

# "God's Design"

## A NOTE TO LEADERS

Okay, we know. Talking about sex is always awkward. Especially when you're talking about sex with your small group. As you may recall from your own middle school experience, your students' understandings and perceptions of sex might be all over the map. So as you prepare for this week's conversation, be careful not to walk in with too many assumptions about what your students know, wonder about, or worry about when it comes to sex. **Your goal in small group today should NOT be to give all the answers about sex and dating.** Instead, get your students talking so that you can better understand their current realities and prove that your small group is a safe place to talk about anything. Including awkward stuff, like sex. There may be times you need to navigate away from answering questions your students ask saying something like, "That a great question. I'm not sure the best answer so let me get back to you on that next week."

**Your goals today should be two-fold** and go with the whole point of this series:

- 1) To open up a safe space for healthy conversation**
- 2) To point your students to relying more on God's word and God-centered adults** than their friends' or culture's word when it comes to understanding physical attraction, relationships, and sex.

Please also note, we want you to be able to be honest and vulnerable about where God has brought victory personally in your life, **but please share in a way that is age appropriate for your audience.** **Be cautious** in what you share, speaking generally and avoiding specifics or graphic comments. If you even question that sharing something personal could cause a student to struggle, then, especially for this series, hold off sharing.

## SERIES OVERVIEW

Have you ever stopped and wondered why some clothing companies have ads with people who are barely dressed or have you ever heard inappropriate sexual lyrics in a song? Our culture bombards us with messages about sex and sexuality all the time. We can hear a lot on dating and sexuality from friends and people at school too. But all those messages give us expectations on dating and sexuality that aren't always healthy or reliable. We want to create a safe space in MSM small groups for us to talk about healthy relationships and where God fits into all of this. Well, God actually designed sex and His design is better than the world's design for sex. If we aren't paying attention, we can allow our culture to teach us to devalue ourselves and other people. Having a healthy and godly view of dating and sexuality now, either before you start dating or while you are at the beginning of your dating journey, can help set you up on a healthy foundation

## MAIN POINT: God's design for sex is better than the world's design for sex.

### OPENER:

**Pick one or two** of the questions below and have each of your students give an answer to get them all talking:

- 1.** What are some things people have high expectations for? (Things that would be disappointing if it didn't happen the way you pictured like grades, birthday presents, etc).
- 2.** If someone only gets their information from movies, music, and culture - what would be some of their dating expectations?
- 3.** Do you think culture and media should be our source of information for what dating relationships should look like? Why or why not?

### READ:

#### *Video Recap*

*Let's review some points and definitions they said in the video:*

- 1.** ***God designed sex** and He designed us to have sexual desires.*
- 2.** *Sexual desires are attractions or feelings we want to express through things like dating, kissing, looking at pictures, etc. God designed us to have desires.*
- 3.** *Sexuality is how we express our sexual desires. Our culture bombards us with an unhealthy view of sexuality. **Sexuality is not our identity but our actions.***
- 4.** *God's design for sex is in marriage. God's design for sex is better than the world's design for sex.*

### ASK:

*We know this topic can be awkward but we **want small groups to be a safe space to talk about anything**, including attraction, relationships, and sexuality. Remember that what people share in small group should be kept in small group and **not spread as gossip.***

- 1.** Why can it be awkward to talk about sex and sexuality?
- 2.** Does it change your view of sex and sexuality to know that God created them?
- 3.** Do you hear unhealthy comments about sexuality or dating at school? How do you handle that?

## READ:

### *Romans 12:1-2 NIV*

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.<sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."*

## ASK:

- 1.** What do you think it means to follow the pattern of the world?
- 2.** What are ways we can keep from following the pattern of the world?
- 3.** Having someone you can talk to about sexuality is important. Who is a wise person you can talk to about the questions, confusions, or struggles you have about sex and sexuality?

## DO:

We realize that you may have some questions you don't feel comfortable asking out-loud. **We are going to take a few minutes so everyone has a chance to write down any questions you may want to talk about in the next few weeks.** You can write your name on it or you can leave your name off, it's totally up to you. **MSM Staff will take the questions and answer some of them on the Hope Student Ministry app.** (Leaders, please hand these cards to your MSM Staff. We recommend you look over your cards too to give you insight into what your students are wondering - maybe you could answer some questions in the following weeks for your group).

**NEXT STEP:** You may still have questions or questions may come up later about dating or sexuality. Remember to **think through who you are hearing about sex from and ask yourself are they the most reliable source?** Take your questions to a god-centered adult who can speak wisdom in your life. **Close your time together in prayer.**