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Holy Sexuality

Sexuality as God's Good Gift

Summary and Goal

In this session, we will look at God's design for human sexuality as described in the Scriptures. As Christians, we need to recognize that sexuality is a gift from God and that His purpose and design for sex is intended to bring us joy. We also need to realize that we are all sexual sinners in need of forgiveness that comes through Jesus Christ. God calls us to respond to sexual sin by repenting of wrong and trusting His Spirit to empower us as we walk in holiness.

Steps to Prepare

- 1. Read the main passages for this lesson, recording your insights and questions:**
 - Genesis 2:8-9,15-25
 - Luke 5:29-32
 - Romans 1:21-28
- 2. Study the Expanded Lesson Content (pp. 118-125).**
 - Determine what elements of this lesson are most applicable to your particular group.
 - Consider ways to personalize the lesson content for you and your class.
- 3. Review the Teaching Plan (pp. 116-117).**
 - Refine the lesson plan based on your group's particular needs.
 - Adjust the plan if necessary.
- 4. Pray for the Lord's guidance as you lead your group through this material.**

Lesson Outline

- 1. Recognize sexuality as given by God for our good (Gen. 2:8-9,15-25).**
- 2. Realize we are all sexual sinners (Rom. 1:21-28).**
- 3. Respond to sexual sin with repentance and faith (Luke 5:29-32).**

Holy Sexuality

Session 10

? For Further Discussion

What are some of the flashpoints in our culture that lead to big debates about human sexuality? Why is it important for Christians to have a biblical worldview when it comes to these matters? How is this subject treated when a biblical worldview is absent?

? For Further Discussion

In what ways does our view of God help us understand the benevolent heart behind God's commands? What happens when our view of God is distorted?

? For Further Discussion

In what ways can Christian couples model the beauty of Genesis 2:15-25 through their lives of love?

Introduce the Lesson

Begin by admitting the odd nature of Christianity's view of sexuality in light of our culture's understanding. Explain why we must take care to treat any talk about specific sins in light of the Bible's overall teaching on sin (leader p. 118; personal study p. 93).

- ? What are some problematic ways Christians have addressed sexual immorality in the past? Is it ever appropriate to address just one type of sin?

Summarize this lesson about God's design for sexuality, our rebellion against His will, and our need to repent and believe the gospel (leader p. 119; personal study p. 93).

1. Recognize sexuality as given by God for our good.

Read Genesis 2:8-9,15-25, encouraging your group to note the generosity of God in giving humans good gifts in this passage.

Highlight the truth that God created everything good and for human enjoyment so that our joy would lead us to worship Him, the Giver of all good gifts (leader p. 120; personal study pp. 94-95).

- ? Why is it important that we understand God's commands in light of His character as a loving God who desires our joy?

Use the example of a begrudging, dutiful husband versus a joyful, loving husband to show how God desires joyful obedience (leader pp. 120-121). Contrast the biblical view that morality is revealed with the worldly understanding that morality is decided by consensus (leader p. 121; personal study p. 95).

- ? Why do the moral values accepted by society change and shift from generation to generation? In what ways does a scriptural view of morality as revealed challenge our culture's view of morality by consensus?

2. Realize we are all sexual sinners.

Before reading Romans 1:21-28, explain the disastrous effects of humanity's fall into sin. Then introduce Paul's letter as describing the root of humanity's problem (leader p. 121; personal study p. 95).

Walk through these verses and explain why Paul used homosexual behavior as a classic example of the way all human beings rebel by inverting God's design (leader p. 122; personal study p. 96).

-  Do you think of sex as an idol in our culture? How does our sexual sinfulness reveal the idolatry in our own hearts?

Walk through the four "street-level" arguments for sexual sin, exposing their flaws in light of Scripture (leader pp. 123-124; personal study pp. 96-97).

- My sexual choices aren't hurting anyone else.
- We're all sinners, so who are you to judge?
- Jesus never talked about homosexuality.
- Sexual promiscuity is seen in nature.

-  What arguments for immoral sexual behavior have you heard from people in your circles? How can we answer these arguments in ways that speak to the reality of our own sinfulness and need for God's grace?

3. Respond to sexual sin with repentance and faith.

Read Luke 5:29-32 as an example of Jesus' love for sinners. Bring the truth that Jesus is a friend to sinners to those in your group who are battling different kinds of sexual temptation. Explain the concepts of *vivification* and *mortification* (leader pp. 124-125; personal study p. 98).

-  Why is it important first to see ourselves as needing Jesus to be a friend to us before we see ourselves as friends to other sinners? What are some practical ways to implement vivification and mortification in our lives?

Now explain how Christians should treat unbelievers who choose to live in sexual sin. Highlight the truth that changing behavior is what comes after Jesus has changed a heart (leader p. 125; personal study p. 98).

Conclusion

Conclude the lesson by reviewing the truths in this lesson. Emphasize the need for Christians to treat others with compassion and grace (leader p. 125; personal study p. 98).

? For Further Discussion

What is the difference between attractions and behaviors? Why is it important for Christians to deny all sinful desires?

? For Further Discussion

Why is it important for Christians to learn how to think, act, and speak in the broader culture about human sexuality?

? For Further Discussion

What is the role of the church in helping individual Christians walk in sexual purity? What would a life look like that is all vivification? All mortification?

? For Further Discussion

In what ways can the church be a place where sexual sinners find salvation in Christ and brothers and sisters in Christ find grace and support?

Expanded Lesson Content

Holy Sexuality

Session 10



Introduction

As Christians, we've always been oddballs when it comes to our views on sexuality. When you take the Christian view of sex and place it in the context of world history and contemporary ideas about human sexuality, you see just how much we stand out. Think about it: no sex before marriage; no sex outside of

marriage; no homosexuality; and the list goes on.

The problem is that our culture resists this distinctiveness. The world would have us conform to its pattern of thinking. That's why, when we say we hold to a biblical view of sexuality, we're often labeled as intolerant, repressive, bigoted, etc.

As a result, we've often stayed silent. We've not addressed hot button issues related to sexual morality. Why? Maybe because anytime you take a particular sin and address it, you risk elevating it above all other sins. We don't want to do that here. We need to look at all sin, sexual or otherwise, within the broader context of the Bible's teaching.

So in this session, we're going to look at sexuality in the broader context of all humanity's sexual sinfulness. As we go forward, keep in mind that whenever we are discussing this issue, we're talking about people, not position statements. We are talking about human beings who deserve to be treated with dignity and respect because of the God whose image they bear. And ultimately, we're talking about us—our own sinful hearts that need redemption.



What are some problematic ways Christians have addressed sexual immorality in the past? Is it ever appropriate to address just one type of sin?

Voices from Church History

"We must exhibit simultaneously the holiness of God and the love of God. Anything else than this simultaneous exhibition presents a caricature of our God to the world rather than showing Him forth."¹

—Francis Schaeffer
(1912-1984)

Lesson Summary

In this session, we will look at God’s design for human sexuality as described in the Scriptures. As Christians, we need to recognize that sexuality is a gift from God and that His purpose and design for sex is intended to bring us joy. We also need to realize that we are all sexual sinners in need of forgiveness that comes through Jesus Christ. God calls us to respond to sexual sin by repenting of wrong and trusting His Spirit to empower us as we walk in holiness.

1. Recognize sexuality as given by God for our good (Gen. 2:8-9,15-25).

⁸ The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He placed the man He had formed. ⁹ The LORD God caused to grow out of the ground every tree pleasing in appearance and good for food, including the tree of life in the middle of the garden, as well as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

.....
¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.” ¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper as his complement.” ¹⁹ So the LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found as his complement. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. ²² Then the LORD God made the rib He had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ And the man said:

*This one, at last, is bone of my bone
and flesh of my flesh;
this one will be called “woman,”
for she was taken from man.*

²⁴ This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵ Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

If we’re going to follow Jesus’ lead in understanding human sexuality, then we have to go where He pointed us. When asked about the purpose for marriage (Matt. 19), Jesus pointed to Genesis 2. Back to the beginning.

Further Commentary

“We worship God when, while we partake of his good gifts, something occurs in the deepest parts of our soul that forbids glory terminating on the gift itself or on our enjoyment of it but that runs deeper into and extends out to the Giver. Apart from understanding God and worshiping him in this way, everything becomes superficial...We want to worship something. Worship is an innate response. We are wired for it by God himself.”²

—Matt Chandler

Further Commentary

“Denial of the truth of God’s revelation undermines any attempt to deal with contemporary ethical questions, particularly in regard to sexuality, which plays a major role in all of our lives. It’s often the place where we want to make up our own rules.”³

—Charles Colson and Harold Fickett

Genesis 1–2 shows us how God created everything and called it good. In love, He placed man and woman in the garden of Eden to enjoy what He had created. God gave us good things, not so that we would simply enjoy them for their own sake but so that our hearts would be stirred with gratitude and joyful worship of God, the Giver.

Take food, for example. God gave us food, not so food would become the ultimate source of our joy but so that food would stir up worship and gladness in our hearts toward God. Whenever I am out of the country for a few weeks, I can’t wait to get home to eat Tex Mex. It’s a worshipful experience for me, really. Chips and hot sauce stir up joy and worship in my heart toward the Creator who gives us such wonderful tastes.

The same is true of other things, such as sex. In fact, everything that exists was intended to roll up into worship and joy in the Creator of all good gifts. It’s important to remember this. Otherwise, we might think that God’s commands are designed to press us down and squelch our joy. We might think God demands our begrudging submission, as if He were a “meany” in the sky waiting to send a thunderbolt toward anyone having a good time.

Nothing could be further from the truth. When God gives us His commands regarding our actions, He is lining us up with how He created the universe to work. God’s law is intended to restore the *shalom*, the peace, of the garden. He doesn’t want to rob us of joy but to lead us into its fullness.



Why is it important that we understand God’s commands in light of His character as a loving God who desires our joy?

If we don’t have the right view of God, we’ll never have the right view of sexuality. Think about it this way. Let’s say you ask me what my marriage is like. I respond with a frown, “Well, I made a vow! Eleven years ago, I stood in front of God, a preacher, and a bunch of friends. I said I would love her, and that’s why I can’t leave her. I made a vow.” Now, if I were to talk about marriage this way, would you think it’s beautiful? Would it make you want to be married? Probably not! It sounds like I’m in a relationship I would rather not have.

But let’s say you ask me about my marriage, and I start talking about my wife’s outer beauty and her inner beauty. And I sound all corny when I talk about how in love I am. Do you see the difference? When I am joyfully united to my wife, the picture of marriage is glorious. Both examples include a vow, but the second exalts marriage for what it is intended to be.

The same is true regarding sex. When we read this passage in Genesis, we can see how lovely the woman is to the man. We see how gloriously unashamed they are together. This is God’s intention—that human beings would enjoy God’s gifts by seeing how they reveal the loving heart of God, the Giver.

In the end, God’s commands about sex are about lining us up with how He created the universe to work. But even though God’s law is for our good, the world resists any attempt to see morality as prescribed by God in this way.

Left on our own, we want morality to be decided by consensus. Whatever most people think, that’s the way it goes. It makes sense to think of consensus morality if we humans are the ultimate authority. But the Bible won’t let us go there. The Bible reveals God, and because this God speaks, we believe morality isn’t something that humans decide. It’s something that God reveals.

 Why do the moral values accepted by society change and shift from generation to generation? In what ways does a scriptural view of morality as revealed challenge our culture’s view of morality by consensus?

2. Realize we are all sexual sinners (Rom. 1:21-28).

The beautiful harmony of Genesis 2 isn’t what we experience today, is it? Almost everyone, regardless of religious persuasion, knows that something’s gone wrong in the world. If we head to a bookstore, the largest section of books is going to be titled “Self-Help.” Why? Because we all know something’s wrong. And we also know something’s wrong with us. That’s why so many go to these books that offer solutions: Let’s get your finances straight. Let’s work on your abs. Let’s work on your emotional state.

All of our problems go back to the scene immediately following the beauty of Genesis 2. Adam and Eve committed treason against God by sinning against Him. The moment they sinned, their relationship with God was broken. Because of God’s curse on sin, the universe began to fracture. The *shalom* of the garden was disrupted. The rhythm of the universe went out of sync. Everything is off.

Why is the universe such a mess? In Romans 1, the apostle Paul unpacked the foundational sin that is at the bottom of all the symptoms the self-help books try to fix. The Bible teaches that we have a problem that’s bigger than the symptoms of dysfunction.

In this passage, Paul is answering the question about why the Gentiles should be held accountable for disobeying God when they weren’t given His law. Here is Paul’s indictment on all humanity:

Voices from the Church

“Relativism promises freedom but enslaves people: it refuses to acknowledge sin and evil in the way the Bible does, and therefore it never adequately confronts sin and evil, and therefore leaves people enslaved by sin and evil.”⁴

—D. A. Carson

Further Commentary

Some couples decide not to get married and will say things like, “We don’t need a piece of paper to prove our love.” The number of couples who live together unmarried is growing. “Barely half of adults (51%) were married in 2011... compared with 72% in 1960. Marriage increasingly is being replaced by cohabitation, single-person households and other adult living arrangements.”⁵ From a biblical perspective, this trend of decreasing commitment to marriage is not only wrong, it also has harmful consequences in the lives of parents and children. Couples who live together before marriage are 50-80% more likely to get divorced than those who never cohabited. The rate of domestic violence is twice as high for cohabiting couples.⁶ Research backs up what the Bible has claimed all along—marriage is a covenant created by God, and it is the only appropriate place for sexual activity.

Further Commentary

Sometimes people say Paul was addressing an exploitative version of homosexual behavior (ex. masters taking advantage of slaves), that he would not have understood the idea of a long-term, monogamous homosexual relationship. This argument is culturally popular, but it falls apart under close scrutiny of Romans 1. Paul clearly wrote that men were consumed with desire for one another. He was writing about reciprocity, not rape.

Another line of argumentation is that Paul was condemning heterosexuals for behaving in homosexual ways, not those who are naturally oriented toward members of the same sex. If God wired us a certain way, how could He judge us? First, there is no conclusive evidence that homosexuality is genetically caused. Second, we are tempted in all sorts of ways that arise from our sin nature. "Natural is acceptable" is not a biblical notion. No one in society would say that is the best way to live. The question is not about temptation but about what we do when we are tempted to act in ways that are absolutely against God's will for our lives.

²¹ For though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became nonsense, and their senseless minds were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God delivered them over in the cravings of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves.

²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served something created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever. Amen.

²⁶ This is why God delivered them over to degrading passions. For even their females exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones.

²⁷ The males in the same way also left natural relations with females and were inflamed in their lust for one another. Males committed shameless acts with males and received in their own persons the appropriate penalty of their error.

²⁸ And because they did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God, God delivered them over to a worthless mind to do what is morally wrong.

Let's work our way through this passage. Verses 21-23 show us the base error of humanity—idolatry. What is idolatry? It's when we take whatever was meant to roll our affections toward the Creator and we let those affections terminate on what was created instead. We don't want God; we just want His stuff. That's the inclination of us all: "Forget You, God. I just want what You made."

How does God respond? Look at verses 24-25. Here we see God judging us by allowing us to go our own way. He delivers us over to our own desires. All humanity continues running down the path of self-centered living.

What does that look like? Watch what comes next in verses 26-28. Our sin manifests itself in sexual dysfunction. The reason he uses sexual immorality as an example is not because he believes this sin is worse than all others but because it's a classic example of how we take the design of creation and make it into an idol. We worship created things instead of the Creator. It's an inversion of God's intention. Likewise, marriage between a man and woman is intended to be a picture of God's pursuit of us in Christ. Sexual immorality, on the other hand, is an example of how we rebel against that picture. The example Paul uses here is homosexuality, yet the truth applies to all kinds of sexual practices outside of God's plan.

So in this passage, we find what the Scriptures say is wrong with humanity—we are idolaters. All of us. We rebel in various ways (and there is a litany of sins listed at the end of Romans 1), but the common theme is that all of us have sinned.



Do you think of sex as an idol in our culture? How does our sexual sinfulness reveal the idolatry in our own hearts?

So what are some ways that we explain away and excuse our sexual sinfulness? Several “street-level” arguments for sexual sin apply to premarital sex, adultery, and any sex outside of biblical marriage as Jesus described it. Let’s go through them quickly.

• **My sexual choices aren’t hurting anyone else.**

I call this the Golden Rule idea. If it’s not hurting anyone else, what could be wrong with it? If a guy is sleeping with his girlfriend and the two of them are consenting adults, why should the church condemn that behavior? Likewise, if a woman wants to be in a monogamous sexual relationship with another woman, why does it matter as long as it’s not harming anyone else?

The truth is, sexual sin does harm us. It’s a sin against the body. We also must remember that the Golden Rule (love your neighbor) is second to the greatest commandment (love God with your whole self). Jesus said clearly in the Gospel of John that those who love Him obey His commands (see John 14:15). In other words, “If you love Me, obey Me.” When you place the Golden Rule within the framework of biblical teaching, you see that sexual sin is a sin against our own bodies and is ultimately a sign of our rebellion against the God who made us.

• **We’re all sinners, so who are you to judge?**

Whenever Christians affirm Jesus’ vision for human sexuality, we are often greeted with the comeback line “So you’re perfect, then?” The critics have a point here. The Bible shows us up as sexual sinners—all of us. But the real issue is repentance. The question is not “Do I sin?” but “Am I walking in repentance?” Christians ought never to feel superior to others. We’re sinners too. The question is about repentance. Are we turning from sin and embracing Jesus?

• **Jesus never talked about homosexuality.**

This objection is only half true. When it comes to dealing with the topic explicitly, Jesus did not speak to the subject. But there is a sense in which Jesus did address this issue. In Matthew 15:18-19, we read: “But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and this defiles a man. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immoralities, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies.” The word for “sexual immoralities” covers all sorts of behaviors condemned in the Old and New Testaments.

Furthermore, when asked about divorce, Jesus went back to God’s design in creation to show how men and women were to relate to one another. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus built on the Old Testament understanding of morality and even went beyond it—calling us out for lust.

Further Commentary

One of the most prevalent sexual temptations of our day is the accessibility and anonymity of Internet pornography. Many in our society take a cavalier and nonchalant approach to pornography, saying, “As long as it doesn’t hurt anyone...” But pornography objectifies men and women, alters our expectations of our sexual partners, saps our relationships of intimacy, further fuels lustful thoughts and desires, and can lead to sexual addiction and in some cases sexual assault. Pornography is not a victimless activity. It is a sin that destroys our hearts and our homes. Thankfully, the gospel is more powerful than the lure of pornography and can deliver us from this temptation.

Voices from the Church

“Our struggles and temptations often trigger sin, but they never cause it. The root cause is always the heart and its sinful desires.”⁷

—Tim Chester

Voices from Church History

“Fallacies do not cease to be fallacies because they become fashions.”⁸

—G. K. Chesterton
(1874-1936)

Further Commentary

Can someone involved in sexual immorality join our church? Scripture teaches that the church is made up of those who repent of their sins, believe in Christ, and are baptized. Someone who is actively engaged in pursuing a sinful lifestyle (of whatever kind of sin) is demonstrating a lack of repentance and therefore should not be granted the affirmation of church membership. But a believing sinner, who is struggling to fight against sin and is seeking to live in repentance and holiness, should certainly be welcomed into the covenant of church membership. In fact, a community of faith where that person can be loved, supported, and challenged is the best and most appropriate place on earth for them to be.

• Sexual promiscuity is seen in nature.

Sometimes people will condemn faithfulness between a husband and wife (monogamy) or the Christian view of homosexual behavior by appealing to nature. As long as animals aren't monogamous and as long as we see some animals behaving in same-sex ways, then why would we condemn adultery or homosexuality or sex outside of marriage? If it's in nature, it must be natural.

This line of thinking denigrates the dignity of human beings, implying we are nothing more than our sexual passions. If we roll that argument out, we arrive in a scary place. We know of certain insects where the male impregnates the female and the female turns around and eats the male. Who wants that as the norm for humans? What's worse, those who believe in evolutionary theory adopt the principle “survival of the fittest.” Do we want to imply, for example, that people with same-sex attractions are genetically weaker than other human beings? Of course not! Appealing to nature to justify any kind of sexual immorality is a dead end leading us to see people with less dignity, not more.



What arguments for immoral sexual behavior have you heard from people in your circles? How can we answer these arguments in ways that speak to the reality of our own sinfulness and need for God's grace?

3. Respond to sexual sin with repentance and faith (Luke 5:29-32).

²⁹ *Then Levi hosted a grand banquet for Him at his house. Now there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others who were guests with them.*

³⁰ *But the Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to His disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”*

³¹ *Jesus replied to them, “The healthy don't need a doctor, but the sick do.”* ³² *I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”*

So far we've seen God's original design for human sexuality. We've seen how we are all sexual sinners in need of God's grace. Now we will look at what our response ought to be. Christ calls us to respond to sexual sin (indeed, all sin!) with repentance and faith.

Sin didn't take Jesus by surprise. He was the friend of sinners. Before we can be a friend to sinners, we need to realize that Jesus is a friend to us. We are the sinners who need His salvation.

I tell everyone who struggles with temptation and sexual sin the same thing. We must humble ourselves before God every day, ask for His mercy, and hold tight to the promise that in Christ He has given us all the grace we need to be obedient to all His commands. It is not the nature and character of God to put us in situations where we cannot overcome temptation.

Throughout church history, many leaders have described our ongoing struggle against sin in two ways: *vivification* and *mortification*. Vivification is building yourself up in Christ and filling your life with whatever helps you see Christ as beautiful. Mortification is putting to death your sin, guarding your heart, avoiding places of temptation, and seeking out accountability with Christian friends. So on the one hand, you fill your life with whatever stirs your affections for Jesus. And on the other hand, you make war against your remaining sin.

Along the way, recognize that the church is meant to be an honest, open community for people fighting sin. We must be willing to confess our sin. When something is in the dark, it gains power. But when sin is brought out into the light, it loses some of its luster. The struggle continues, but walking in community aids our pursuit of holiness. We repent of our sin and trust God and the power of His Spirit.



Why is it important first to see ourselves as needing Jesus to be a friend to us before we see ourselves as friends to other sinners? What are some practical ways to implement vivification and mortification in our lives?

How should we respond to non-Christians who have chosen to live outside of God's design and plan and act in ways that the Bible calls sinful? These situations come up all the time. We have friends committing adultery, coworkers living together but not married, gay and lesbian relatives.

Our response...love them anyway. Like Jesus, we should be a friend to sinners—He is to us. We must not justify or excuse sinful behavior nor avoid people living outside of God's plan. They are created in God's image and should be loved and treated accordingly—as people with inherent dignity (and we may need to defend that dignity when others act differently).

Our life goal is not to get people to stop sinning; it's to see people know and respond to the love of God, first and foremost. Changing behavior is what comes after Jesus has changed a heart. Our message is the gospel of Jesus Christ, not just traditional morality. Let's speak with our lips and model with our lives the love of Jesus Christ. We have a loving Father who desires our joy. We have a Savior who gave His life for our sins. We have the Holy Spirit who intercedes for us and empowers us to live in obedience.

Conclusion

We have looked at God's design for human sexuality as described in the Scriptures. We should always remember that sexuality is a gift from God. He wants our joy. When we disregard His commands, we are abandoning our own joy in order to pursue a lie. But when we respond with repentance and faith, we become a people full of compassion and grace. A people who love Jesus and hate their sin. A people who embrace the truths of God without compromise while loving those who disagree with us without condition.



Voices from the Church

"Apart from Scripture's call, the greatest argument for sexual purity is the living example of a faithful man and woman deeply in love. This is what our cyber-sexed, reductionist world must see. And more, they must see that Christ is the center of marriage and the answer to sexual immorality."⁹

—R. Kent Hughes



Voices from the Church

"We can be communities of repentance only if we're communities of grace. And this means being honest, open, and transparent about our struggles."¹⁰

—Tim Chester

References

1. Francis Schaeffer, in *Letters of Francis A. Schaeffer*, ed. Lane Dennis (Wheaton: Crossway, 1986), 202.
2. Matt Chandler, *The Explicit Gospel* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 36–37.
3. Charles Colson and Harold Fickett, *The Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 66.
4. D. A. Carson, *The Intolerance of Tolerance* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 132.
5. Richard Fry, "No Reversal in Decline of Marriage," Pew Research [online], 20 November 2012 [cited 4 June 2013]. Available from the Internet: www.pewsocialtrends.org.
6. Glenn T. Stanton, *The Ring Makes All the Difference* (Chicago: Moody, 2011), 46, 60.
7. Tim Chester, *You Can Change* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 67.
8. G. K. Chesterton, *The Quotable Chesterton*, ed. Kevin Belmonte (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 64.
9. R. Kent Hughes, *Set Apart* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 83–84.
10. Tim Chester, *You Can Change*, 161.

Additional Resources

Holy Sexuality

Devotional Material

Encourage your group to read the three devotional readings included in the *Personal Study Guide*.

Study Material

- “The Morality of Sex”—Chapter 5 from *Ethix: Being Bold in a Whatever World* by Sean McDowell
- “Married to Christ”—Chapter 4 from *How People Change* by Timothy Lane and Paul David Tripp
- “Morality and the Natural Order”—Pages 229-246 from *The Good Life* by Charles Colson and Harold Fickett
- “How to Teach Sex”—Article by Stanton L. Jones; find a link to this article at gospelproject.com/additionalresources
- “How I Wish the Homosexuality Debate Would Go”—Blog post by Trevin Wax; find a link to this blog post at gospelproject.com/additionalresources

Sermon Podcasts

Matt Chandler: “God and Sex”

Sam Williams: “A Christian Psychology of and Response to Homosexuality”

Find links to these at gospelproject.com/additionalresources

Tip of the Week

Want Some Teaching Options?

Individuals are different. Teachers are different. Groups are different. What works for one may not work well for another. In recognition of this fact, we are making available a resource that provides teachers and group leaders with additional teaching options. This resource is available for each session and includes four or five interactive teaching options a teacher can make use of during group time and that point group members to their *Personal Study Guide*. You can download this document for free from gospelproject.com/additionalresources.