

## Small Group Guide THE CROSS AND CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY (PART 1)

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. David Platt

June 23, 2013

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

---

Use this resource as a tool to help Christ-followers move forward in their spiritual growth. To do this well requires that the Small Group Leader is building a relationship with the individuals in the small group and has identified where the people are in their relationship with God. Are they Christ-followers? Are they growing in Christ? If so, in what areas do they need to grow further? As disciple-makers, Small Group Leaders shepherd people to know the truth of Scripture, to understand why it matters, and to apply it to their lives. Small Group Leaders come alongside those whom they disciple to discover how loving God, loving each other, and loving those not yet in the Kingdom should shape how they live. The structure of this resource coincides with moving people from knowledge (Main Truth) to understanding (Why It Matters) to application (Now What Do We Do?). Utilize this Small Group Guide as a flexible teaching tool to inform your time together and not as a rigid task list.

### GETTING STARTED

*Welcome* – Incorporate time for greeting one another, enjoying any refreshments, and making announcements. If guests are visiting, make introductions and help them feel welcomed. Ask for their contact information, so you can follow up with them.

*Looking Back* – Provide an opportunity for small group members to share what God is teaching them, how they are applying what they are learning, and how He has given them opportunities to share the gospel with others. This can be done as a whole group or in smaller groups. Do the people know each other well enough to share more than surface level information? How can time together be used to foster deeper relationships among those in the small group? Also, what are the struggles and needs of the people in the small group? How can the people in the small group sacrificially serve each other?

*Looking Up* – Hold prayer as fundamental to small group time rather than supplemental to it. Give adoration and thanksgiving to God in prayer. Submit yourself to Him, confessing sin. Petition God for personal needs and other requests. Pray for the disciple-making efforts of those in the group and for the salvation of the lost in each other's families, spheres of influence, and in the world. The Weekly Prayer Focus below can also be incorporated in the group's prayer time.

#### *Weekly Prayer Focus (from Our Worship Guide)*

- *Pray for Our Lives: Praise God for the good intentions for which He designed sex. Pray we will embrace an understanding of human sexuality that is shaped by God's Word rather than society's mores. Ask God to convict and strengthen us all to flee from sexual immorality. Pray for repentance in the lives of all those struggling with sexual sin. Ask God to lead us in how we glorify Him in our bodies. Pray we will ultimately find out greatest pleasure in God and in our fellowship with Him.*
- *Pray for Our City: This week we are praying for the ministry of Widows First (widowsfirst@bellsouth.net). Brook Hills members, Mike and Lynn Patterson, founded Widows First to help meet the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of low-income widows and widowers who have no one in the area to help them. Several Brook Hills members support this effort to put James 1:27 into practice. We are also praying for Chelsea Village Baptist Church and Scott Slayton, Pastor.*

- *Pray for Our World: This week we are praying for Brooks Hills Long-Term missionaries Doug and Nancy Turman serving in Thailand. Doug and Nancy serve among the Burmese peoples of Thailand. There they engage local villages by care for the widows and orphans in those communities. Join us this week as we pray for Doug, Nancy, and their family. This week we are also praying for our Short-Term team led by Tyler Grant serving in Ecuador with the Brock and Coe families and our Student trip to New York City led by Becca Benson.*

## **MAIN TRUTH**

### *Message Outline*

#### **THE CROSS AND CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY (PART 1)**

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

- The central exhortation: Flee sexual immorality (6:18).
- The biblical clarification: Flee sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and a woman.

#### **The Character of God...**

- God has created our bodies for His ultimate glory (6:13, 20).
- God has designed our bodies for our eternal good (6:12-14).
  - Sex is relational (Gen. 2:24; Prov. 5:3-10).
  - Sex is covenantal (Prov. 5:15-20; Mal. 2:14).
  - Sex is intimate...it is obviously physical, yet deeply spiritual (Gen. 4:1; Eph. 5:22-23).
  - Sex is fruitful (Gen. 1:28; Song of Sol. 2:13; 1 Cor. 7:5).
  - Sex is selfless (Eph. 5:28-31; 1 Cor. 7:3-4).
  - Sex is complex...it involves the mind, the body, and the soul (6:13-15; Mt. 5:28; 2 Cor. 6:14).
  - Sex is complementary...when it comes to both gender and kind (Gen. 2:18-24; Lev. 18:22-23; Rom. 1:26-27).

#### **The Sinfulness of Man...**

- Sin disorders our hearts (Rom. 1:18-21).
  - We exchange God's pattern for our preferences (Prov. 14:12).
  - We exchange God's praise for our pleasures (1 Pet. 2:11).
    - We are all born with a heart of pride (Gen. 8:21; Ps. 51:5).
    - We are all bent toward sexual deviation (1 Thess. 4:3-8).
- Sin disorders our thoughts (Rom. 1:21-25).
  - We exchange God's Word for our experience (Rom. 8:5-8).
  - We exchange truth for tolerance (John 8:31-36).
- Sin disorders our desires (Rom. 1:24-27).
  - We exchange sexual responsibility for supposed rights (Rom. 6:1-4).
  - We exchange what Scripture says about our desires for what science says about our desires (Gal. 5:16-21).
    - Improper sexual desire is immoral, not inevitable (Eph. 5:3-5).
- Sin disorders our actions (Rom. 1:28-32).
  - We exchange moral obligations for natural explanations (Rom. 2:14-16).
    - Causation does not mean justification (Gen. 4:6-7).
  - We don't always choose our temptations, but we do always choose our reactions (1 Cor. 10:13).

## Small Group Guide

### THE CROSS AND CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY (PART 1)

*The Church at Brook Hills*

*Dr. David Platt*

*June 23, 2013*

*1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

---

#### The Sufficiency of Christ...

- Jesus has purchased our bodies with His blood (6:20).
- Jesus has united our bodies with His body (6:15-17).

#### The Necessity of Faith...

- Turn from your sin and yourself (6:12-14).
  - We are free from bodily sin that harms so deeply, controls so quickly, and devastates so painfully.
- Trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord (6:18-20).
  - We are free to enjoy His great purpose for our bodies as we exalt His great glory with our bodies.

#### The Urgency of Eternity...

- According to the sure judgment of God, unrepentant sexual sin leads to hell (6:9-10; Mat. 5:27-29; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5; Jude 1:7; Rev. 21:8).
- Only by the sheer grace of Christ, humbly repentant sinners enter into heaven (6:11; Rev. 21:6-7).

### Message Summary

Much like first century Corinth, we live in a time where sexual sin and immorality is rampant. God created human sexuality for His glory and for our good. Since God created sex, it is up to God to determine how it is used, and He designed sex to be shared only between a man and a woman within the context of marriage. The Bible speaks strongly against all sexual sin, but all sin can find hope and forgiveness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

## WHY IT MATTERS

### Digging Deeper

This week as we turn back to our study of 1 Corinthians, Pastor David uses the threads of the gospel to discuss Christian sexuality. Spend some time reviewing the threads of the gospel. Does each member know all five threads? Do they know the Scripture associated with each thread? Have they continued to boldly share the gospel with others? Remind them that even though we have moved on to a different sermon series, it is the responsibility of every Christian to share the gospel regularly. Ask the small group members to consider who they can intentionally share with this week. Does your group have a way of keeping track of weekly prayer requests, so you can continue to labor in prayer over the course of the week? For example, one small group uses a Google calendar to track each other's prayer requests throughout the week. Is there a similar tool your group could use to remember the names of the people your group is sharing with, so you can pray for one another as you weave gospel threads?

As we begin part one of two sermons focusing on the cross and Christian sexuality, consider the make-up of your group. Is your group comprised of mostly singles, older couples, newly married couples, college students, or those who have been widowed, or are a variety of life situations represented? How would each of these demographics relate to this topic differently? What does everyone have in common regardless of his or her station in life? How can group members most honor God with their sexuality?

Sexuality is often a hot issue in our increasingly permissive culture. We live in a time and culture when people have many different opinions about sexuality. However, the Bible is not silent about sexuality. What does the

## Small Group Guide THE CROSS AND CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY (PART 1)

*The Church at Brook Hills*

*Dr. David Platt*

*June 23, 2013*

*1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

---

Bible teach regarding God's good design for our sexuality? God designed sex for our good, but ultimately for His glory. Consider the seven biblical purposes for sex discussed on the outline and review them with your group. What does each of these teach us about God's design and good purpose for our sexuality? What do they reveal about the character of God? Which of these is our culture most resistant to?

- **Sex is relational**
- **Sex is covenantal**
- **Sex is intimate**
- **Sex is fruitful**
- **Sex is selfless**
- **Sex is complex**
- **Sex is complementary.**

Though sex is a good gift from God, sin has marred our understanding of human sexuality. Both today's culture and the Corinthian culture have views on sexuality that are contrary to the truth of God's Word. The first century culture believed that sex was simply a good and natural appetite, like hunger, that should be satisfied when necessary (1 Cor. 6:13). In what ways is our culture like theirs? What are some common attitudes and beliefs held today that are contrary to the testimony of Scripture? In what ways have you been influenced by the culture with regards to sex?

The sinfulness of man has corrupted the way we relate to God and to each other. **Sin has disordered our hearts, thoughts, desires, and actions.** Using the progression of sin as a model, discuss how our view of sexuality been distorted by sin. Refer to God's design for sexuality above and think together about how sin has subverted God's purposes for human sexuality. What do cultural and societal practices such as promiscuity, divorce, abortion, homosexuality, prostitution, various forms of sexual abuse, and sex trafficking reveal about our inherent bent towards sexual deviance?

While Scripture shows that sexual immorality is outside the bounds of God's will, every sinner can find hope and peace in Jesus Christ. What does the gospel teach us about human sexuality? Do you know anyone who is lost in sexual sin? How can you pray for them and begin to share the gospel with them? Do not take for granted that there may be those in your group who, currently or in the past, struggle with sexual sin. Invite the individuals in the group not to isolate themselves but to approach you or another Christian they trust if they are willing to seek counsel and to confess sin. Knowing that sin disorders our hearts, thoughts, desires, and actions, discuss how to combat temptation. What steps can be taken to fight temptation in the heart? In the thoughts? With desires? With actions? How can they prevent the progression of sin from occurring? Remind them that God is merciful and gracious and will forgive any one who turns to Him in repentance and faith (1 Jn. 1:9). At the same time, equip them to fight sin instead of habitually indulging in it. Can someone of the same gender provide accountability and commit to pray for this brother or sister?

Discuss with the group how we as a church can better model a biblical view of sexuality before the world. How would you describe biblical sexual ethics to a non-believer or to a new Christian? If you are currently discipling people, how can you begin to teach them a God-honoring view of sexuality? For those with children, how can we appropriately teach our children the biblical model of human sexuality? What fears do you have about discussing sexual issues with your children or with those whom you disciple?

## ***NOW WHAT DO WE DO?***

### ***Group Discussion & Application***

*Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).*

## Small Group Guide

### THE CROSS AND CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY (PART 1)

*The Church at Brook Hills*

*Dr. David Platt*

*June 23, 2013*

*1 Corinthians 6:12-20*

---

- How would you describe the current cultural climate with regards to sexuality? How does the cultural climate affect the church? To what degree have the views of the world influenced the church?
- How does the gospel and the cross of Christ speak uniquely to human sexuality?
- What is the biblical definition of “sexual immorality”? How is the biblical definition different from the cultural definition? Is the biblical definition of sexual immorality different than your own? Are there attitudes and beliefs you need to repent of? Pray that God would reveal areas where your thoughts and beliefs are not in line with His Word.
- By holding to biblical sexual ethics, we may often be labeled as hateful, intolerant, or out of date. How can we respond with Christ-exalting love and kindness to people who would think this about us? How can we speak the truth in love concerning sexuality?
- God knows what is best for our bodies. Why were our bodies created? How do we glorify God with our bodies? Read 1 Corinthians 6:14. How does the resurrection point to the inherent worth and goodness of our physical bodies?
- One of God’s purposes for sex is that we be fruitful. How does seeing sex this way speak against a culture that promotes personal freedom and ideas like promiscuity, abortion, and widely available contraceptives?
- How is sex selfless? For those who are married, how can you show your spouse this selflessness in your marriage? If you are single, how can you show a watching world the value of God’s design in sexuality? How can you most glorify God in your singleness?
- How do biblical manhood and womanhood help us understand sexuality? What does it mean for sex to be complementary?
- Read Romans 1:18-32. What is the four-fold progression of sin? Where you have seen this progression in your own life? In our culture? Are there sin patterns in your life that you need to repent of? How will you address those areas of temptation?
- We are all born with a heart full of pride and a bent towards sexual deviance. How can we zealously guard our hearts, our lives, and the church from sexual sin? Are there boundaries that you need to set up in your own life to avoid sexual temptation?
- Do you look to Scripture or to science and culture to define your desires and morality? How would you respond to someone who tolerates sexual sin because “it is natural”?
- What excuse do you make for sin in your own life? How can you begin to be honest about sin in your own life?
- Read 1 Corinthians 6:15-17. We are united with Christ. What does it mean to be a temple of the Holy Spirit? How does sexual sin dishonor God?
- Are there people you know who are lost in sexual sin that you can graciously urge to faith, repentance, and forgiveness in Christ? Take some time to pray for these people as a group. Ask that God would break their hearts for what breaks His and that He would use you to speak to a culture lost in sexual sin.