



SERIES AT A GLANCE

TEACHING THEME

Moral Boundaries

Think of moral boundaries like a fence: on one side is all the good, moral behaviors we can freely act on and outside the fence are the immoral behaviors. Jesus doesn't want us to just see a list of yes and no's, but the Bible does give us moral boundary guidelines because God knows that boundaries protect us. God sees a bigger picture for our lives full of hope, joy, peace, freedom, etc. Learning how to protect our bodies and emotions, to honor God's plan for sex and morality, and respect ourselves and others - it's not about restrictions, it's actually about living more in God's freedom.

SERIES OVERVIEW

Guys and girls can be vastly different. They do say that opposites attract. But how can we honor each other and God in our dating relationships? We are going to dive into some advice the Bible has for us on how to pursue true love, respect each other, and not rush but look for God's leading.

HIGH SCHOOL HACK

Your high school students probably already feel a social pressure to date. Every week, let your students know: This series isn't an encouragement to date, it's an encouragement for students to use godly wisdom when they date. Some students in your group may not be dating yet, and that is ok! In fact, Paul says it's better to stay single (1 Corinthians 7:10) and our last week we are going to talk about not rushing - so if your students aren't dating or don't feel ready yet - GREAT! This lesson is still good wisdom and discussion for them because chances are one day they will start dating and when they do they'll be able to start on a great foundation of Biblical wisdom!

WEEK BY WEEK

WEEK 1: WEEK OF MARCH 7, 2021*

- MAIN POINTS:
 - 1. Know what you're pursuing and
 - 2. Don't make excuses or settle for less.
- MAIN SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 31:10-31
- JESUS CONNECTION: God wrote the greatest love story ever told because of how much He loves you!

WEEK 2: WEEK OF MARCH 14

- MAIN POINTS:
 - 1. Guys and girls may be different, but we can still seek to understand and respect one another.
 - 2. Respect God with your body.
- MAIN SCRIPTURES: 1 Peter 2:15-17 & 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5
- JESUS CONNECTION: We all were born slaves to sin but God sent Jesus to die on the cross to rescue us from our sins and death.

WEEK 3: WEEK OF MARCH 21 WHAT ABOUT SAME-SEX SEXUALITY?

- MAIN POINT: As Christians we are called to balance living in God's grace and truth.
- MAIN SCRIPTURES: Zacchaeus story overview, Romans 2:4, Matthew 19:4-5, Romans 1:26-30
- JESUS CONNECTION: We have all sinned and all need forgiveness that only Jesus can give to us.
- TEACHING POINTS (GRACE):
 - 1. Zacchaeus example: Zacchaeus was a tax-collector in an anti-tax collector culture. Zacchaeus encountered God's kindness in Jesus before he began following Jesus.
 - 2. What is Sin? Attractions and temptations are not sin, but acting on lust or engaging in sexual behavior outside of God's design of marriage is sin.
- TEACHING POINTS (TRUTH):
 - 1. Jesus and the Bible define marriage as a union between a man and a woman.
 - 2. The Bible defines same-sex relationships as sin.
 - 3. God loves all people but hates all sin. That's why we all need Jesus. We have all sinned and all need forgiveness that only Jesus can give to us.

WEEK 4: WEEK OF MARCH 28

- MAIN POINTS:
 - 1. Be willing to slow down and look for God's leading.
 - 2. Honor God with your dating life.
- MAIN SCRIPTURES: Song of Solomon 2:7 & Hebrews 12:1-2
- JESUS CONNECTION: It was Jesus' joy to suffer on the cross
 because He loves you and wants a relationship with you.

*HSM Campus Pastors have the option to choose between their groups going through this week's curriculum OR having a Party Break week to hang out, have fun, and emphasize student inviting friends. Talk to your HSM Campus Pastor to discuss the best choice for your group.

7 Tips FOR TALKING ABOUT SEXUALITY WITH YOUR CHILDREN



Questions about sex, sexuality and gender have become some of the most pressing ethical questions facing the home today, and your children especially are swimming in the deep end of these topics. Your leadership and facilitation as a parent are incredibly important.

Discipling your kids in this topic is not easy. It's uncomfortable. It's nerve-wracking. And the world your kids are growing up in is drastically different from the world you grew up in. They're being faced with questions and ideas and relationships that didn't seem to exist 20 or 30 years ago.

Some of the greatest challenges for a parent are the conversations surrounding sexuality and gender. But you must understand one TRUTH, it's probably the one thing you need to hear more than any other-YOUR VOICE MATTERS! And it needs to be included in this dialogue.

These are crucial questions directly related to your children's spiritual growth and they are being bombarded with alternative and destructive views on these topics every single day. Plus, the church rarely has good, honest, gospel-centered discussions about these topics. Especially if you include topics like porn, masturbation, same-sex attraction, or transgender identities. It's no longer just a conversation about not having sex before marriage.

Unfortunately, your kids are getting a sex education from somewhere whether we want them to or not. So, rather than pretending like we can (or even should) shelter them, we should educate them in God's design for sex in a healthy and God-honoring way.



So, what could a talk on sexuality look like in your home? Here are seven tips on how to begin engaging these conversations with your children.



1

Your children need to know God loves them.

God's love for us is foundational. All obedience, all of our sexual integrity, is a response to God's prior love for us. And we need to drive this home for our children. If all they do is "remain virgins until their married," then we've failed. I mean, that's a good thing, but we're not saved by sexual purity, but by the purifying work of Christ. He is our foundation. Knowing God loves them is paramount to the entirety of this conversation.

This is also why we advocate for using the term **sexual integrity rather than sexuality purity**. The term sexual purity has a lot of baggage associated with it. For too long this term has been associated

more with behavior modification or sin management, than the transformational work of Christ in our lives. Unfortunately, this has reduced "Christian sex" to simply choosing to wait for sex until marriage...to remain a virgin.

But we must understand, sex is not just physical. It is emotional, social, and spiritual. **Sexual integrity** is about having a holistic view of sex. It requires more than just self-willed behavior. It requires turning to the Lord with all our hearts and being empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey. Sexual Integrity is about saying "YES!" to living a faithful, flourishing life as a sexual being according to how God has designed you.





Embrace the awkwardness.

As a parent, who chooses to engage in these conversations, you will need to become comfortable in the awkward tension. Sometimes anxiety can get in the way of having some of the most important dialogue with your kids. But don't let it stop you!

Many adults will feel uncomfortable talking about the topics of sex, sexuality, and gender due to the sensitive nature of each discussion. Maybe it is because you didn't have a chance to discuss these topics when you were younger. Maybe it is because you've always thought this conversation should remain private. Or maybe you have not dealt with shame from your own sexual

brokenness. This is something all of us at some point need to face. Whatever the reason, you have a responsibility to help your children engage this conversation.

One thing that might also help: if possible, practice having these conversations with your spouse or other trusted adults before ever having them with your children. Also, as you prepare for these conversations, become a trustworthy guide for your kids. Listen to what they say about the culture. Specifically, pay attention to the conversations they might have with friends surrounding these topics. By doing so, you'll be able to better help your children navigate their own experiences.



3

No topic is off limits.

Don't shy away from the difficult subjects. It is incredibly important to create spaces that are safe for your kid to discuss anything. And this is not just something you say – it has to be modeled day in and day out. Your posture will be just as important as what you communicate. Sometimes HOW we believe is just as influential for your kids as WHAT we believe.

Also, your kids will know if you're giving them cliched answers to complex questions. answers. If you're going to be available for any conversation then make sure you are honest and respectful. And if you don't know the answer one of the best things you can say is, "I don't know but let's find out together!" This creates a communal spirit and shows you are willing to walk alongside your child in their search for answers. Humility and an openness to learn builds credibility with this generation.

Please understand, your kids are going to want answers to more than just how far they can go sexually with a boyfriend or girlfriend. As you probably already know youth are struggling with a variety of issues surrounding sex, sexuality, and gender. They may have questions about sex: how far is too far, or what exacttly is considered sex? They might also have questions about their sexual orientation or their gender identity. Being available and willing to engage in each of these conversations will be important.

And let's not forget – the Church hasn't always done well in the conversations surrounding LGBTQ identities. Please remember, most youth probably have LGBTQ friends and have been unimpressed with how the church has treated LGBTQ people. Or they might be struggling with their own sexuality. Parents who don't address LGBTQ related questions will come off as tone-deaf to the conversation. And if our children see their parents as tone deaf, your theological position will lose credibility. This is why it will be important to begin sexuality talks with a posture of humility and repentance; you will want to first humanize the conversation before getting into Scripture.



4

One conversation is not enough!

Helping your children align their sexual lives with the creator's plan is one of the greatest opportunities you have as a parent.

And the good news is that it doesn't need to happen in ONE talk. It can (and should) happen over many years and many different talks.

These are not conversations that you need to force. Allow your children to control the pace and rhythm with which they move the dialogue. One child might ask you about sex at 8 while the other doesn't ask anything until 9. As you become the expert of your children you will learn how to move the conversation forward.

But this doesn't happen in just one - 100 minute talk. Rather it happens over 100-one minute talks. This gives them time to digest the information. It also gives you time to prepare for each and every conversation that lies ahead.

And don't be surprised if your children know more than you or at least sounds like they do by using new terms or talking about identities you've never heard of. Generation Z, your kids, will not have a lack of resources when it comes to this subject. That is why you must be the first and last place they seek information. Become Google to your children when it comes to the topics of sex, sexuality, and gender. This means becoming a student long before your children ever do by studying recent trends and what other youth are asking long before your kids ever ask you.

Unfortunately, parents incorrectly assume they are giving enough information to their teens. In one study, 90 percent of parents reported having had a conversation about sex with their teen. However, nearly 4 in 10 teens say they have never discussed sex or sexuality with their parents.

Don't let this be you. Start the conversation if you haven't already and keep it alive all throughout their life.



Cultivate a passion for both TRUTH and GRACE.

We need to have a love for what scripture says about sex, sexuality, and gender. This means having a desire to seek TRUTH and understand God's divine plan for sex. Recognizing that God is the creator and author of all. It also means extending GRACE in everything that we do and say.

Most youth will get the grace part of this conversation. Many of them extend 'grace' to friends who are habitually looking at porn or are having sex. It's also common for youth to only emphasize grace when discussing LGBTQ related questions. The unfortunate reality is often these conversations are one-sided. Emphasizing grace but with no truth. Or, all truth with no grace. But your children need to hear both!

Your children need to understand what the Bible says about sex, sexuality, and gender. This means you need to study Scripture. Learn to love what it reveals. You need to be a student of Scripture so you can share its truths with your children.

But as you learn the Bible's truths you will also learn of the grace, the incredible grace given and received throughout the gospel. Youth need to know they can love their friend caught in sexual sin - or themselves - as God's precious children. By being commited to following what the Bible says about grace and forgiveness they also learn his wonderful and divine plan for sex.





We need to discuss shame and forgiveness.

So many youth are hooked on porn, habitually masturbating, or having sex outside of marriage. These experiences along with several others can produce shame in the lives of Christians. This shame can then prevent them from truly engaging in conversations about sex, sexuality, and gender in healthy ways.

Communicating God's forgiveness and also teaching your children to forgive themselves will be important, except in instances of abuse where a victim can treat themselves with contempt because they wrongly believe the abuse was their fault. For those who have been sexually abused, taking a step toward freedom from shame won't occur unless someone walks with them in their pain and confusion.

This means you must listen, listen, listen. This may be the first time they've ever shared this story. It is incredibly vulnerable so honor that moment with your time and patience. Be sure to also communicate that this was not their fault. Often someone who has been abused can think they are responsible for the choice that was stolen from them. That is simply not true!

Helping your children feel comfortable and "not alone" in their shame will be important. Once they expose their shame to the light, they can start to find healing through community and ultimately through Jesus Christ. Oftentimes we see that shame drives us into isolation, but healing comes through a group of committed friends and mentors who draw us out and love on us as Jesus would. And there is no one more important in this process than YOU as a parent!



Talk about singleness as much or more as you talk about marriage.

Sometimes our focus on marriage can make an idol out of it. As parents, we need to promote a biblical understanding of marriage. And the Bible does not promise that everyone will or should get married. So when you say things like, "WHEN you get married..." we're not promoting a biblical view of marriage. Marriage is a good and beautiful vocation that some (perhaps many) are called to. And so is singleness.

Instead of saying "when you get married..." we should follow the biblical view of marriage by saying "if God calls you to marriage..." When we assume everyone should or will get married, we unintentionally devalue singleness.

Please understand, your kids are going to wait longer, most likely, than any other generation to get married (if they do get married). This means they will live a much longer life being single than past generations. The average age of marriage in the 1950's was 21. Today the average age is 29. For some of your children that is a WHOLE other lifetime. So you need to promote the truth that singleness is not just a stage to get through, but as a gift and calling to take advantage of even if it is only for a season.

To be blunt, if you or your church communicates that marriage is the end-goal of life, or that singleness is a miserable existence, then the biblical point of marriage will be lost. If you're married, be honest about the tough parts of your marriage. If you only talk about the good parts of your marriage, your children will not have a realistic picture of marriage. And, if you're single, then help them see the blessings of singleness. Don't pass over the hard stuff either. All stages of life come with difficulties and your children need to know this!







HIGH SCHOOL PARENT PACKET

Hey HSM Parents! We've got a series coming up where you will have a lot of opportunity to speak truth in students' lives to help them navigate a particularly difficult area – relationships and sex. We want to partner with you well by empowering you with all our material in advance and encourage you to have conversations with students at home.

WHAT THIS SERIES IS NOT:

- It's not an encouragement to date.
- It's not a sex education class.

WHAT THIS SERIES IS:

- **An opportunity to open communication channels** and encourage students to seek Godly wisdom and advice in an area they may not feel comfortable to bring up on their own.
- **An opportunity for students to build some Biblical foundations** in a pivotal area of life that can have huge impact on their future.
- An opportunity to for the church to partner with YOU, the parent, by not only sharing what we are talking about with them in advance, but consistently encouraging our students to have conversations with you on this topic at home.

IS IT TOO EARLY TO HAVE THESE CONVERSATIONS?

- Crushes, new feelings, attractions, urges and even pressures to date are becoming more and more of our students' worlds as they grow up. We want to have age-appropriate conversations that prepare students.
- We intentionally have it built into the first message for the speaker to say "sex" on stage because it's a word that carries a lot of weight, and we want to break the ice from stage that church is a safe place to talk about sex.
- Did you know the average age of exposure to porn is 8-11 years old? 80% of this happens within the home. Our goal is to equip students to know how to respond Biblically when sexual temptations arise.

HOW WILL WE HELP YOU PREPARE TO LEAD DISCUSSIONS AT HOME?

- We will be sharing our whole series resources with you further in advance so you can BEGIN PRAYING AND PREPARING NOW for leading your students through this. We suggest you sit down with your student in advance and go over these topics. It's important to remind your students you are a safe place for them to talk about anything.
- This packet includes extra resources to help you navigate different conversations your students may bring up during this lesson.

ACCOUNTABILITY SOFTWARE RESOURCES

- Ever Accountable: https://www.everaccountable.com/
- Accountable2you.app: https://www.accountable2you.com/features
- Covenant eyes (better for computer): http://www.covenanteyes.com/
- Net Nanny (gives deeper parental controls): https://www.netnanny.com
- Triple X Church (free but limited): https://x3watch.com/



HIM + HER
STUDY GUIDE
—— WEEK 1 ——



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Proverbs 31:10-31

MAIN POINTS:

- **1.** Know what you're pursuing.
- 2. Don't make excuses or settle for less.

JESUS CONNECTION:

God wrote the greatest love story every told because of how much He loves you!

@HopeHSM

1. READThe Bible

Yessss! We are glad you are here because taking time on your own to study God's word is an amazing way to grow in your relationship with Him. Life with Jesus is the best life! Take a moment to pray and ask God to lead you as you study this Scripture; then read the Scripture (from your Bible or it's on the back).

2. OBSERVE

The Straight Facts

Who:	
What:	
Where:	
Why:	
How:	
What is Repetitive?	
Highlight it	
What is Contrast?	
Underline it	

3. INTERPRET

What Does the Text Mean?

Research answers using trusted sources like a Study Bible, BibleProject.com, BlueLetterBible.org, and/or Bible.org

What is the historical and/or cultural context of this Scripture?

Scholars aren't 100% sure who wrote Proverbs 31, but many believe King Lemuel, named in verse 1, is actually King Solomon. What is clear is that it was written as godlyinspired advice for a prince looking for a wife. While you may not be close to thinking of who you want to marry, the principle stands that character traits listed in Proverbs 31 are great standards for us to set on those we date, as well as on the people we want to be!

What else do I know about the author, audience, or context of this passage?

What other Scripture might help me interpret this text?

What is this text's clearest meaning?

4. APPLY *Getting Personal*

How do you relate to any of the characters, events, or words in this Scripture?
What truth(s) from this Scripture can you apply to your life right now?
What is God saying to you through this Scripture?

MAIN SCRIPTURES Proverbs 31:10-31 NIV A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. ¹¹ Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. ¹² She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. ¹³ She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. ¹⁴ She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. ¹⁵ She gets up while it is still night; she provides food for her family and portions for her female servants. ¹⁶ She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. ¹⁷ She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. ¹⁸ She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. ¹⁹ In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. ²⁰ She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. ²¹ When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. ²² She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. ²³ Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. ²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. ²⁵ She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. ²⁶ She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. ²⁷ She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. ²⁸ Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

²⁹ "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."

gate."

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.
 Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city

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HIM + HER TEACHING GUIDE WEEK 1



MAIN SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 31:10-31

MAIN POINTS:

- **1.** Know what you're pursuing.
- Don't make excuses or settle for less.

JESUS CONNECTION:

God wrote the greatest love story every told because of how much He loves you!

THE WHAT

WHAT are we talking about and WHY does it matter to me? (2-3 min)

ME

- Share an unrealistic picture of dating or love you've seen in a movie, book, social media, etc.
- Share an example of how this "perfect picture" has let you down (bonus points if it's funny)

WE

- The classic picture is painted: Boy meets girl. Girl meets boy. They
 think each other are cute...begin to discover they have things in
 common...and live happily ever after.
- From movies to social media, it's easy to get caught up in the idealistic viewpoint of what dating and romance should be like from our culture.
- We've probably all been there: let down by an unrealistic picture painted in the media.

TRANSITION

- What reasons or standards do you have when it comes to dating?
- Do you choose someone because you think they are hot, rich, popular, funny, smart? Culture says those are the most important things.
- God has some better standards written down for us we are going to explore tonight.
- Don't get me wrong, those other things aren't bad, but they also aren't enough – relationships based only on these things are superficial & they can't last on their own.

SO WHAT

So WHAT does this mean for my faith and life with God? (5-6 min)

GOD

PROVERBS 31

- Proverbs 31 shows us a different perspective as it lays out five traits to look for when pursuing someone. It's a long passage so I'm going to jump around a little giving an overview – then we will read & highlight the Scriptures together during our discussion time.
- Important side note: This series isn't an encouragement or pressure to date. In fact, Paul says it's better to stay single (1 Corinthians 7:10) so if you aren't dating yet GREAT! This lesson is still good for you because chances are one day you will start dating and when you do you'll be able to start on a great foundation of Biblical wisdom!

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SO WHAT CONTINUED

GOD CONTINUED

KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PURSUING: TRAIT 1

- **Verse 11 states,** "The heart of her husband trusts in her." You see in this picture, the husband is never worried about trusting his wife.
- So the first trait is: Can I trust this person?
- As you are getting to know someone, consider if the person is honest and trustworthy. Do they have a track record of following through on their word? Do they break or keep their promises more?

TRAIT 2

- Verse 12 goes on to say, "She does him good and not harm, all the
 days of her life." She does him good. And in verse 23 it also talks about
 how her work benefits his reputation and success and because of her,
 he is a better man.
- Which brings me to trait 2: Does this person make you stronger?
- Is this person constantly leading you into sin, or encouraging you in your growing in your faith? Look for a person who is going to encourage you to grow, to become a better person. A couple should be stronger together than they would be apart.

TRAIT 3

- Verses 13-16 go on to list different things that may seem strange to us, talking about wool and flax and ships...but the point is it is listing different ways this girl is hard-working and responsible.
- So ask yourself when pursuing someone: Is this person responsible?
- Do they set goals and go for them? Are they responsible? Or are they lazy and blow off responsibilities? If they have younger siblings, do they help look out for them? How do they treat them? This could actually show you insight into our next trait too.

TRAIT 4

- Verse 20 shows that the wife helps the poor and needy, so ask yourself:
- Is this person generous and kind?
- Look for someone who helps others, even when it doesn't benefit them. Someone who is kind and giving. Someone who is generous.
- Look at how they treat other people. How they treat you matters and how they treat others matter. How do they talk about other people?

TRAIT 5

- Verse 30 goes on to say, "Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised."
- Our last trait is probably the most important: Does this person trust in and follow Jesus?
- Don't compromise on this point. This question gets at the heart of everything – because the closer we grow in our relationship with Jesus, the more we grow at these other traits.
- Think about it this way: if Jesus is the most important thing in your life

 don't you want to be able to the most important part of your life with someone so important?

DON'T MAKE EXCUSES OR SETTLE FOR ANYTHING LESS.

- This may be the most important thing I say this whole time: DON'T SETTLE FOR ANYTHING LESS.
- Why? Sometimes we are looking for others to complete us or make us a whole, we date to make ourselves feel better or to have a good time, or because we are looking for love or acceptance we make excuses and compromises but I want you to know a few things:
- YOU ARE ENOUGH. You don't need to date someone to make you whole, they can't really do that anyway.
- YOU ARE LOVED. God wrote the greatest love story ever told because of how much HE LOVES YOU!

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NOTES JESUS CONNECTION God created you to be in relationship with Him, but sin broke that relationship before we were ever born. God sent Jesus to die on the cross to rescue us from our sin and death; Jesus loves you so incredibly much. **TRANSITION** Through this study I hope we will gain a greater perspective on dating that will help you truly live your best life – because Jesus has your true best life in mind for you. **NOW WHAT** NOW that I know, HOW can I live this out? (2-3 min) YOU And an extra side note – if we are looking for someone with these traits, we should also be someone with these traits. In other words, be someone the someone you are looking for is looking for. Do these traits describe you? Do these traits describe the people you date or have crushes on? Are you settling for less? WE Ask we talk about this, remember none of us are perfect. But I hope you will be real, engage in conversation, ask questions and be honest with yourself and the people in your group. Let's be a safe place for people to talk and share, be real, and not worry about someone gossiping about them afterwards: in other words what is said in small group, stays in small group. **PRAY** • Close your time together in prayer.





MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Proverbs 31:10-31

MAIN POINT:

 Know what you're pursuing.
 Don't make excuses or settle for less.

JESUS CONNECTION:

God wrote the greatest love story every told because of how much He loves you!

LEADER CORNER

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

For students to start, or grow, in using godly wisdom in who they pursue in dating relationships.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Let your students know: This series isn't an encouragement to date, it's an encouragement for students to use godly wisdom when they date. Some students in your group may not be dating yet, and that is ok! In fact, Paul says it's better to stay single (1 Corinthians 7:10) and our last week we are going to talk about not rushing – so if you aren't dating or don't feel ready yet -GREAT! This lesson is still good wisdom and discussion for you because chances are one day you will start dating and when you do - you'll be able to start on a great foundation of Biblical wisdom!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

GET THEM TALKING

- 1. How would you describe how the ways dating and relationships are portrayed in our culture (movies, social media, etc.)?
- 2. Do you think these portrayals are good, bad, or a mixture? Explain your thoughts.

ACTIVITY

Today we are going to write in our Bibles! It's ok, lighting won't strike you (probably)! If you don't want to write in your Bible then you can pull up a Bible app. As each verse is read, highlight it and write the matching standard to the side (or on your phone make a note on your app — or leaders you can share the Study Guide for this week with your students to make notes on). TIP: Crayons and colored pencils make good Bible highlighters because they don't bleed through the pages as much as regular highlighters. You can use multiple colors to match your traits & highlights.

TRAIT 1: READ verse 11; WRITE "Can I trust this person?"

TRAIT 2: READ verses 12 & 23; WRITE "Does this person make me stronger?"

TRAIT 3: READ verses 13-16; WRITE "Is this person responsible?"

TRAIT 4: READ verse 20; WRITE "Is this person generous and kind?"

TRAIT 5: READ verse 30; WRITE "Does this person trust and follow Jesus?"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Any other character traits of this woman stand out to you?
- 2. What are typical traits people look for in those they date?
- 3. Why would these character traits be good to look for in someone you date?
- 4. Look back at verse 30. Our culture says physical appearance is a top trait to look for, but this verse mentions something else is much more important. Why do you think this trait is such an important quality (or if you disagree, why)?

NEXT STEPS

- 1. What are some top character traits you will set as a personal standard for the people you date?
- 2. Which of these Proverbs 31 character traits can you strive to grow in right now?

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

MAIN SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 31:10-31 NIV

"A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.

¹¹ Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.

¹² She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.

¹³ She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands.

¹⁴ She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar.

¹⁵ She gets up while it is still night; she provides food for her family and portions for her female servants.

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16 She considers a field and buys it;

out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. ¹⁷ She sets about her work vigorously;

her arms are strong for her tasks.

¹⁸ She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.

¹⁹ In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.

²⁰ She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

²¹ When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet.

²² She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple.

²³ Her husband is respected at the city gate,

where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.

²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes.

²⁵ She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.

²⁶ She speaks with wisdom,

and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

²⁷ She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

²⁸ Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

²⁹ "Many women do noble things,

but you surpass them all."

³⁰ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

³¹ Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

BONUS LEADER RESOURCE

GAME IDEA: 5 SECOND RULE

IN PERSON INSTRUCTIONS: ITEM NEEDED: Whip cream, 4 tins, timer with buzzer, 4 towels

HOW TO PLAY: Have 5 student volunteers come up front. They will each have 5 seconds to list 3 things related to a topic you say. If they don't, they will get pied in the face! If a student says something that is debatably related, have your other students vote as to whether it counts or not. These could be run by 1-3 volunteers: 1 to be the host, hype things up, and give the topics. 1 to watch the time and hand out towels. 1 to pie them in the face.

POSSIBLE TOPICS:

- Words that rhyme with red
- Prom
- Tik tok
- Disney
- Couples
- Salad Dressings
- Ocean Animals
- Romantic Movies
- Extreme Sports
- Annoying things cats do
- Getting ready for a date
- Things you find in a coffee shop
- Name one of your small group leaders
- Among Us
- Valentine's Day
- Video Games

VIRTUAL ADAPTATION

Obviously you can't pie your students in the face over a screen. You could play without the punishments OR you could make them do a punishment on screen that needs no or easy to find supplies.

ON SCREEN PUNISHMENT EXAMPLES:

- Go outside and bark.
- Pour water on your head.
- Pat your head until we tell you to stop.
- Hide under a table or bed the rest of the game.
- Go outside and run around your whole house.
- Eat a spoonful of ketchup.



HIM + HER
STUDY GUIDE
—— WEEK 2 ——



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

1 Peter 2:15-17 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5

MAIN POINTS:

- **1.** Guys and girls may be different, but we can still seek to understand and respect one another.
 - **2.** Respect God with your body.

JESUS CONNECTION:

We all were born slaves to sin but God sent Jesus to die on the cross to rescue us from our sins and death.

@HopeHSM

1. READThe Bible

Yessss! We are glad you are here because taking time on your own to study God's word is an amazing way to grow in your relationship with Him. Life with Jesus is the best life! Take a moment to pray and ask God to lead you as you study this Scripture; then read the Scripture (from your Bible or it's on the back).

2. OBSERVE

The Straight Facts

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3. INTERPRETWhat Does the Text Mean?

Research answers using trusted sources like a Study Bible, BibleProject.com, BlueLetterBible.org, and/or Bible.org

What is the historical and/or cultural context of this Scripture?

Both 1 Peter and 1 Thessalonians were letters written by early church leaders (Peter and Paul, respectively) to early churches to give them encouragement and instruction on how to grow closer to Jesus and live Christian lives. Though our culture is different from the early churches, many issues we face like greed, oversexualization, selfishness, etc. are the same struggles that flood our culture.

What else do I know about the author, audience, or context of this passage?

What other Scripture might help me interpret this text?

What is this text's clearest meaning?

4. APPLY *Getting Personal*

How do you relate to any of the characters, events, or words in this Scripture?

What truth(s) from this Scripture can you apply to your life right now?

What is God saying to you through this Scripture?

MAIN SCRIPTURES

1 Peter 2:15-17 NIV

"15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. 16 Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. ¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor."

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 NIV
"3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God."

NOTES

DOODLES



HIM + HER TEACHING GUIDE WEEK 2



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

1 Peter 2:15-17 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5

MAIN POINTS:

1. Guys and girls may be different, but we can still seek to understand and respect one another.

2. Respect God with your body.

JESUS CONNECTION:

We all were born slaves to sin but God sent Jesus to die on the cross to rescue us from our sins and death.

THE WHAT

WHAT are we talking about and WHY does it matter to me? (2-3 min)

ME

- Guys and girls are different.
- Share a personal story of a stereotypical misunderstanding between you and someone of the opposite gender (bonus points if your story has humor) OR Ask your audience to share different stereotypical differences between guys and girls & be ready to share some of your own. (For example: Guys are more physically wired; Girls are more emotionally driven. Guys fight with their fist, girls fight with their words. Girls speak a secret language guys can't understand. Girls overthink and guys underthink.)
- Guys and girls are different, and that can make understanding each other difficult. It can make dating complicated. We don't act, think, or react like each other. Which is why sometimes the world of dating can be a minefield.

WE

- Even though stereotypes aren't always right, we've all experienced a time where we saw or felt a difference between guys and girls.
- Did you know there actually are differences in the way guys and girls brains are structured and how they process information? Woman have bigger memory centers and more white matter, which connects the different parts of their brains more. Guys have more informationcontaining grey matter.
- You may have heard guys brains are like waffles, and they have a box for everything. Girls brains are like spaghetti, and everything is connected.
- The point is: we are different. Sometimes these differences can lead us to misunderstand each other, feeling frustrated or disrespected.

TRANSITION

- Even though we are different, we can still seek to understand and respect one another.
- Today we are going to look at 2 different Bible verses and how they center around this idea of guys, girls, dating, and RESPECT – how we can respect each other and God.
- Important side note reminder: This series isn't an encouragement or pressure to date. If you aren't dating, this lesson is still good for you because (1) we can seek to understand and respect each other outside of dating and (2) if you start dating in the future, you will have a great foundation of Biblical wisdom!

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SO WHAT

So WHAT does this mean for my faith and life with God? (5-6 min)

GOD

1 PETER 2:15-17

- Let me start by giving a little Biblical background knowledge to this first verse because it talks about something you may find a little strange: it says we are God's slaves.
- You see the Bible says everyone on the planet is essentially a slave, and we have a choice between being slaves between 1 of 2 things:
 - 1. Sin or evil (or sometimes it's called our flesh)
 - 2. God or righteousness (or sometimes it's called the spirit)
- Romans 6 lays out a good picture of this, and shares how anyone who
 has not accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior is a slave to sin/evil,
 but anyone who has accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior is a slave
 of God/righteousness.
- Peter is writing to Christians in the early church on how they can live their lives for God and he is giving them some instructions:
- READ 1 PETER 2:15-17. A couple things here:
 - FIRST, WE ARE FREE. Those who believe in Jesus are set free. Ever done something and said you'll ask for forgiveness after? Some people approach their life with God this way, because they know God will forgive them. Which is the second point and JESUS CONNECTION:
 - 2. SECOND, WE ARE FORGIVEN. No matter who you are you were born a slave to sin but God sent Jesus to die on the cross to rescue us from our sin and death; When we believe in Jesus our sins are forgiven forever and unconditionally buried with Jesus and they don't count against us anymore. That kind of forgiveness brings freedom. Forgiveness frees us from the weight of guilt and sin. We can mess up we are free to sin and God will forgive us not because we earn it, but because His forgiveness is unending.
 - 3. THIRD, WE HAVE A CHOICE. Not only do we have a choice to follow Jesus or not as our Savior we have hundreds of choices a day as to whether we will walk in God's ways or sins ways. That battle rages all the time we have a choice. And here Peter is encouraging us not to use our freedom as an excuse to sin or do evil.
 - 4. Lastly, there is a lot of good stuff in this small section of the Bible, but I want us to focus in on two words: RESPECT EVERYONE. Not respect those who look or act like you, who are popular, those who are older are in charge: respect everyone. Those who are different from you, those no one else respects, even people younger than you, and yes those who are different a different gender from you.

RESPECTING EACH OTHER WOULD SOLVE A LOT OF PROBLEMS.

- If we truly respected each other, no one would want to use another person for their own pleasure or gain.
- If we truly respected each other, guys would see every girl who walked by, posted a pic, or was in a video as someone to respect and honor – a sister in Christ.
- If girls respected guys, we wouldn't bad mouth them. We wouldn't say that "all guys are liars or out for one thing" because not ALL guys are like that – but ALL guys should be shown respect.
- And not only should we be respecting each other, we should be respecting ourselves.
- We've talked about our differences, but I want to land on something we have in common: God created each and every one of you and He designed you with the capability to share love on an extremely intimate level. This leads into our next Bible verse.

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READ 1 THESSALONIANS 4:3-5. A couple things here: **NOTES** 1. GOD DESIGNED BOUNDARIES AROUND SEX. If you are wondering, God's design for sexual intimacy is between a man and woman in marriage. Sexual immorality is anything sexually outside of those boundaries. And it can even include things like lust and pornography. Genesis 2:24 "That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh." 2. GOD ISN'T AGAINST SEX, HE IS FOR IT. In fact, He tells Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply which means...have lots of sex. (Genesis 1:27-28) It's when we take sex and sexual intimacy outside of God's design that it gets us in trouble. It can lead to a lot of pain. 3. RESPECTING GOD WITH YOUR BODY ISN'T FOR GOD'S GOOD, IT'S FOR YOURS. Whether you follow God's boundaries for sex or cross the line, it isn't going to hurt God – it's going to hurt you. Maybe not at first, every temptation has a "hook" that seems to lure us in saying it has something good for us, but then later we are stuck with damaging consequences. Sexual boundaries aren't about restrictions, they can actually bring MORE freedom in our lives by saving us from some of the damage of crossing lines we shouldn't. **TRANSITION** If you have crossed the line already, it's not too late for you to jump on the right side of the fence. Remember, every time you confess your sin God is faithful to forgive you (1 John 1:9) and show you a way out of it (1 Corinthians 10:13). **NOW WHAT** NOW that I know, HOW can I live this out? (2-3 min) YOU Your parents may have set boundaries around your dating or use of technology and you know what – that is great! I know it doesn't feel great, but they are doing it to protect you. God has set boundaries for us on sexual purity because He wants to protect us. He wants what is best for us. That's all great – but none of that matters if you don't decide you want to follow those boundaries. The choice is yours. Have you already set your own boundaries around who you want to date and physical limits to showing love and intimacy? Have you already set your own boundaries around your use of technology or anything that leads you into sexual impurity? If not, are you willing to? I hope you can see the big picture, see how it benefits you, others, and your relationship with God, and that you chose to live lives that respect God and respect others.

WE

- Let's be a safe place for people to talk and share, be real, and not worry about someone gossiping about them afterwards: in other words what is said in small group, stays in small group.
- Let's talk together about these questions:
 - How do we respect each other when it comes to guys and girls?
 - And how do we respect God when it comes to our physical boundaries?

PRAY

Close your time together in prayer.



HIM + HER DISCUSSION GUIDE — WEEK 2 —



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

1 Peter 2:15-17 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5

MAIN POINTS:

- 1. Guys and girls may be different, but we can still seek to understand God sent Jesus to die on the cross and respect one another.
 - **2.** Respect God with your body.

JESUS CONNECTION:

We all were born slaves to sin but to rescue us from our sins and death.

LEADER CORNER

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

For students to start, or grow, in using godly wisdom in who they pursue in dating relationships.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Let your students know: This series isn't an encouragement to date, it's an encouragement for students to use godly wisdom when they date. Some students in your group may not be dating yet, and that is ok! In fact, Paul says it's better to stay single (1 Corinthians 7:10) and our last week we are going to talk about not rushing – so if you aren't dating or don't feel ready yet -GREAT! This lesson is still good wisdom and discussion for you because chances are one day you will start dating and when you do - you'll be able to start on a great foundation of Biblical wisdom!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

GET THEM TALKING

- 1. What are some differences, in general, that you've noticed between guys and girls?
- 2. What are common ways you think guys and girls commonly misunderstand or manipulate each other?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

READ 1 Peter 2:15-17 and discuss the following questions:

- 1. God calls us to live in honor and respect for one another. What are ways guys can respect girls?
- What are ways girls can respect guys?
- 3. What are ways we can respect people we are dating?
- 4. What are things that can make it hard to show respect to each other?
- 5. How can we overcome these roadblocks?

READ 1 THESSALONIANS 4:3-5 and discuss the following questions:

- 1. What things is this Scripture calling us to stay away from?
- 2. What things is it calling us to move towards?
- 3. Have you ever thought about setting boundaries around dating or other things that can lead you to give into temptation? If so, can you share some of those boundaries with us?
- 4. How can we respect God when it comes to our physical bodies?
- 5. What are some temptations that pop up in high school that can make it hard to live out respecting God with our bodies?
- 6. How can we overcome these roadblocks?
- 7. If someone were to admit they were struggling with sexual sin in our small group, do you think they'd feel loved or judged by us?
- How can we be a small group that encourages each other to grow in our faith without shunning people when they sin?

We've talked about two types of respect today. Respecting those of the opposite gender and respecting God with our bodies. Be honest with yourself, which of these do you think is your biggest struggle right now? What is something you can do this week to show respect in that area?

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

MAIN SCRIPTURES

1 Peter 2:15-17 NIV

"15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. 16 Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. 17 Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor."

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 NIV

"³ It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵ not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God."

BONUS LEADER RESOURCE

We all need accountability. Your students may reach out to ask you to help keep them accountable on different aspects of their faith – this is awesome! That means they want to grow in their faith. On top of supporting your students, here are some steps you can encourage them to take:

5 Steps to Hold Yourself Accountable

- Be Honest with yourself and God. We all have sinned, God knows this (Hebrews 4:13). We are honest and ask God for His forgiveness, God is always faithful to give it to us. And don't you just feel freer, lighter, happier when you are forgiven and not weighed down by secret sins?
- 2. Commit to God's ways. John 14:15 says, "If you love me, keep my commands." But I want to tell you something this is a choice YOU are going to have to make and keep making. Your parents can't do it for you, even if they drive you to church or make you login online.
- 3. Invite others to keep you accountable. This may be the scariest step because who wants to share about their secrets and sins with others and you took it! James 5:16 says, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." Are there other mature believers you can ask to be on your team? Not everyone is going to understand the choices and changes you are making, get some people on your team who you can support you.
- 4. Make a Plan. Set goals and boundaries to overcome temptation in place. Have a plan for how you will leave tempting situations maybe even look into accountability software or asking others, like your parents, to help you keep certain boundaries.
- 5. Rinse and Repeat. We will all mess up and sin again, but remember God is a loving, forgiving Father cheering you on every step you take towards following Him.



HIM + HER
STUDY GUIDE
—— WEEK 3 ——



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Romans 1:18-2:4 SECONDARY: Matthew 19:4-5

MAIN POINTS:

As Christians we are called to balance living in God's grace and truth.

JESUS CONNECTION:

We have all sinned and all need forgiveness that only Jesus can give to us.

@HopeHSM

1. READThe Bible

Yessss! We are glad you are here because taking time on your own to study God's word is an amazing way to grow in your relationship with Him. Life with Jesus is the best life! Take a moment to pray and ask God to lead you as you study this Scripture; then read the Scripture (from your Bible or it's on the back).

2. OBSERVE

The Straight Facts

Who:	
What:	
Where:	
Why:	
How:	
What is Repetitive? Highlight it	
What is Contrast?	
Underline it	

3. INTERPRET

What Does the Text Mean?

Research answers using trusted sources like a Study Bible, BibleProject.com, BlueLetterBible.org, and/or Bible.org

What is the historical and/or cultural context of this Scripture?

Romans is a book in the New Testament written by Paul. It was originally written as a letter, without chapter divisions and today we are looking at a passage that spans over two chapters to get a full picture of the truth and grace contained in the Scripture. Paul states same-sex sexual lust and behavior are sins, but he isn't just singling out this sin and mentions many other sins. Paul follows this list of sins with a reminder to not judge each other but that it's God's kindness that leads us to repentance.

What else do I know about the author, audience, or context of this passage?

What other Scripture might help me interpret this text?

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What is this text's clearest meaning?

4. APPLY

Getting Personal

Scripture?	this
What truth(s) from this Scriptucan you apply to your life right now?	
What is God saying to you thro	ough

MAIN SCRIPTURES

Romans 1:18-2:4 NIV

"18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. ²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

2 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?"

Matthew 19:4-5 NIV

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?"

NOTES

DOODLES





MAIN SCRIPTURES:

TEACHING GUIDE
—— WEEK 3 ——

Romans 1:18-2:4

MAIN POINTS:

As Christians we are called to balance living in God's grace and truth.

JESUS CONNECTION:

We have all sinned and all need forgiveness that only Jesus can give to us.

VIDEO + LIVE TEACHING FORMAT

SERIES INTRO/RECAP

- We are in Week 3 of our Him + Her series where we've be talking about godly advice for dating relationships and sexual integrity.
- OPEN COMMUNICATION Yup I said it, SEX. We know it can feel awkward sometimes to talk about; we want to open those lines of communication up and let you know this is a safe place to talk about things like attraction, dating, and yes sex because we care about you and we believe that is important for you to live your best life.
- Last week we talked about how guys and girls may be different, but we can still seek to understand and respect one another. We also talked about how we can respect God with our body.
- Today's topic goes in a different direction that you may have been wondering: so if God designed sex to be between man and woman in a marriage, what about those who are attracted to the same sex?

TODAY'S TOPIC SAME-SEX SEXUALITY:

- We are going to watch a video clip where some people share their stories and we start learning what the Bible has to say, then we'll talk together about it.
- SHOW HSM SAME-SEX SEXUALITY VIDEO CLIP.

HSM VERSION OF VIDEO CLIP covers the following points:

- MAIN SCRIPTURES: Zacchaeus story overview, Romans 2:4, Matthew 19:4-5, Romans 1:26-30
- TEACHING POINTS (GRACE):
 - Zacchaeus example: Zacchaeus was a tax-collector in an antitax collector culture. Zacchaeus encountered God's kindness in Jesus before he began following Jesus.
 - What is Sin? Attractions and temptations are not sin, but acting on lust or engaging in sexual behavior outside of God's design of marriage is sin.

TEACHING POINTS (TRUTH):

- Jesus and the Bible define marriage is a union between a man and a woman.
- o The Bible defines same-sex relationships as sin.
- God loves all people but hates all sin. We all need Jesus. We have all sinned and all need forgiveness that only Jesus can give to us.

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CLOSING:

- That was a LOT and I'm sure we have a lot of thoughts going through our minds right now. First, I want to remind everyone this is a safe space for us to talk to each other. Some of us might feel differently than others or really be wrestling with what the Bible says about same-sex sexuality. Let's respect and honor each other as we talk in small groups.
- The Bible does say that same-sex sexuality is a sin, but it also says we are ALL sinners who need Jesus. I'm a sinner. You're a sinner. The person sitting next to you and leading your small group – we are all sinners that need Jesus.
- As Christians we are called to balance living in God's grace and truth. This means learning what the Bible has to say about both what is a sin and how we are all sinners who need grace. Let me pray for us and then let's head to small groups.

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MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Romans 1:18-2:4 SECONDARY: Matthew 19:4-5

MAIN POINT:

As Christians we are called to balance living in God's grace and truth.

JESUS CONNECTION:

We have all sinned and all need forgiveness that only Jesus can give to us.

LEADER CORNER

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To give students a safe environment to read and discuss different Scriptures about same-sex sexuality.

THINK ABOUT THIS

We are called to share God's truth in love. Just a reminder that we are not here to teach our opinion but God's word. It can be tempting to want to pick and choose which Bible verses we believe. If some of your students start sharing thoughts like, "I don't believe THAT scripture," remind them of these verses: "All Scripture is Godbreathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." – 2 Timothy 3:16-17

"Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you." – Deuteronomy 4:2

Also, go into your conversation with the mindset that one of your students might have this sin struggle. This will help you speak with compassion and grace as you discuss God's truth.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

GET THEM TALKING

What are different opinions you've heard about same-sex sexuality?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you think about what was shared in the video? **SHARE:** Today's passage is long, but it gives us a complete, balanced picture of both God's wrath at sin and His kindness towards the sinner.

READ ROMANS 1:18-2:4 and discuss:

- 1. What stands out to you from this passage?
- 2. What guestions do you have about it?
- 3. This verse is showing us that by God's definition same-sex lust and relations are sin. During the message, they shared that attraction and temptations aren't sin, but lust and sexual behaviors outside of God's design for marriage are sin. In your own words, what are the differences between attraction, temptations, lust, and behaviors?
- 4. How can we turn to God when we face temptations?
- 5. Does anyone know what repentance means? (Repentance is when you are genuinely sorry and want to change and move in a direction closer to God.)
- 6. This verse, just a few after the first one we read, says that God is rich in kindness. What are different ways we can we see God's kindness?
- 7. We all need Jesus. How can remembering that help us reflect God's kindness to others?

NEXT STEPS

Some of the people in the video shared how it was hard for them to talk about their experiences with others.

- 1) If a friend shares they have this struggle, how can you show them love and kindness?
- If you find yourself struggling with these feelings or thoughts, reach out to a parent or godly adult in your life to walk alongside you.

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

MAIN SCRIPTURES

Romans 1:18-2:4 NIV

"18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴ Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. ²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

2 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?"

Matthew 19:4-5 NIV

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?"

BONUS LEADER RESOURCE

Due to the nature of this topic, we want you to be extra prepared in spirit, heart, and mind. Please be sure to take extra time on your own before leading lessons to:

- Read over all the material in leader packet,
- Attend huddles on time,
- And pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare you and lead you as you lead your students in discussion.



HIM + HER STUDY GUIDE WEEK 4 -



MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Song of Solomon 2:7 Hebrews 12:1-2

MAIN POINTS:

- **1.** Be willing to slow down and look for God's leading.
 - **2.** Honor God with your dating life.

JESUS CONNECTION:

It was Jesus' joy to suffer on the cross – because He loves you and wants a relationship with you.

@HopeHSM

1. READ The Bible Yessss! We are glad you are here because taking time on your own to study God's word is an amazing way to grow in your relationship with Him. Life with Jesus is the best life! Take a moment to pray and ask God to lead you as you study this Scripture; then read the Scripture (from your Bible or it's on the back).

2. OBSERVE

The Straight Facts

Who:	
What:	
Where:	
Why:	
How:	
What is Repetitive? Highlight it	
What is Contrast?	
Underline it	

3. INTERPRET What Does the Text Mean?

Research answers using trusted sources like a Study Bible, BibleProject.com, BlueLetterBible.org, and/or Bible.org

What is the historical and/or cultural context of this Scripture?

Song of Solomon (aka Song of Songs) is different from most Old Testament books because it's not a historical record of God and His people, it is a poem about love and desire. This verse is speaking to women, but guys this doesn't count you out! As God's people, we all can benefit from living out this Biblical wisdom. To hear more about context, check out The Bible Project's "Read Scripture: Song of Songs." on YouTube.

What else do I know about the author, audience, or context of this passage?

What other Scripture might help me interpret this text?

What is this text's clearest meaning?

4. APPLY

Getting Personal

What truth(s) from this Scripture can you apply to your life right now? What is God saying to you through	How do you relate to any of the characters, events, or words in this Scripture?
	can you apply to your life right
this Scripture?	What is God saying to you through this Scripture?

MAIN SCRIPTURES

Song of Solomon 2:7 NIV

"Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field:
Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires."

Hebrews 12:1-2 NIV

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

NOTES

DOODLES





MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Song of Solomon 2:7 Hebrews 12:1-2

MAIN POINTS:

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NOTES

THE WHAT

WHAT are we talking about and WHY does it matter to me? (2-3 min)

ME

- Share a personal story where you really enjoyed going fast (maybe riding a rollercoaster or outrunning someone) or were really annoyed by how slow something was (waiting in a line, slow internet).
- Our culture loves to go fast: microwaves, airplanes, data speeds we love to go fast. I mean, how annoying is it when your internet is SLOW.
- Sometimes going fast can be a good thing, some times it's not the best thing. Sometimes going fast can make us miss things that are really important.

WE

- Sometimes we can pursue relationships or always being in a relationship really fast. Too fast.
- We don't want to be alone so we rush to be in a relationship.
- It's fun. You always have someone to hang with or talk to. Feeling like someone cares, pursuing someone or being pursued by them: it's nice.
- We have to be careful because in the rush of it all we can become distracted and miss other things that really matter.
- Maybe you or someone you know has become distracted from school, family life, other friends in pursuit of a relationship?

TRANSITION

 The biggest thing they can distract us from is our own personal, spiritual growth.

SO WHAT

So WHAT does this mean for my faith and life with God? (5-6 min)

GOD

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR YOU.

- God has a plan for each and every one of you. Whether you know it or not, He has a bigger picture and purpose for your life.
- Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you...
- Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
- God has a plan for who He wants you to be and what He wants you to do, and based on my personal experience and the promise of Scripture, it's so much better than anything we could come with on our own.

SO WHAT CONTINUED

GOD CONTINUED

SOMETIMES SLOWING DOWN IS A GOOD THING.

- If we are running so hard and so fast after relationships or even other things like other's approval – we can miss part of the goodness God has for our lives.
- This leads us to one of our main verses that talks about how the desires of rushing into passion are classic, been around for centuries, but not always the best things: Song of Solomon 2:4.
- Song of Solomon (aka Song of Songs) is different from most Old Testament books because it's not a historical record of God and His people, it is a poem about love and desire. This verse is speaking to womae, but guys this doesn't count you out! As God's people, we all can benefit from living out this Biblical wisdom.
- READ SONG OF SOLOMON 2:4.
- Idk what to say about the reference to gazelles and deer maybe was their version of a country song today that always references trucks and old town roads?
- But if you get past that the message is super clear we don't have to rush.
- Our world puts so much pressure on you, on us, to date and to be a certain way – but slowing down, taking your time, waiting a while, can be a good thing.

BE WILLING TO SLOW DOWN AND LOOK FOR GOD'S LEADING.

- God has a plan for your life and it's worth pursuing.
- READ HEBREWS 4:1-2.
- This verse mentions for us to "throw off everything that hinders AND the sin that entangles" meaning that things that aren't sin, they aren't bad, they can still weigh us down and distract us from the thing that matters most in our life: PURSUING JESUS.
- Be honest with yourself, are you pursuing relationships, or anything else for that matter, so much that it's coming before your pursuit of Jesus?
- PURSUING JESUS SHOULD BE FIRST IN OUR LIVES. If other things are distracting you from that, it's time to slow down and take a step back.

JESUS CONNECTION

- JESUS PURSUED YOU FIRST, before you were ever born. Look back at Hebrews it was Jesus' JOY to suffer on the cross because He loves you and wants a relationship with you.
- There are some really sweet love stories out there. Some couples have faithfully loved each other practically their whole lives. But there is a still a greater love story out there for you.
- The love story is about someone who moved heaven and earth to be in a relationship with you. A real Prince of Peace who became a King of Kings after He stormed the gates of hell to rescue you.

JESUS HAS A RACE FOR YOU TO RUN.

- THIS RACE WILL TAKE PERSERVERANCE. Perseverance is continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition. I mean I think that is the definition of 2020 overcoming and persevering through hard things. Guard your spiritual growth from distractions.
- THIS RACE WILL PUT FOCUS ON JESUS. It will mean putting Jesus first
 and that might mean slowing down or stepping back from other
 things. It takes sacrifice. We aren't saying that dating is wrong, but if
 it causes you to put your relationship with Jesus on the back burner
 that's not good.
- THIS RACE HONORS GOD. None of us are going to run our races perfectly, but that doesn't mean we can't strive to run our races for God better and better every day. Pursuing God honors God. It actively says that nothing in your life is worth pursuing more than pursuing God.

NOTES

HONOR GOD WITH YOUR DATING LIFE.

- We've been talking about seeking Godly wisdom for dating all month, let me review a few main points we've learned:
- (1) Know what you're pursuing and don't make excuses or settle for less
- We looked at character traits that should really be standards for us in who we date and who we become from Proverbs 31. Traits like being trustworthy, responsible, and kind.
- (2) Guys and girls may be different, but we can still seek to understand and respect one another. And we can respect God with our bodies.

TRANSITION

 Through this study I hope we will gain a greater perspective on dating that will help you truly live your best life – because Jesus has your true best life in mind for you.

NOW WHAT

NOW that I know, HOW can I live this out? (2-3 min)

YOU

- Think back through all you've learned today and through this series:
 - Are you settling for less?
 - o Are you respecting God and others?
 - o Are you pursuing Jesus before other things?
 - O How have you grown in honoring God with your dating life?
- And here is a question I'd love us to discuss: What has stood out or impacted you the most? (You can give space for students to answer now or wait to re-ask during discussion time. PRO TIP: Prep someone in the group to be ready to be the first to answer this question by giving it to them ahead of time and having time to think of their answer.)

WE

- Not everyone is going to understand choices we make in dating when we follow God's boundaries.
- Let's support each other, have each other's backs. Encourage each other as we run our races after God.
- It's better when we don't have to do it alone.

PRAY

• Close your time together in prayer.

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MAIN SCRIPTURES:

Song of Solomon 2:7 Hebrews 12:1-2

MAIN POINT:

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- 2. Honor God with your dating life.

JESUS CONNECTION:

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LEADER CORNER

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

For students to center their lives around Jesus (and not dating)

BACKGROUND TO SONG OF SOLOMON

Today we are going to read from Song of Solomon, which is also known as the Song of Songs. This book is different from most in the Old Testament in that it's not keeping a historical record of God and His people. Instead, it's a poem about love & desire. If you read the whole book, you will see how love is described as a powerful and driving force. There are a lot of themes that repeat in this poem and we are going to talk in depth about one specific one today. Today's verses are short, but super powerful. To understand even more about the context, check out the 7 minute YouTube video from The Bible Project: "Read Scripture: Song of Songs."

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

GET THEM TALKING

1. What kind of things do people miss when they are too consumed with a relationship?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

READ SONG OF SOLOMON 2:7 and discuss:

- 1. Why can it be so easy to "rush into love?"
- 2. Why do you think this verse cautions us to not awaken love early?
- 3. How can rushing too fast in a relationship cause us to lose sight on Jesus?
- 4. What are ways Christians can keep their focus on Jesus while dating?

READ HEBREWS 12:1-2 and discuss:

- 1. In your own words, what is this verse saying?
- What are ways Christians can keep their focus on Jesus while dating?
- 3. As a group, let's come up with a list of 6 Ways to Honor God While Crushing/Dating (Leaders, write down the list and text it to your group for them to save and look back on).

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NEXT STEPS

Your next step challenge is to pick one of these 6 ways that you think you could grow more in your own life. Let's take a minute to brainstorm and think, what is one thing you can do this week to grow in honoring God in your crushing/dating life?

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask your students to share their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

MAIN SCRIPTURES

Song of Solomon 2:7 NIV

"Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field:

Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires."

Hebrews 12:1-2 NIV

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."