



Intimate Encounters - Part 2

In pop culture, stories about intimacy focus on attraction. In the real world, true intimacy is sustained by attachment, which requires vulnerability. And yet, as we move towards a world in which sexuality is available without attachment, our very capacity for intimacy erodes— it's easy to become lonely and isolated despite the fact that there have never been more "options" available. What if the ancient wisdom of the biblical writers has something to say about our predicament? And what if it could help us recover a free-er, more intimate version of sexuality than what surrounds us in an advertising-saturated culture?

Getting Started

1. Did you tend to feel safe and supported growing up? Thinking over your life, when can you recall this feeling? Its absence?

What About You?

2. Who has been vulnerable with you in the past? How did it impact your relationship?
3. Do you find it easy or difficult to give yourself over to other people in vulnerability?
4. Why do you think our culture focuses so much more on *attraction* than *attachment*?
5. Have you ever seen shame change a relationship?

Look It Up

1 Corinthians 7:3–4, Genesis 2:18–25, 3:6–8,

6. Have you ever seen any of these verses about sexuality misused? What did people get wrong, in your opinion?

7. What do you think the ancient poet means by "one flesh?" What all does that image conjure up?
8. What does it say about these two people and their situation that they were naked and felt no shame?
9. Why do you think Adam and Eve immediately hid after they betrayed their Maker?

Putting It All Together

10. Will you commit to prayerfully exploring your inner life this week in order to answer the following question: how is shame affecting my capacity for intimacy?
11. What can you do to begin to deal with your shame this week? What are some tangible steps you could take?
12. What is making it difficult for you to give yourself over to another person right now?