

Sexual Revolution

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Take a deep breath. This is going to be a great week in your group. This will be the only week that we talk about the Sexual Revolution series in your group. As you prepare for this discussion, invite God to be a part of your group this week as you discuss something that truly matters to Him. I know you may feel awkward about this, but we genuinely believe that God has something in store for us as we approach this week. We will be praying for you and your group this week, as well.

Sex is a highly sensitive topic to discuss in church and in a small group of people. Please keep in mind that some people may not come to group this week because of the topic of conversation. Don't be discouraged by that. Please know that some people who normally talk during the discussion are not going to say anything at all. All of this is okay! What we have done to help this is to give you a lot of questions this week and a great passage of scripture that addresses God's view of sex. The questions are relevant for anyone, no matter what stage of life they are experiencing, because they talk about our view of sex, not the act of sex. With that in mind, please be very cautious to not allow the conversation to move to anything inappropriate. Do not hesitate to cut someone off if you feel they are going somewhere they shouldn't. Do that for the sake of the group and staying on track with the questions. Your group has the potential to be very surface this week or go deep in conversation. Just know and reassure your group that we are talking about this because it is important to God and to our relationship with Him and others.

Announcements

Before you start the discussion this week, there are two things that need to happen.

1. Remind the group that you will not be meeting next week due to Thanksgiving. You will meet the week of November 26th and do Message Based Curriculum. The week of December 3rd, you need to plan to have a party to celebrate the end of the year. That will be the last week your group will meet until the week of January 7th, 2007.
2. Evaluations need to be completed before you begin the discussion this week. You should have received a packet of evaluations in the mail with instructions to complete them. We ask every group member to do this in order to provide feedback to our leadership. We care what our group members have to say about their group experience.

Objectives

- To talk about our view/perspective of sex and what has contributed to it.
- To look at what the Bible has to say about sexual intimacy.
- To think about how we can allow God to change the way we think about sex.

Facilitators' Guide

1. What is your number one take away from the series so far?

- This is a chance for your group members to share their thoughts about the series and how it has affected their lives. It is a great series that is applicable to everyone, no matter what station in life you are experiencing. I think some good opinions will come from this question.

2. Growing up, would you say that your family talked openly, lovingly, and positively about sex? Why or why not?

- The answers to this question will give some insight into how people's perspectives on sex have been shaped and molded. No answer is wrong here, so be open and receptive to people's responses.
- My family was pretty open about talking about sex, but it was mostly portrayed in a negative way. It was never talked about as a beautiful, spiritual thing that God created. It was always portrayed as a bad thing that you should never even consider before marriage. While there is truth in that, God's plan for sex and the beautiful wonder it entails was never addressed.

***Does your family talk about sex this way now? Why or why not?**

- This is meant to show how our perspectives of sex are today. This may be between your extended family or between you and your spouse.
- With my extended family, we still talk openly about sex, but it is mostly in a joking and humorous way. We typically do not have serious conversations about it. I think it is that way because my brother and I are both now married and sex is NOT a bad thing for us.

3. Who do you think has taught you the most about sex:

***friends?**

***family?**

***church?**

***culture?**

- Again, this will give insight into how people gained their perspectives on sex. Be cautious here not to allow the conversation to become inappropriate. We are not talking about the mechanics of sex here. We are talking about our view of sex. Remember, we're changing the way we think about sex.
- I'm sure most people will say that they've been influenced by all four choices. That is certainly natural, but we want to narrow it down to which one has had the most influence.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-7 (NLT). Answer the following:

***Verse one reads, "Now about the questions you asked in your letter." You can see here that the church at Corinth was asking about sex. How does it make you feel to talk about sex in church/small groups? Why do you feel the way you do?**

- The point in reading verse one and emphasizing it is because followers of Jesus were talking about sex nearly two thousand years ago. Believe it or not, not a lot has changed in a couple thousand years. Sex is a big deal in our lives and in our culture, and we want to make sure we talk about it and make sure we are aware of God's view on sex...not just the world's. Again, there are no wrong answers here.

***What do you think Paul means in verse 3 when he refers to sexual intimacy?**

- This is a personal opinion question. As you talk about this, notice that he does not simply say sex or physical sex. He says sexual intimacy. That does not limit it to the act of sex. He is talking about sex as a spiritual and emotional thing, as well as a physical one. He is talking about it in the sense that God designed it.

***In verses 3 and 4, what does it mean to give authority of our bodies over to our husband or wife?**

- People will have different opinions about this based on their experiences in their own relationships and the relationships they have seen growing up.
- What this verse does NOT mean is that we give our rights away as a human being when we are married. Paul is not saying that we become a doormat or that the husband or wife should be in control of the other when it comes to sex. Paul is saying that when we become married, we have to put the needs of our spouse ahead of our own and we have to recognize that our needs are not the same as their needs. God has created us differently, and we need to respect that and put their needs ahead of our own.

***Verses 5 reads, "So do not deprive each other of sexual relations." What does that REALLY mean?**

- Throughout this group meeting, remember to keep the conversation from becoming inappropriate. The Bible has great insight into God's view of sex and that is what we want to discover and talk about.
- Again, this means that we are not to put our needs ahead of our spouses' needs. And we have to remember that our needs are not only physical, but also emotional and spiritual. That is how God has designed us.

5. Have you ever used sex/physical intimacy as a weapon, tool or game? If so, which one and why?

- You have the chance to go pretty deep with your group on these questions. Be sensitive to your group members and realize that they are all coming from very different backgrounds and situations.
- A weapon is something that is hurtful and causes pain. A tool would be something where you use sex to get your way. And a game is where we keep score and are constantly comparing.
- If you are in a women's or singles' group, this question may be a little more difficult. I would restate the question to say something like this: "Sex/physical intimacy is NOT meant to be a weapon, tool, or game. Why do you think that is true based on the verses we just read?" You can talk more about the truth of these not being biblical rather than specific examples.

6. Of the following list of words, choose three that best describe your view of sex:
joy, pleasure, regret, loneliness, indifference, frustration, conflict, success, failure, satisfaction, spiritual

- This is meant to ascribe some real words to our view sex. Please note that this list is not inclusive. People may have other words that better describe their view of sex.

***Now choose three words that you wish described your view of sex.**

- Most of us could probably use some changing in our view of sex. Again, you do not have to stick with the list provided; you can generate your own words. Be open to others' thoughts as well.

***What is the next step for you to take to achieve this goal?**

- The point here is to examine ourselves and think about a positive change regarding how we currently view sex. We do not want to point fingers at any one else; this is a self-assessment. This question asks about our view of sex, so keep that in mind as the conversation progresses. It may be that we need to ask God to change the way we think about sex in order to gain His perspective. It may be that we need to talk more openly with our spouse about sex in order to change our view. It may be that we need to seek professional Christian counseling for things that have happened in the past. There are countless ways that we can allow God to change the way we think about sex.