

LOVE AND DATING

Week 4 - Sex and Physical Boundaries

THE MAIN POINT

Sex is treated so casually in our culture - like it's simply a physical act and has no repercussions as long as you don't get pregnant or get an STD. The truth is that sex is much more than physical. Our goal in this week's discussion is to dive into the discussion of sex. Just as God created relationships, He also created sex. Therefore, in its proper context, sex is a really good thing. Rather than simply saying "don't do that" or "it's bad," we will take a look at what the Bible actually says.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- White board, marker, eraser or large easel pad of paper to write on & a marker
- iPhone or iPad with "Off Limits!" app downloaded

GETTING STARTED

Welcome students back and remind them of the small group rules:

RULES FOR SMALL GROUP:

Commitment - Commit to being at every group meeting (make it a priority!)

Confidentiality - What is shared here stays here.

Be honest or be silent - don't make up an answer just to have one. Sometimes the most honest answer is no answer, so if you need to, just say pass.

Respect - for one another, their thoughts/ideas/opinions (no put downs).

ACTIVITY

Off Limits!

One person with an iPhone or iPad will need to download the app. (There are similar android versions of Taboo available as well.) This game is essentially the app version of "Taboo." Split your group into 2 teams. When it is your team's turn, you will need to choose a person to be the describer. The opposing team should select someone to police the describer. The describer will be given a word that they must make their team guess. However, they may not use any of the "off limits" words listed on the card to describe that word. No sound effects, plurals, "sounds like", or abbreviations allowed either. If the describer accidentally uses a word and gets caught by the police or wants to skip, swipe left. If the team guesses it correctly, swipe right for a new card. Each team gets 1 minute to get as many words guessed as possible.

GOING DEEPER

That was fun! Thank you for being a part of this awesome group. Over the last few weeks, we've been talking a lot about love and dating. Speaking of "off limits" ...today we're going to look at a topic that might be a little awkward and we don't often want to talk about, but we need to. We hear about it a lot or see it a lot in media, but no one really wants to talk about it in depth. I'm talking about sex.

- What are some things people/society/media say about sex?
- What are some things you have heard or read that the Bible says about sex?
 - If you have the ability to write the responses down on a board I would encourage that
- What is your opinion about sex? Are there rules for who should have sex and when?

Let's look back at the list we came up with about what the world says about sex (again, if you have it on a board or a large easel board that's best).

- Which of these do you agree with and why? Disagree with?

Interesting take on what the world says about sex. Now before we look at the list we came up with for what the Bible says, let's take a look at what the Bible actually says about sex.

Read Genesis 1:27-28 NLT

- What is God's first command to Adam & Eve? (Be fruitful and multiply aka have sex!)
 - Have you ever thought about the fact that God is actually the one who created sex?

Over the past couple weeks, we've talked about how God created relationships. We also talked about how God created love. It stands to reason that if you accept that there is a God and he created us and gave us relationships, God actually is the one who came up with the idea for sex. You may have heard that Christians believe sex is bad and it's off limits like the words in the game we played earlier. God actually created it and made it good. That's pretty cool. Well since He's the one who created it, maybe He also gave us some guidelines for using it correctly. Let's see what else we can find.

Have different students read the following passages: Mark 10:6-9, Hebrews 13:4, Exodus 20:14, 1 Corinthians 7:1-2 (If your students aren't familiar with the Bible and can't find these, you can either have them printed up ahead of time, help teach them to find the verses, or simply read 1-2 of them as the group leader.)

- What are these passages saying about sex?

These passages in the Bible teach us that sex belongs in the context of marriage. To us in our current day, that might sound completely crazy and overly restrictive. He actually goes even further than that...

Read Matthew 5:27-28

- What do you think? Why would God ask us to save sex for marriage?
- What does Jesus mean when He suggests lusting after someone is "committing adultery in your heart?"

So not only are we asked not to have sex outside of marriage, we're also to guard our hearts and minds from thinking sexually toward people we aren't married to as well. That includes the things we look at...

Again, God created sex, so He probably knows best. It's also important to remember from last week that God loves us more than we can possibly understand (Ephesians 3:17-18). So even if we might feel like what God has to say about sex seems overly restrictive, we can also logically conclude that a loving God would say so because it is what is truly the very best for us and the world we live

in. But how?

- How could God's instruction to save sex for marriage be what's best for us? What could be the benefit to our lives if the only person we had sex with was the person we married?

Andy Stanley, that guy we've been quoting a lot in this series once said, "Fire in the fireplace is a wonderful thing. Fire on the carpet has the potential to burn down your house. Sex is a lot like fire. In the right context, it is an awesome thing. But once it is outside the context it was designed for, sex can burn your life and relationships to the ground" (From "Seven Checkpoints for Student Leaders").

Here's the truth: sex is so much more than just a physical act. We might be tempted to think it's just physical, but I think deep down most of us know it's more than that. It's the reason that things like sexual abuse or assault are so particularly awful for someone to go through. It's the reason that a spouse is so deeply hurt when their husband or wife sleeps with someone else. It's the reason that when we have sex with someone and that person leaves, it hurts so bad. It's more than physical. It affects and involves our minds, our hearts, and our souls. That verse we read a little bit ago from Mark 10:6-9 teaches us that when we have sex, we become "united into one" with that person. It's a big deal, and deep down we all know it. (Source: see chapter 8 of [The New Rules for Love, Sex, and Dating](#) by Andy Stanley)

Last but not least, what are the consequences for having sex outside of marriage?

Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 NLT

- What stands out to you from these verses?

That's some pretty intense stuff. But it goes to show that God takes sex outside of marriage very seriously.

I think this maybe will help us understand why He takes it so seriously. God knows that sexual sin affects us so much more deeply than just a random physical act. When we sin sexually, we sin against our own bodies. It robs us of what God has in store for us in the context of a loving committed marriage relationship.

- What are your thoughts so far? How does this make you feel?

You might be sitting here thinking that it's too late. You've already messed up. You've already taken things too far. You've sinned. You're not alone. Jesus said in the passage earlier that even if you lust after someone, you've committed adultery (sexual sin). I might be guessing here, but there's a really good chance that all of us stand guilty in this area including me. Let me tell you a story.

Tell the story of John 8:1-11 in your own words.

TAKE AWAY

The good news is just like with the woman caught in adultery, Jesus doesn't condemn us either. We've all messed up. We've all sinned in more ways than just sexual sin. But Jesus paid our cost for our sin on the cross. That's what was meant in 1 Corinthians 6, when it said "God bought you with a high price." That high price was Jesus' death on the cross for you and me. We're given the opportunity for a new life and freedom from our past. But just like the woman, Jesus doesn't forgive us so that we can just go right back to the way things were. He tells us to go and sin no more. If you accept this gift of forgiveness, you enter into a relationship with God. It might be tough to think about not having sex until you're married, but I can tell you that God is incredibly trustworthy, desires for us to have the very best, and is ready to help us get there.

There's a scene in Disney's Aladdin where Prince Ali is floating on a magic carpet outside of Jasmine's balcony. He reaches his hand out to her and says, "Do you trust me?" At this point, Jasmine was faced with a decision whether to walk off a ledge high above the ground onto this weird carpet thing. She had to decide whether to trust the carpet to hold her up and that Prince Ali would keep her safe. She took the leap and was shown the world.

Today we challenge you to trust God. We are, after all, talking about the Creator of literally everything. It might look daunting to you to take a leap and say yes to a relationship with God. The end result is an unforgettable journey filled with God's best for you.

- Will you trust Jesus?