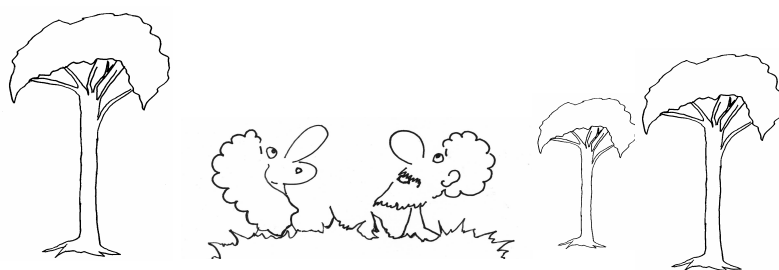


Chapter 5

YOUR PRIVATE GARDENS: TWO PLACES OF INTIMACY FROM GOD



In God's perfect design for marriage, He provided two gardens of intimacy. In both private gardens He is present. The first is the garden of shared intimate physical relations. This is a walled garden. It is designed to be hidden from the sight of others. It is intended to be completely private. It is to be enjoyed exclusively by husband and wife. It can be a place that aids and affirms your experience of "*Growing Together*."

The second garden is the garden of prayer. This is as intimate a garden as the first one. It is designed for times of shared intimacy in prayer to the Lord. In it, the couple draws closer to each other, as they draw

closer to God. Prayer affirms and reinforces spiritual intimacy with God and with each other.

Both gardens work in concert to provide the marriage couple a shared opportunity to experience the hand and heart of God.

THE FIRST GARDEN: THE MARRIAGE BED

(Genesis 4:1 NKJV) “Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.””

THERE WAS DIVINE PRESENCE AND ASSISTANCE IN THE FIRST ACT OF MARITAL INTIMACY AND REPRODUCTION. IT WAS GOD’S DESIGN.

God's Word declares that intimate physical relations are part of marriage, and that each partner is the exclusive sexual territory of the other. There are no exceptions.

(Proverbs 5:15 NKJV) “Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.”

(Proverbs 9:17-18 NKJV) “Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant {18} But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of hell.”