# HOLINESS & HONOR Godly Discipline for Love and Intimacy



#### Lesson 1

# Spiritual Self-Discipline

## Defining the Terms

#### Gender

- Refers to the expression of our sex
  designation
- Influenced by sex—our biology—and by our culture and environment

## **Sexual Activity**

- Acts by which people express physical attraction toward each other
- Actions and words intended to stir up or fulfill sexual desire

#### Is it OK to flirt with others?

## **Sexuality**

• Our capacity to offer or respond to sexual activity

## **Self-Discipline**

 The control we exercise over our body, words, thoughts, actions, and desires in order to reach a goal

#### **God's Brilliant Design**

## Intimacy, Not Selfishness

 When God created humans—their sexuality included—He declared that act of creation as good.

## Interdependence, Not Conflict

- God designed men and women with differences.
- These differences form a more complete picture of His image.
- 1 Corinthians 11:11–12



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#### Lesson 2

# Wrong Views of Sexual Activity

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Gives Power

- A means to power
- A display of strength
- Sexual encounters are "conquests"

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Gives Power

- This view reflects a belief that people are merely objects to be used, rather than persons made in God's image.
- 2 Samuel 13:11–17

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Gives Power

- Christ calls on His followers to control their strength and use it to serve others, not to abuse them.
- Sexual intimacy only works when spouses willingly submit themselves to each other.

#### 1 Corinthians 13:4–7

#### What does love looks like?

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Gives Worth

- "A sexually active person is more socially adjusted or capable."
- "Without sex, a person can't understand love or joy or human intimacy."

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Gives Worth

• In this view, sex isn't just *accepted* in a dating relationship, but *expected*.

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Gives Worth

- This view is part of our old flesh and the world system—the corrupt mass of philosophy and culture that naturally opposes God.
- Colossians 3:5–7

# Is it possible to accept the world's values as well as God's?

• Proverbs 6:30–32

 "Since our bodies have sexual components, then sexual activity is a mere bodily function."

- Emphasizes our physical nature to the exclusion of the spiritual
- "Humans are animals acting on instinct."

• 1 Corinthians 9:24–27

#### 1 Corinthians 6:12–13

How would you explain the principle of this verse in your own words?

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Is Impure

- "Privacy exists only for bad things."
- Sex as a "necessary evil"
- "Sex should be rejected as a hindrance to spiritual purity."

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Is Impure

- Sexual activity in marriage is private because it is exclusive.
- Illustration: The Song of Songs

#### Wrong Views: Sexual Activity Is Impure

- God designed women and men with the capacity to enjoy each other through sexual activity.
- 1 Corinthians 7:1–5



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#### Lesson 3

# Marriage, Part 1

#### What Is Marriage?

# How would you define marriage in your own words?

## **Definitions of Marriage**

• For some couples who have lived together for a long time, marriage might just be an extra sign of commitment.

#### **Definitions of Marriage**

- Even when we look in Scripture, we find so many poor examples of marriage—polygamy, infidelity, forced marriage.
- Matthew 19:3–9

#### An Ideal

- An exchange of vows between a man and woman
- To reflect God's love and truth to each other
- Thereby forming an existential bond
- That can often support both spouses
- While also perpetuating society

# How is marriage different than a long-term relationship?

### Purpose of a Godly Marriage

 To glorify God by reflecting His love and truth—to each spouse, to the children produced in the marriage, and to the rest of the community.

• Functions explain what the thing *does* or *produces*.

- Support and Cooperation
- Genesis 2:18

- Companionship and Enjoyment
- 1 Corinthians 7:3–4

Childbearing and Childrearing

#### **Qualifications About Marriage**

- Marriage Isn't for Everyone
- Marriage Is Tough

## Do you think the idea of "falling in love" is legitimate?



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#### Lesson 4

# Marriage, Part 2

#### Forms of Intimacy

- Intellectual Intimacy
- Emotional Intimacy
- Spiritual Intimacy
- Physical Intimacy

#### But is sexual activity moral so long as it takes place between a husband and wife?

• An environment of grace, created through self-discipline

- Obedience to the Spirit
- Understanding
- Fidelity
- Discretion

- Protection
- Love

#### **The Commitment to Honor**

- We assure our spouse that we will love and accept all of them.
- We assure our spouse that we will not force them to do what they should not do—or do not want to do.

#### **The Commitment to Honor**

- We assure our spouse that they can open up to us completely.
- We assure them that we want to attune our sexuality to theirs.



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#### Lesson 5

# **Moving Forward**

### The Severity of Sexual Sin

- Proverbs 6:27–29
- Sexual sin offends God.
  - God grieves over our sin.
  - God judges sin.

### The Severity of Sexual Sin

- Sexual sin harms you
  - Proverbs 7:6-27

## The Severity of Sexual Sin

- Sexual sin harms others
  - Sin can destroy the trust that others place in us.
  - It can lead others to pursue the same sin.

## **Responding to Our Sin**

- Repentance
  - A change in belief, a choice to acknowledge and accept God's truth about our sin
- Rejection

#### 2 Corinthians 7:8–13

According to verse 10, what is the difference between a godly response to sin and a worldly one?

### **Responding to Another's Sin**

- You are not responsible for other people's sin
- People may harm you, but no one can defile you

– Mark 7:14–23

#### **Responding to Another's Sin**

• Christ loves the hurting

- Trace sin back to your heart
- Put up a fight

#### Matthew 5:27–30

Is it possible to sin even if you arguably haven't hurt someone else?

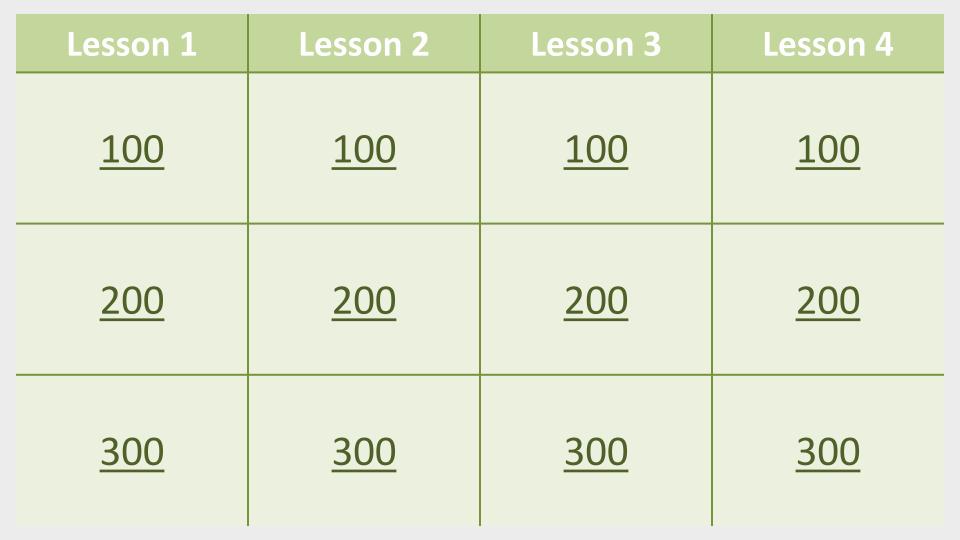
- Focus your thoughts instead on something good.
- Don't make it easy to give in to temptation.

– Consider the consequences of giving in.

– Get help.

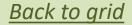
- Rely on God's Grace
- Exercise Self-Control
  - 1 Corinthians 6:15-20
  - Romans 6:11–23



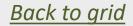


Final Question

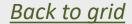
#### According to 1 Thessalonians 4:2–8, what is the goal of abstaining from sexual immorality, or fornication (vv. 3, 7)?



#### What word does Romans 8:5–8 use to describe the part of us that desires sin?



### What is self-discipline?



In which chapter of 1 Corinthians does Paul talk about the interdependence of men and women?



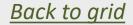
#### Name one of the wrong views of sex discussed in Lesson 2.



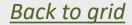
What book in the Bible expresses the love between King Solomon and his Shulammite wife?



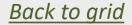
#### What person in 2 Samuel 13 illustrates the sex-as-power view?



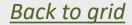
#### What's the difference between "purpose" and "function"?



## What's the purpose of a godly marriage?



# Name one function of marriage discussed in Lesson 3.



## What is intimacy, according to Lesson 4?



What's one area of intimacy within marriage that we discussed?



#### Name one of the ways to nurture intimacy in marriage.

