . . . ."

(laughter)

Tim: Now what are you laughing at?

(laughter)

Tim: If I enjoy this so much, then maybe I should treat my wife to the same great pleasure. So it was a Saturday. I had come in from cutting the grass. I was taking a shower. I happened to know my wife was in the bedroom, and I thought, "I'm going to give her a little thrill."

(laughter)

Joy: And he did.

(laughter)

Joy: I was in the (laughing) – I was in the room folding laundry, and my first thought is, "Where are the kids?" The thought had never crossed his mind. He didn't care where they were; they could be under the bed for all he cared. So, I thought it was very logical. I threw him a towel.

Tim: She throws me a towel! It's like, "Do you know you're naked? Here."

(laughter)

Tim: Oh, I'm sorry. What an oversight on my part! I came walking out of the bathroom feeling like Fabio –

(laughter)

Tim: I go running back in feeling like PeeWee Herman.

(laughter)
Tim: What went wrong?

Joy: Well, what went wrong is – I think my husband is handsome, but women are commonly not stimulated by sight. Sometimes we can be, but as we said before, it’s the relationship. It’s more we’re stimulated by touch, by nice words, by tenderness, by attitudes, by chocolates, by flowers. It’s really something that says, “I care about you.”

Tim: So what are the lessons we should learn from this difference? Okay, men, again, us first. Men, we tend to assume that our mate is just like us and will be aroused the same way that we are. But we have got to learn to see sex the way she does, and if she is seeing sex as just one part of the overall relationship, then relational things might be more stimulating to her.

That means not just dropping your shorts, but time together. Non-sexual touch, writing a little post-it, doing a little foot rub, just a good conversation or a little tenderness.

Joy: Right. So women, what can we learn? Well, if he’s stimulated visually, then we need to give him a chance to look at us. There must be something that he wants to see, even if we don’t quite get it.

But, the thing that’s hard for us – I know that for us, I am always in a hurry, it seems. I know a lot of you women are too. So I’m in a hurry to get dressed; I’m in a hurry to get undressed and get into bed. So I need to really be more conscious, and we as women probably need to be more conscious of let’s not always be in such a hurry. Let’s give our husbands a chance to see us in the way that he wants to see us.

Tim: There you go.

(laughter)

Joy: So men, I’ll let you in on a little secret. Your wife has maybe told you this already, but this is very true. For women – and women, you can tell me if you agree with this – but we are constantly bombarded by images of other women who have been airbrushed or enhanced in some way.

You can walk out the grocery line, you can see it on TV, everywhere you go. You’re walking down the street and you’re seeing more of women than you care to see. We are constantly comparing ourselves with those images everywhere. And so when we come back to the bedroom and we start to undress, and we look in the mirror, we go, “Well, not quite what I’m seeing on the magazine covers going out the grocery line,” and so we tend to project that that’s the way our husband thinks about us as well.

Tim: Yeah.

Joy: We may tend to cover up more, and then our husband really wants to see us actually. So the way you men can help us is just to show your approval, to say, “Honey,
I love this about you,” or “I don’t care if you’re not like this,” because especially as we age there is no way that we can compare ourselves to those images that we see everywhere. So we need our men to reaffirm that in us.

**Tim:** And men, a point we should take home too is never criticize your wife’s body. That’s an important thing. She’s got a hard enough time with self image without us saying anything negative. As one of my friends likes to say, he says, “Never criticize any part of your wife’s body that you’d like to see again.”

(laughter)

**Tim:** Alright, we’ve talked about our different attitudes, we’ve talked about the different ways we’re aroused. Our third difference: our different abilities to focus. You know, our narrow focus can make us difficult to distract. Did you know that women on average have wider peripheral vision than men? That’s just a scientific fact. Women literally see more than men do.

But did you know that men on average have greater depth of field? That means we may not see as much, but when we see something we like we lock onto it like a heat-seeking missile, and it’s hard to tear us away. And when it comes to the subject of sex, we can be difficult to distract.

**Joy:** But a woman’s wider focus -- that allows us to be easily distracted, doesn’t it? I remember one night early on in our marriage. I had been taking that fifteen minutes extra to get ready for bed in the bathroom, and so when I came out I found that Tim had gathered every single candle that we ever had and put it in our bedroom and lit it, so that when I came out to the bedroom it looked like the Shaolin Temple. Everything was all lit and the little candles were flickering.

I should tell you a little about our bedroom, first of all. We said that we had a queen-sized bed, and at that time it was right below a big picture window. We had only lived in that house just a little bit of time, so we didn’t have any drapes yet. All we had was a little opaque pull-down blind.

Well, the women are getting this already, aren’t you? So a little time goes by and then the thought occurs to me. Our bedroom is facing the street. I am wondering if the shadows that we’re having in the bed are on the blind from all the flickering candles, and we’re giving the street a presentation.

(laughter)

**Tim:** Do you know, she made me get up and go outside –

(laughter)
In my shorts -- I’m speaking now -- and stand in front of that window while she went (gesturing) --

(laughter)

**Joy:** I really did not make him, but he just knew if he wasn’t going to go out there was nothing else happening that night.

(laughter)

**Tim:** That’s making me.

(laughter)

**Joy:** I didn’t want to ruin the mood, either, but the distraction would not go away until I knew we were not giving a shadowbox presentation to the neighborhood.

**Tim:** And I didn’t care if the wall fell down. But that’s because, men, we are more difficult to distract. Now, what are the lessons we should learn in this difference?

Men, first of all, for us – we expect our wives to have the same single-minded focus that we do, and they don’t, do they? And when they don’t have the same single-minded focus that we have, we tend to take it as rejection or lack of desire. And that’s not fair. It’s just that they cannot focus as easily as we can.

**Joy:** So for women, what can we learn? If it’s possible, it’s really helpful if we can allow a little decompression time. If we know that our husbands want to have time, if we can say to them, “Honey, can you just give me five minutes, or ten minutes, so that I can leave this big box of life outside our bedroom door, and I can just try to take a breath, and I can try to just focus on you before I start to have this time.”

Some practical things we can do is just know where those distractions are. Where are the kids? Is our door locked? You know, Tim has just made a habit. He knows that I’m going to ask, “Is the door locked?” so he automatically locks the door. And to this day, even the kids are in three different states, but he locks the door.

(laughter)

**Tim:** Yeah, man, ‘cause she can hear them in different states.

(laughter)

**Joy:** I can. Oh, you never know when they’re coming home, right ladies? You never know. So you can also turn off the ringer on the phone. And if something is on your mind that is bothering you or you know that you just need to clear the air with your
husband first, then ask if you can talk to him just a little bit to do that, so you can be all present.

**Tim:** You know, and men, we can help too. Find out where the kids are. Find out if you have kids.

(laughing)

**Tim:** Or get away with your wife. Choose an environment where there are fewer distractions. You want a good time with your wife? Pick an environment that lends itself to that.

Alright. So our first three differences: different attitudes, different ways we’re aroused, different abilities to focus. Our fourth and final difference is the different ways that we’re fulfilled.

Everybody wants sexual satisfaction in marriage, but if you want to be sexually satisfied in marriage, you’re going to have to give up your self-centeredness. Because if your focus is on you and what you want and what you like, and how you work, you’ll have nothing but frustration when it comes to sex. That’s why marriage is a decision to serve one another whether in bed or out.

So what are the lessons that we can learn here? Well, we’ve got to resist our own selfishness. There’s an old stereotype and that is that women want love and men want sex. But do you know what the truth is? Way deep down, when it comes to sex I think men and women want exactly the same thing. You know what it is? We both want to be desired.

**Joy:** This is very confusing for us as women, isn’t it? Because we have all these images from our culture saying that, no, men just think of sex as sex, and they can pretty much have sex with anyone at any time and be pretty satisfied. But not with a good man, and not with a man as God intended him to be.

You know, Tim is telling us that men want to be desired just like women do. And even as women growing up, we’re taught to fear men or to be cautious of men because, really, sex is all they want, so be careful.

We need to remember and change our thinking to what is a man really like, and how does he really think about this area. Well, Shaunti Feldhahn has written a wonderful book, and I’d like to just read a quote from her book that really describes how men think.

It says, “In a very deep way your man often feels isolated and burdened by secret feelings of inadequacy. Making love with you assures him that you find him desirable. It salves a deep sense of loneliness and gives him the strength and well-being necessary to face the world with confidence.”
“And of course, sex also makes him feel loved. In fact, he can’t feel completely loved without it. At the most basic level, your man wants to be wanted. For your husband, sex is a powerful way to feel desired and fulfilled as a man. And that’s really why our passion is important to them.”

You know, I know a woman who was not feeling much for her husband, and she was a Christian, and she knew her biblical duty as a wife, so that’s basically what she told him. She said, “Alright, I know what my responsibility is, so I’ll fulfill my duty to you.” That really didn’t go over very well with her husband . . .

Tim: Yes.

Joy: . . . because that’s not what he cared about. He cared about her passion, and that was very wounding to him. And you know, we may not say that to our husbands, we may not say, “Okay, I’ll perform the duty.” But if we show up time after time after time with less than being enthusiastic about what he’s initiating, it can feel just like that – that we’re performing a duty, and our lack of passion is really wounding to him.

They can meet their needs with other people – and this is something someone told me when I was very young in my married life, and it really registered with me. They said, “You know, Joy, your husband can meet every other need in his life with someone else. Maybe he has an athletic need, so he can go play a sport with a friend. Or his spiritual needs – he can get involved with a Bible study, a men’s fellowship at church. Maybe his social needs can be met by a volunteer group somewhere else in a community. But his sexual need can only be met legitimately by you. You are the only one that can fulfill that need.

Tim: Men, what some of your wives are thinking right now is, “I would love to meet his desires. I would love to show him desire. I’d love to show him more passion. But the problem is, he will not connect with me.

The problem for us sometimes, guys, is we can compartmentalize, so we like to take the fact that we’re an angry man or that we’ve got conflicts we’ve never apologized for, or that we’re not very good at conversation, and we want to put it in a box, put it on a shelf, get out the one marked “sex” and just have fun. You might be able to pull that off, but she can’t.

And what some of you are thinking right now is, “You know, I’m just not an emotional kind of guy.” But I’m not asking you what you feel. I’m asking you what you’ll do, because the issue is you’ve been called to serve one another in marriage, whether in bed or out. So that takes us back to the verse we saw at the very beginning.

“The marriage bed must be a place of mutuality, the husband seeking to satisfy his wife, the wife seeking to satisfy her husband. Marriage is not a place to stand up for your rights. Marriage is a decision to serve the other whether in bed or out.”
I don’t know who came up with the term “making love,” but they knew what they were talking about, because when you do it right, when you don’t just focus on your needs but you have the humility to learn their needs and to serve them, that’s what happens. You manufacture love. And when you’re done, you have a little bit more than when you began. The problem in marriage is that there’s too much sex and not enough making love.

Thank you, Father, for this mysterious but wonderful part of marriage and thank you for the wisdom of your Scripture on how to enjoy it. Lord, please help us all to be humble, to be students once again, to ask our questions and to learn, learning one another’s needs to learn to serve one another in bed, just as you called us to serve out. Thank you. We pray in Christ’s name.

**Bob:** Well, again, we’ve been listening to Tim and Joy Downs today with a message from the *Love Like You Mean It* cruise, talking about marital intimacy.

You know, there may have been some of our listeners who thought, “Boy, they’re just being kind of transparent about this issue on the radio,” and they may have felt a little uncomfortable with the subject, but you know, Dennis, I look at how much misinformation is being communicated publicly –

**Dennis:** Oh, yeah. Right.

**Bob:** -- and I’m just convinced that we need some public declarations of truth when it comes to this subject.

**Dennis:** What better use of Christian radio than to counter the messages, the false messages about sex that the culture is sending. The reality is, Christians ought to have more fun. They really ought to have more fun. The problem is, we get married and we find out we’re different, and instead of those differences attracting us to one another as they did when we dated, they end up repelling us.

I think one of the things God is up to when it comes to the sexual dimension of the marriage relationship – I think he is teaching us how to truly love. Tim talked about making love. I agree with that, but I think God is instructing us and he is tutoring us in really coming to grips with how we deny ourselves and how we truly can serve another person with godly love.

**Bob:** You and Barbara did a great job of helping couples in this area of marriage a few years ago when you wrote a book called *Rekindling the Romance*. Half of the book was for the guys and half of the book was for the ladies. You talked to the guys about how we can better understand and serve our wives, and Barbara talked to the ladies about understanding their husbands in this area.

I want to encourage our listeners, if you didn’t get a copy of the book *Rekindling the Romance* by Dennis and Barbara Rainey, and if this is an area in your marriage where
there has been maybe some tension or maybe it’s been difficult, go online at FamilyLifeToday.com for more information.

Again, the website: FamilyLifeToday.com. You can request a copy of the book or you can call us at 1-800-FLTODAY to request a copy of the book as well. The book is called Rekindling the Romance by Dennis and Barbara Rainey.

And of course Dennis and Barbara are going to be with Tim and Joy Downs, who we heard from today, and with Mary Ann and me, and with Voddie Baucham and his wife and Gary Thomas and his wife, and the band Sanctus Real and Paul Overstreet, and a whole bunch of folks. All of us are going to be on the Love Like You Mean It cruise in 2012, Valentine’s week, February 13th through the 17th.

We’ve got 1300 people, roughly, already signed up to be with us next year for the cruise, and when our team heard that we were going to be playing Tim and Joy’s message from the Love Like You Mean It cruise on FamilyLife Today, they said, “Can you encourage FamilyLife Today listeners to join us for the cruise in 2012?"

I said, “Well, I’ll do that, but is there anything special we can do for our FamilyLife Today listeners?” And they said, “How about if, this week, between now and Friday, if a FamilyLife Today listener goes online at FamilyLifeToday.com and they click on the link for the Love Like You Mean It cruise – they can get all the information they need there. If they decide to sign up and they type the word ‘UPGRADE’ in the promo box, we will upgrade them from an interior stateroom to an ocean view stateroom.”

I said, “I think that sounds like a nice deal.” It’s only good for this week, and the only way you can qualify is to go to FamilyLifeToday.com, you click on the Love Like You Mean It logo, and when you’re ready to sign up just type the word “UPGRADE” in the promo code box, and we’ll make sure that you’re taken care of.

But you need to do it before Friday, so let us hear from you, and we hope you can join us February 13th through the 17th as we head out into the Caribbean for the Love Like You Mean It cruise.

Now, tomorrow we’re going to turn our attention to one of the challenges that our generation is facing. We’re sometimes referred to as the “sandwich generation,” where we’ve got children of our own and we’ve got parents who need our help. We’re going to talk about being caregivers for our parents as they age.

Shelly Beach is going to be here to talk about how caring for her mom brought her closer in her relationship with God. I hope you can join us for that.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, and our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our host, Dennis Rainey, I’m Bob Lepine. We will see you back tomorrow for another edition of FamilyLife Today.
We are so happy to provide these transcripts to you. However, there is a cost to produce them for our website. If you've benefited from the broadcast transcripts, would you consider donating today to help defray the costs?

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