

Session 2 Leader Guide

- What are some of the consequences of the sexual revolution which have affected the Jones' and the Smith's? *Answers may vary but here are some: same-sex attraction/marriage, living together without marriage, relying on birth control and infertility practices to have children when we want them instead of relying on God to give us blessings and the shame and guilt involved when these issues surface.*
- How are these consequences life issues? *These issues of adultery, fornication, same-sex attraction, and birth control/infertility practices are life issues because they are contrary to what God has intended for us as we studied in the first session. We were created to have a union with God that is holy and beautiful, full of life; but the fall has made that union cut off, ugly and full of death.*

Let's take a look at what Scripture says.

1. Sex without marriage- what does Bible teach about this?
 - Ephesians 4:17-19 *Participating in adultery alienates us from God and others.*
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 *Abstaining from adultery is the will of God and shows the fruit of the spirit of self-control.*
 - Hebrews 13:4 *Dishonoring marriage will result in dishonoring God and bring judgement from Him*
2. Same sex activity/marriage-What does the Bible teach about this?
 - Romans 1:26-27 *People seeking gratification in ways that are not ordered by God in a marriage with one man and one woman are in error.*
 - 1 Cor 6:9 *Those who practice sexual immorality will not inherit the Kingdom of God.*Leviticus 18
3. How does engaging in sexual immorality affect our lives?
 - 1 John 2:16
 - 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20
 - Proverbs 11:6
 - James 1:13-14

When we engage in sexual immorality we are going against God, our creator and Father and are of the world. We let Satan's lies tell us that we may have been created with an inclination to be attracted to the same sex, or to even be the opposite sex. This is in direct conflict with scripture. Our desires are rooted in the good gifts of God's creation, but our corrupt nature desires what God has NOT given or what he has forbidden. 1 Corinthians 6:18 says, "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body." We sin against our own bodies because we do not use them as God intended, and we sin against the Body of Christ by harming our neighbors and our relationship with the Lord. It explains why relationships become damaged such as Sue, John, and their

daughter. It also makes sense that Carol and Mark feel the guilt and or shame of their past experiences thinking it has influenced their children in some way. This is part of the worldly damage of physical illness, mental illness, disease and so on that we bring upon ourselves with sinful sexual behaviors. Some of this also may stem from the idea that we disregard our own God given bodies. Hating our bodies often comes from the lack of fulfilling the need for intimacy that is not only physical but also emotional and spiritual. We think of terms of human sexuality having no other purpose than desire. Seeking physical pleasure outside of marriage creates emotional and spiritual damage, our body becomes the enemy. Is it any surprise that this type of sinful behavior leads to confusion about sexuality, disorder of families and consequently the disorder of society in general?

- What is an ordered Christian view of marriage and why is it important?
 1. **Read Ephesians 5:21-33.** What is marriage a sign of? From Luther: “a sacred sign of something spiritual, holy, heavenly, and eternal. ... [Marriage] is an outward and spiritual sign of the greatest, holiest, worthiest, and noblest thing that has ever existed or ever will exist: the union of the divine and human natures in Christ. The holy apostle Paul says that as man and wife united in the estate of matrimony are two in one flesh, so God and man are united in the one person Christ, and so Christ and Christendom are one body. It is indeed as Paul says [Ephesians 5:32] that the estate of marriage truly signifies such a great reality. Is it not a wonderful thing that God is man, and He gives himself to man and will be his, just as the husband gives himself to his wife and is hers? But if God is ours, then everything is ours.”
 2. How are husbands and wives to act in relation to each other? Wives are to submit to their husbands. While “submission” is interpreted by some to be slavish obedience, verse 24 clarifies by explaining that wives are to submit “as the church submits to Christ.” In praying, “Thy will be done,” we declare to the Lord that we do not seek to control Him, but thankfully serve Him. Likewise in marriage, the wife is not to seek to control her husband, but to serve and love him. This is a task made difficult by the fall into sin (Genesis 3:16). Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the Church. The word for “love” is not romantic love, but a word that describes sacrificial service to others even when they are being less than lovable. How did Christ love the Church? He died for her, that His people might be cleansed from sin. Husbands are likewise to serve their wives sacrificially.
 3. **Read Genesis 2:18-24.** The Lord institutes marriage in verse 24. What does this verse say? When in history was marriage instituted? Marriage is described as the union of a man and a woman. Notably, when the man leaves his father and mother, he is leaving another union of man and woman to be joined to his own wife in marriage. This was part of God’s ordered design to

keep creation going. The institution of marriage took place before the fall into sin.

4. How does the Ephesians passage reflect the order of creation in the Genesis passage? Paul specifically references Genesis 2:24 in his passage in Ephesians, which is pointing out the picture marriage gives us of Christ and His bride and the picture of His ordered creation of man and woman. One is to be the head of the other, but it all reflects one fleshly body.

5. **Read Genesis 1:28.** What blessing and privilege does God give to the first husband and wife to be fulfilled within their marriage? He blesses them with the words, "Be fruitful and multiply." He thus declares that marriage is the institution in which children are to be conceived and born. The Lord could have kept making people out of dust and ribs, but instead He entrusts to man and woman the gift of procreation to bring more life into the world.

6. **Read Song of Solomon 2:1-7, 4:1-6, 6:2-3, and 7:1-11.** How do these verses help us to understand the intimacy of a married couple? Sexual intimacy in a marriage is meant to be a beautiful celebration. The husband and wife are to delight in each other, and this is God pleasing. In chapter 2:7, it is said that intimacy or sexual expression is not to be stirred up or awakened until it pleases. In a marriage bed, it is pleasing.

Additional discussion questions for consideration:

- In what way is our attitude toward marriage influenced by what we see and hear about marriage in popular cultural or among our friends? When we are constantly surrounded by images of marriage that conflict with Biblical truth, through the media or in our lives, the normalness of everything begins to permeate our thoughts. We become used to it and think complacently about it. We start to rationalize it. When it becomes legal in a civil sense, it adds to the confusion as well because the civil government has overstepped its authority and placed itself into the role of God by presuming to "define" marriage.
- What have you observed to be one of the main reasons couples decide to live together instead of marrying? I have observed that people really think it's a good idea to test the waters first before jumping in when it comes to marriage. Perhaps divorce or conflict in their families have tainted them to commitment.
- What confusion arises for children (regardless of how they are acquired) of a same-sex marriage regarding role models for life as a man and woman? When there are two of the same sex raising a child, that child misses out on having a role model of fatherhood or motherhood in the real sense of the words. Calling both parents "daddy" or "mommy" makes it confusing for children when they see families that do have an actual man and woman in their respective roles. Discuss how this can be detrimental to the identity question many children have. All boys need a man to be a role model for his behavior as a future man. The same is true for girls. When those roles are reversed or gone altogether, it is difficult for young ones to relate. They naturally are going to have questions and will also feel left out or unloved by a missing parent once they discover how children are conceived. Children will

instinctively know something unnatural had to be done to produce their version of a family. It also means that the child is without at least one and maybe both of his or her biological parents. For a same-sex couple to have a child, a family must have been broken. This is never good and falls short of the ideal. All this leads to confusion about what is real and what is fantasy, which children already are going to have to sort through as it is. Ambiguous definitions and unclear roles are only going to add to the confusion and cause disorder which can lead to issues later as they mature.

- How can the institution of marriage be important for single people? *Singles need to feel intimacy like everyone else, and the institution of marriage provides a boundary for them to respect. All of us come from the union of one man and one woman, even if it is through artificial means. This leads to the idea that we all have parents to honor. Marriage is important for all of us because it provides a way to honor the parents who were blessed by God to give birth or adopt legally. The complications of divorce, premarital sex (or as I sometimes call it, non-marital sex), and infertility practices make it more difficult for anyone to honor what we are lacking. Singles may not have a marriage of their own to live out a chaste life, but they do have parents to honor. They can live a chaste life by sacrificing their own personal pleasure or lack of intimacy in a relationship by having an intimate relationship with God. Paul even pointed out in 1 Corinthians 7 that being single freed up a man or woman to being holy because there is less to be anxious about.*

Discuss the challenges single people have in the Christian Church. *Many singles have considered their singleness as a vocation, yet many have expressed that it can be a huge burden. Much of church life is often centered on families and married life. When there is a singles group, it is often just a way to meet a future spouse, which is not wrong in and of itself, but many singles would like to just be included in the church family without being “singled” out.*