

ELEVATE: Seek What Is Noble!

Session # 1: Sexuality – “*Bring the Sacred back into Sexuality*”

Session Objective: This session’s objective is to realign your students’ perspective on sexuality; to allow them to see that sexuality is a desire that is God-given, that has been corrupted by the world. Students will leave with the knowledge that their minds play a key role in the quest towards sexual purity.

Minimum Prep:

- Read through the entire session outline (option 1: Leader Driven Lesson)
- Read through the entire session outline (option 2: Student Driven Lesson)
- It may be appropriate to divide your group into males and females each with a leader of their gender if this is possible. Your students will likely be more open to speak and share honestly if they are not worried what the opposite gender might think.

Extended Prep:

- Question Box:
 - Two weeks before this session on sexuality, allow students to put anonymous questions into a box that is left in the youth room. These questions will lay the foundation for your small group questions. (Since this session deals with sexuality in general, this is a good exercise to find out where your group’s biggest concerns are, i.e. homosexuality, “how far is too far”, masturbation etc.)
- Gold Fish Illustration for understanding God’s boundaries:
 - Bring in front of your group a large goldfish in a small bowl. Introduce the fish as Oscar, your pet. During the next few moments share (“ham it up”) about how unfair it was that Oscar had to live within these confining bowl boundaries. Insist with your group that “Oscar should be free, living without any restrictions or boundaries.”
 - Then reach into the bowl, pull out Oscar, and drop him on the table. The students will likely go nuts. As Oscar flips around, they may yell at you to put it back in the bowl. But return the hostility by shouting, “What’s the problem! I’m just giving him his freedom. I’m being a real friend!”
 - After this stunt has had its impact, put Oscar back into the bowl and explain how positive God’s boundaries are. (*Youthworker Fall 1994 p.47*)

Session Outline

(Some leaders may feel uncomfortable talking about sexuality with their students so it is important that this is something prepped well in advance. It is important that the leaders are comfortable dialoguing about sexuality otherwise their small group will not be as open to responding.)

Leader Preamble:

Let's just get it out on the table. For years it has been said that the church has made sex and sexuality something dirty, bad, and wrong to talk about. Let's blow that low view of sexuality out of the water by elevating sexuality back to the awesomeness that it was created to be! Remember sexuality is not all about intercourse; it is looking at sexual contact and interaction in the context of the body, mind and soul

*This session is to be a time that we are honest, open and free to talk. Two important things: first, God has said that sex is wonderful and words like penis, breasts, and vagina are not dirty words but are great body parts that God created. **Leader Note:** If you as leader use real words then the students will see it is okay to be honest and will feel comfortable talking as well).*

Many of you would say that you already know that God's Word says to avoid sexual immorality and you already know the consequences of sex outside of marriage. But, it could be argued that in a strange way you may still be looking for some kind of loop-hole or permission to exploit your sexuality. It is kind of like the movie, Titanic - people went back to see it 3 or 4 times hoping that one of those times it would not sink.

But you know what, whether the media, a friend or anyone else gives you permission or a loop-hole to exploit your sexuality, the question you have to ask yourself is, "Do I want to be a follower of them (the media, friends, etc.), or do I want to be a follower of Jesus Christ"? Jesus has called us to elevate our understanding of sexuality to that of sacredness and to live a life worthy of the calling we have received. His truth never changes no matter how many times you look at it; He is the truth and in living for Him we will experience true freedom from the bondage of sin.

This session is not so much about what I, (small group leader) can tell you, it is what you want your future to be and what part God is going to play in your life. It is not about what the church, your parents, or our pastor believe that directs your behaviour, but your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

So to launch us into our talking about sexuality and how it can and needs to be elevated to a new level in our world and in our own lives.

NOTE: There are two options for this session,
Choose the option that you feel will most benefit your group.

Small Group Questions:*(Option 1)***1. What comes to mind when you think of Sexuality and the Church/Christianity?***(Optional question: What is your view of sexuality?)***2. What do you think comes to mind when your school friends think of sexuality?**

We are created as human beings with design. Sex and sexuality is one of those things that have a unique design with purpose. A hammer has a purpose for putting a nail into a board. There is no reason why you could not use a guitar for this, but it would be preposterous do that – it would harm the guitar, even if left just a small hole, and over repeated times, it would leave the guitar unable to fulfill its purpose.

The same is true with sex/sexuality. Sexuality is designed as something incredibly spiritual, intense, and sacred. It is designed to unite two people to become one. God has created sexuality (not just intercourse) to bond two people together, to hold two people tight in a marriage. The more we engage in sexual ways with different people or outside the context of marriage, the greater the risk that sexual bonding will not hold our marriages together in the future. It is true that sex can be used to fill up an empty feeling, meet the need of being wanted, or respond to an urge or desire you have. But all this has done is to cheapen sexuality. Ironically, the world, which says that Christians have spoiled sex through restrictive rules, has actually been the one to spoil sexuality by making it so casual that it becomes void of depth and value.

3. How has society cheapened sex/sexuality? And how can we elevate sexuality back to being something sacred and precious?

*Ex. **pornography** – making it objectified*

***Advertisements** – making it a public sale*

***Just Intercourse** – making it just something physical*

Often the question is asked, “How far is too far?” If our desire is to see “what can I do and still be called a Christian”, then that question is appropriate. But as we seek to elevate our life to one that experiences the freedom that Christ has given us, we are asking the wrong question. You see, if we desire to seek purity and elevate our life to truly experience the freedom that Christ gave us, and then we need to reframe the question to, “How pure can I be”?

If you are really trying to seek purity, you can’t start with a question that presupposes stretching the limits.

4. What is the difference between asking “How far is to far?” and “How pure can I be?” How can these two questions affect the way you approach sexuality?

We are sometimes given boundaries by God so we can experience life to the fullest. Sexuality is a precious gift, given from God to humanity right from creation. Sexuality is not about what you can get out or get from of another person or thing, but it is an expression of intimacy which creates a sacrificial bond of two people’s heart, soul and mind being bonded together.

5. What Does God’s Word have to say about Sexuality?

*Genesis 1:28, 2:24-25 (Sexuality is purposeful and pure in a union of man and woman)
Songs of Songs 4:1-16 (Sexuality is intimacy and joy in a marriage)
Matt 5:27-28 (Sexuality is not just the physical but also in the Mind and Spirit)
1 Corinthians 7:3-5 (Sexuality is not self-seeking but is a joining and giving of self)
Galatians 5:16-25 (There is a context for sexuality that is contrary to the Spirit)*

6. What pain is God protecting us from by saying that sexual expression is only to be expressed within the marriage context?

(Unwanted pregnancy, STD’s, shame, guilt, blackmail, rejection, loneliness etc)

[NOTE: if you have time bring out the Fish Illustration at this point.]

Sometimes we look at boundaries and guidelines as always being negative or restrictive. But as one can look through scripture and in life, many boundaries are not to restrict your freedom but instead to protect you and give you a greater experience in life. God gave us the command to have sex and to be united through sexuality with the guideline that elevating the sacredness and depth of your sexual experience is to be within the context of a heterosexual marriage.

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Option 2: *(If you created a Question Box, use the students’ questions first and use the rest of the session as support to working through the questions. Also, if are using the Question Box, instead of answering all the questions, break the group into small groups and have them use their Bible to come up with answers and then discuss the answers together as a group)*

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Final Leader Thoughts:

In the fight for sexual purity we must realize that our most powerful sexual organ will be our minds. That is why the scripture tells us to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”. Smokey the Bear always said “Only you can prevent forest fires”, we can let it be said that “Only you can choose to seek purity”.

Leader Note: This is your place each week to record significant sharing or growth in the lives of your students for subsequent follow up. You can also use this space to provide feedback on the material. All suggestions are welcome.

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