

# DAY ONE

## TRUE HAPPINESS

From music to movies to social media, sex is everywhere. Since our culture has lost sight of the transcendent meaning of sex, many people today think sex itself is the route to happiness.

**Where do you see evidence of this misunderstanding about sex?**

**Have you ever been tempted to believe it? Why or why not?**

This kind of attitude isn't new. In fact, the apostle Paul wrote about this very same issue nearly two thousand years ago.

### READ ROMANS 1:18-20.

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*

**What does this teach us about God's moral law? How do we know about it?**

**Describe what this teaches about unbelievers in relation to God's law.**

### NOW READ ROMANS 1:21-23.

*For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.*

**In these verses, what actions did people take to reject God?**

**What about our culture? What do people pursue instead of God today?**

**When have you been tempted to pursue things or people instead of God?**

### FINALLY, READ ROMANS 1:24-25.

*Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.*

**What did God do in response to the people's sin?**

**What does this teach us about the seriousness of sexual sin?**

Just like in Paul's day, rather than worshiping the Creator (of sex), people today worship the created thing (that is, sex itself). The Bible calls this idolatry. Sounds serious, doesn't it? That's because it is. Rejecting God's sexual ethic is a symptom of an even bigger issue within our hearts.

# DAY TWO

## THREE MYTHS AND THE TRUTH

During this week's group session, we discussed three purposes of sex: procreation, unity, and the anticipation of heaven. Now, let's examine three myths about sex.

### MYTH #1: SEX IS NOT A BIG DEAL.

In 2019, Planned Parenthood launched an online chatbot named Roo to answer student questions about sex, pregnancy, and other sexual health issues. One of the questions initially trending on the site was, "What's the right age to have sex for the first time?" <sup>1</sup>

**How would you respond to this question?**

The answer Roo offers is, "It's all about picking the right age for you, which might be totally different than the right age for other people. It may seem like everybody you know is having sex, but that's definitely not true. The average age when people have sex for the first time is around 17." <sup>2</sup>

**How does this compare to your response?**

**How does it ignore what you've learned regarding God's design for sex?**

When I shared this with a group of high school students, a senior observed that Planned Parenthood assumes sex is not a big deal. There is no mention of marriage, commitment, or children. Sex is pictured as an activity entirely dependent on the relative feelings of the individual. They say: If you feel ready, then go for it.

At the heart of the world's perception of sex today is the idea that sex is not a big deal; it's just another recreational activity for consenting teens and adults. This is clearly not God's design.

### MYTH #2: SEX IS ONLY A PRIVATE ACT.

One of the most common sayings concerning sex today is that it is a 100 percent private act between two (or more) consenting adults and there should be no criticism or regulation of what consenting adults choose to do behind closed doors.

**Do you think sex simply a private act between two consenting adults? Explain.**

**Name some of the consequences—public and private—of sex.**

Sex is not meant to be a public act. It is meant to be experienced with privacy. But it's impossible to separate the private act of sex from its public consequences. Sex may be practiced in private, but it concerns the whole community. Consider these consequences:

- **Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs):** According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), roughly twenty million new infections of sexually transmitted diseases occur every year in America, and half of these are in young people ages 15-24. The estimated health care costs are \$16 billion per year. <sup>3</sup> This is an expense everyone pays for—sexually active or not.
- **Unwanted Pregnancy:** Sex is the natural means by which humans procreate. Since sex has the potential of creating new life—a result that affects the entire community—it can't be limited to the walls of the bedroom. Sex quite literally affects everyone.
- **Character:** Our sexual experiences deeply shape our character. Sex is a big deal, and since our sexual experiences shape the development of our own character, they influence how we treat other people beyond the bedroom.

### MYTH #3: "SEX" SIMPLY MEANS SEXUAL INTERCOURSE.

**Why does sexual purity need to go beyond only sexual intercourse?**

Someone who has never had sexual intercourse is called a virgin. However, sexual purity involves more sexual activity than just intercourse. Sexual purity involves all aspects of our sexuality, from our bodies, to our minds, to our eyes, to even our words.

Sexual activity with someone to whom you're not married will always bring guilt and regret. This is because it's a misuse of God's design for sex. God's design leads to sexual activity that doesn't make you feel guilty and is celebrated by Him. Don't settle for the cheap imitation of uncommitted sexual activity. God wants what is best for you.

# DAY THREE

## WHATEVER IS PURE

Some time ago, I had a conversation with a young man who told me he was a virgin. But as we continued talking, it became clear he had gone pretty far sexually with a girl, even though they had never had sexual intercourse.

Sadly, this young man had adopted the idea that virtually any sexual behavior was permissible outside of marriage except sexual intercourse. How had he gotten this idea? Clearly not from Scripture.

Genesis 4:1 says that “Adam knew his wife Eve.” In Hebrew, the word translated “knew” is *yada*. The word is an common expression for sexual intercourse in the Old Testament,<sup>4</sup> but it carries the idea of a deeper relational union involving the mind, soul, and body.<sup>5</sup> The Jewish understanding is that sex is a holistic activity in which the body cannot be separated from the mind.

### READ ROMANS 6:13 (NIV).

*Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.*

What activities reflect a life that has been brought from death to life?

According to Romans 6:13, how should Christians use their bodies? In everyday life, what does this look like?

### READ PHILIPPIANS 4:8.

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

What are things you consider to be honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise?

How do you cultivate such thoughts in your mind?

Which of these things do you find most difficult to think about? Why?

These verses teach us that God wants us to be pure in \_\_\_\_\_, soul, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Do you believe it's possible to be thinking about “whatever is pure” or “whatever is lovely” while engaging in any kind of sexual behavior? If we are honest with ourselves, I think we know the answer is no.

God wants each of us to be pure in body, soul, and mind. He is not interested in us doing whatever we want sexually short of having sexual intercourse, but in us loving Him and other people with all that we are.