

# GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY

The Collegiate Navigators  
Staff-in-Training  
**Version 2.1**

The Collegiate Navigators Staff-in-Training  
Master Builders Bible Study Series

# GOD'S DESIGN FOR SEXUALITY

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# Outline

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## **PROLOGUE: SEXUAL CULTURAL REALITIES**

What are the realities we face today in life and ministry?

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## **STUDY 1: SEXUALITY DESIGNED AND DEFACED**

What was God's original plan for our sexuality?

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## **STUDY 2: SEXUALITY REDEEMED AND EMBRACED**

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## **STUDY 4: SEXUALITY MINISTERED WELL**

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# PROLOGUE

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## Getting Started: Some Sexual Cultural Realities

**H**ERE IS A WONDERFUL REALITY: GOD HIMSELF DESIGNED HUMANS AS SEXUAL BEINGS EXPRESSED THROUGH GENDER DISTINCTIONS. These are core parts of our true identity. He longs for us to embrace our sexuality and gender and to enjoy living well as sexual beings.

But here is a sobering reality: Our society is sexually saturated, obsessed, and damaged. Destructive consequences of sexual choices affect everyone at some level. Americans spend more money on pornography than on professional basketball, football, and baseball combined. There are more strip clubs than McDonalds restaurants in the U.S. Sexually-charged images bombard us everywhere. Risky decisions are made in order to become sexually appealing.

What does this mean for you, and for us in our calling? Sexual issues present both the possibility of wonderful opportunities for the power of the Gospel AND a devastating threat to living out the Gospel.

Our ability to properly answer these three key questions is absolutely critical:

1. How can we live out our own healthy, sacred God-designed sexuality by experiencing Jesus' healing and hope?
2. How can God redeem the pain of sin and sexual wounds?
3. How can we reach people in this sex-obsessed, sexually broken culture and effectively offer Jesus' healing and hope to them?

Satan has tried to wipe out God's purposes since the beginning through the devastation of sexual dysfunctions. The devil has been actively opposing and imitating God's best regarding sex and all of life. Satan takes the weakness of the flesh and exploits it. He takes what God calls good and offers tempting imitations to substitute this good with something destructive.

In this study, we will also explore gender issues. Admittedly, this is a controversial area. Both secular and biblically based writers have put ideas and theories on the table. Socialization has affected us. Extremes from "everything is different" to "there are no differences" regarding gender float around. We will do our best to guide toward significant biblical discoveries.

One challenge in studying this topic is that basic terms such as gender, sex, sexuality, masculine, and feminine rarely appear in traditional Bible translations. The concepts and principles are there, but not those terms. According to the dictionary, these terms aren't exactly synonyms, yet they overlap and inter-relate to one another. Generally, in this study we use gender to refer to the state of being male or female; we use sex to refer to sexual intercourse; and we use sexuality as an umbrella term including the biological, physical, psychological, and spiritual aspects of being created masculine or feminine in gender. Try not to get hung up on the fine distinctions among these terms. You and your group can clarify them as you study.

It is imperative for your group members to create an environment of grace and truth where every participant can experience trust and safety. This study should help you and those in your community process some of the key issues related to sexuality as you live and minister among



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# SEXUALITY DESIGNED AND DEFACED

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**P**REVIOUSLY YOU HAVE STUDIED GENESIS 1-3 AND EXPLORED HOW YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT YOUR GENDER HAVE SHAPED YOUR IDENTITY (FIRST-YEAR EDGE AND STAFF-IN-TRAINING STUDIES). Genesis 1 and 2 show us God's original design for male and female together, and they provide the basis for understanding authentic personhood and relationships. Genesis 3 tells us how and why we became broken. It describes how Satan and sin and shame entered the human experience with devastating consequences, marring the relationships between man and woman. This story contains insights into how and why sexual brokenness began and swiftly spread in the earliest generation of mankind. In these first two studies, we'll ask you to review what you've learned and to go deeper in these areas.





In Romans 1, Paul addresses the subject of sexual brokenness, too. He could be describing the downward spiral of a culture, as well as the degeneration of an individual. As you read Romans 1:

- **Summarize what you notice about the relationship between what people think about God and what they give themselves permission to do.**

- **Illustrate this downward moral spiral with examples from your culture or from people's lives.**

## Sexual Brokenness Illustrated: Case Study of Amnon and Tamar

When someone gets caught in the downward spiral described in Romans 1, where does it end up? This story illustrates what sexual brokenness looks like in one family. As you read the story of Amnon and Tamar in 2 Samuel 13:1–29, notice what harm came from Amnon’s sexual choices. As you meditate on this story, write down your thoughts, emotions, and descriptions of:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Lustful Brother</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Vulnerable Sister</u></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Passive Parent and Brother</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Influence of Peers</u></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Consuming Shame of the Victim</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Contempt of the Offender</u></p>

If David or Absalom were given another chance to respond to Tamar more compassionately, what might they have said?

## Reflection on the Battle of the Sexes

All three of these passages (Genesis 3, Romans 1, and 2 Samuel 13) depict the battle of the sexes that has raged since the Fall. Our culture (and many other cultures) tends to value men over women. This destructive bias is called “misogyny.” Many cultures have enshrined this inequity in their social patterns and legal systems. At the same time, some cultures also put down men and masculinity, which is called “misandry.” These attitudes of disrespect for the opposite gender often lead to other sins and injustices.

<p><b>MISOGYNY</b> (<i>miss-ab’-juh-nee</i>): The dishonor or disrespect or hatred of women and femininity.</p>	<p><b>MISANDRY</b> (<i>miss’-an-dree</i>): The dishonor or disrespect or hatred of men and masculinity.</p>
<p>What are some ways you see women and the feminine way of being under-valued or disrespected? (Consider movies, songs, commercials, TV shows, etc.)</p> <p>By cultural practices and attitudes</p> <p>By the media</p> <p>By men</p> <p>By women</p>	<p>What are some ways you see women and the feminine way of being under-valued or disrespected? (Consider movies, songs, commercials, TV shows, etc.)</p> <p>By cultural practices and attitudes</p> <p>By the media</p> <p>By men</p> <p>By women</p>

<p>Whether you are a man or a woman, can you identify . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any ways you have been wounded by the devaluing of women or the feminine way of being?</li> <li>• any attitudes or behaviors of yours that devalue women or the feminine way of being?</li> </ul>	<p>Whether you are a man or a woman, can you identify . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any ways you have been wounded by the devaluing of men or the masculine way of being?</li> <li>• any attitudes or behaviors of yours that devalue men or the masculine way of being?</li> </ul>
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*The cross is the one place where misogyny [the hatred of women] can find its end. Regardless of its expression—be it abuse, abandonment or a woman’s self-hatred—Jesus dies to bear the sin of misogyny. The crucified one answers the laments of the Tamars everywhere as they cry out, “Where could I get rid of my disgrace?” One must look no further than the place of great exchange—the cross, where God bears disgrace and grants women holy honor instead.*

—ANDREW COMISKEY, *STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS*

## Prayer Pause

Take some time to pray for yourself (and for anyone you know) over how you may have suffered from attitudes of disrespect because of your gender, as well as from the sins that arise from the battle of the sexes. Ask the Lord to bear your disgrace and grant you holy honor instead.

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**SEXUALITY  
REDEEMED AND  
EMBRACED**

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## Sexuality Redeemed

Previously you've studied Ephesians. To reflect once again on how Christ's work brings beauty from the ashes in our lives, read Ephesians 2:1-22 in at least two different translations.

From this passage, what were we all like before we met Christ? And what's true about our new identity in Christ?

In what ways do you understand the Gospel "redeeming" sin, especially the guilt and shame of sexual sin?

As God has been "conforming" and "transforming" you into the image of His Son, what changes have you noticed in your attitudes and behavior regarding sexuality and relationships? From your own experience in Christ, how are you becoming a new creature, especially in your sexuality?

## One More Picture of Christ's Transforming Work

When Jesus prayed for His disciples at the Last Supper, He used the language of intimacy. Meditate on John 17:20-26. What does true intimacy with Jesus look like?

Many places in the Bible we find our relationship with God compared to the intimate relationship between a bridegroom and his bride. As you read these verses, write any observations about relating to God as newlyweds relate. See Isaiah 62:5, 2 Corinthians 11:2, Revelation 19:7-8, and Revelation 21:2.

*"We are never truly free until our hearts are ravished by the love of God. But then, this is what the mystery of sex has been telling us all along."*

*Paula Rinehart, Sex and the Soul of a Woman*

Read Ephesians 5:21-33. When God wanted to illustrate the beauty of the relationship between Christ and His church, He compared it to marriage—describing both as "a great mystery." From these verses, describe several ways that our life and union with Christ is similar to marriage at its best.

Now consider your relationship with Jesus from this viewpoint. How do you experience Him as Bridegroom?

Often there are unique obstacles for men to consider themselves as Christ's bride. What are some of those obstacles men might feel? How can these obstacles be dealt with?

Elsewhere in Scripture God compares His love relationship with us to that of a father loving a child and a friend loving a friend (John 15:15). The third basic experience of human love is between husband and wife. What are some ways you see the husband-wife love bond differing from the other kinds of love?

Maybe you observed that—unlike a father’s love and a friend’s love—a husband’s love is both sexual and exclusive. It is natural for a husband to feel “godly jealousy” for his wife by not wanting to share her sexual love with any other man. Think about this universal emotion as you study these passages. Then summarize what godly jealousy looks like in Scripture.

Exodus 34:14

Deuteronomy 4:23-24 2

Corinthians 11:2

Exodus 20:5,6

Zechariah 8:2

Summarize what’s godly about jealousy:

How do you think our being sexual and having gender may point us to God and His heart?

## Embracing Your Gender

Let's consider what's different about male and female besides the obvious physical differences.

For starters, do you think there are any differences between males and females at the soul level? If so, what are some differences? If not, why not?

How did you feel about your gender as you were growing up? (comfortable/ uncomfortable, enjoy/hate, secure/insecure, etc)

How has each of these influences shaped your view of gender—boys and girls, men and women, male and female, masculine and feminine?

- **People**
  
- **Teaching and things you have read**
  
- **Media**
  
- **Culture**
  
- **Experiences**

What are several things you enjoy most about your femininity/masculinity?

Both Galatians 3:28 and Colossians 3:10-13 explore your identity in Christ. How do these passages relate to your gender?

## Prayer Pause

Take some time to give thanks for what Jesus has done on your behalf. Spend some time praying through what He is doing to redeem and transform you.



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## SEXUALITY LIVED WELL

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*There is a growing cry, not necessarily for a return to the nostalgic past, but for some new form of boundaries that protect the sacredness of sex. Especially for women who long ago lost their virginity, there is a longing to regain the innocence of soul that boundaries imply.*

*-Paula Rinehart, Sex and the Soul of a Woman*

**S**EXUALITY IS A BEAUTIFUL AND POWERFUL PART OF WHO GOD CREATED US TO BE. So it makes sense that He would have given us a guide to sexual wisdom to help us enjoy our sexual gifts in ways that fulfill our souls—not cheapen them.

## Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

Read **Genesis 39:4-20**. Identify and describe any attitudes, convictions, or actions that helped Joseph respond well to sexual temptation and remain sexually pure during this period of vulnerability.

What role do you think good jealousy may have played in Joseph's choice?

How did God respond to Joseph's choice? (vs. 21-23)

If Joseph had yielded to this sexual temptation, what impact do you think it would have had on his destiny? . . . and on the destiny of the Israelite nation?

# Six Keys To Living Well As A Sexual Person

Here are just a few of the many passages about sex in the Bible. We've selected these because they express God's best for us—the "grace boundaries" that come from God's protectively jealous love for us. These boundaries are both a gift of His grace and a part of His design.

## 1. Value Of Boundaries

Living well always involves understanding and living within boundaries for maximum health—sexual and otherwise. Responsible parents set boundaries for their children, and wise people set boundaries for themselves. Why?

Our heavenly Father also sets boundaries that help us "protect the sacredness of sex." What does this reveal about God's heart?  
Psalm 16:5-6

How do you feel about having sexual boundaries to live within?

## 2. Honoring Sexuality

How should we think about our sexuality? Find 4-5 principles about what sex is for and how to honor it from 1 Corinthians 6:12-20.

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2. Is absolute purity even possible? If so, how do you think singles can enjoy their sexuality "with absolute purity"?

### 3. Sexuality and Singleness

Read 1 Corinthians 7:32-38. The apostle Paul was likely single when he wrote to the Corinthians. Jesus and Daniel are among the famous biblical singles! And others, like Moses, married later in life. How do you think their singleness and sexual purity impacted their contribution to God's Kingdom?

What about being single do/did you enjoy most? What about being single do/did you enjoy least?

*Without trust nothing lasting is built into a relationship. Allowing for a period of life devoted to courtship without sex is the best gift two people in love could claim for themselves. It is the heart of Romance.*

*-Paula Rinehart. Sex and the Soul of a Woman*

Consider these options for dealing with our normal sexual needs and desires:

- Suppression: What effect does suppressing or denying one's sexual desires have?
- Expression: What effect does sexual expression without right boundaries have?

In most marriages, there are seasons when one or both partners' sexual needs go unmet—for days, months, or even years. So both singles and married people need to deal with unmet sexual desires in healthy and holy ways—throughout the whole of their lives, not just when they are young. Can you think of 4-5 common reasons or seasons in a married couple's life when this may happen? (If you have trouble with this question, ask an older married person you can be frank with!)

Consider these passages. Are there options beyond suppression and expression? How do you think your physical and sexual energies can be translated through God's power into fruitful outlets? Mark 12:33, Colossians 1:28-29, 1 Corinthians 7:32-38 (above)

#### 4. Sex Within Marriage

What stands out to you from these passages about sexuality in marriage? Genesis 2:24, Song of Solomon 5:8-16, Song of Solomon 7:1-9

Summarize what “grace boundaries” the Bible draws for married people. Proverbs 5:15-18, 1 Corinthians 7:3-5, Hebrews 13:4

What do you think the Bible means when it says that a person’s body belongs to the spouse alone? Why is mutual possessiveness (or exclusiveness) of each other’s body important to a marriage?

Explain the difference, according to the Bible, between “knowing” a woman and “lying with” a woman. How does your heart respond to these ideas?

## 5. Limits on Sexual Partners

For each of these passages, identify (1) any sexual partners that God puts “out of bounds” for His children and (2) any negative consequences or reasons given for staying within these boundaries.

**Exodus 20:14**

**Exodus 22:19**

**Leviticus 18:6-12, 22**

**Proverbs 7:6-21**

**Matthew 5:27-28**

**Luke 17:1-2**

**1 Corinthians 6:13-20**

**Romans 1:26,27**

From those same verses, what’s wrong with having sex with partners other than one’s marriage partner?

Since Christ lives in the hearts of believers, how do you think He responds and feels when a believer engages in or fantasizes about sexual immorality?

From what you can tell, when it comes to sexual attitudes or behaviors, what is the difference between the believers and the non-believers in your context?

## 6. Facing Sexual Temptation

Most of us tend to keep our sexual tensions and struggles trapped inside us—in darkness. Either we feel incredibly ashamed that we even have struggles. Or else we fear others' condemnation if we even hint at our struggles. As you respond to these questions, consider the behaviors or thoughts that you may keep hidden.

Where have you been giving yourself permission to go (physically OR mentally) that you need to establish as off limits for you?

*"The power of sin is in its hiddenness."*

In going there, what do you think you've been running from?

In staying within boundaries, what do you think you might be running to?

The godly way to deal with sexual struggles is to bring them into the light of God's truth through confession to God and to others—carefully selected others who can actually help us find freedom. One way to deal with temptation is by "coming into the light." Express the principle(s) or the advice contained in each passage. John 3:19-21, 1 John 1:5-10, and James 5:16

What do you think "coming into the light" means? What are the risks if you do? . . . and if you don't?

How worried do you think God is about His reputation if your sin comes into the light? Explain.

Is there any fantasy or recurring thought that needs to be exposed to God’s grace and light? (See 2 Corinthians 10:5.) Explain.

Select 3-4 of the verses below offering practical suggestions for dealing with sexual temptation. For each verse (1) express the advice or principle it contains and (2) describe when and how you might apply it in your own life.

- Job 31:1 2                      Corinthians 10:5 2      Timothy 2:22              1 John 1:7-9
- Ecclesiastes 4:9 1      Timothy 5:2                      Hebrews 3:13              James 5:16

**Example:** Job 31:1

**Principle:** You can’t help the first look, but you can refuse to lust after beauty by choosing to respect.

**Application:** I will install a good filter on my computer to keep out the porn—and do it today!

What changes, if any, do you need to make in the way you view men and women and how you treat them as sexual beings?

*Christians who remain in hiding continue to live the lie. We deny the reality of our sin. In futile attempt to erase our past, we deprive the community of our healing gift. If we conceal our wounds, out of fear or shame, our inner darkness can neither be illuminated nor become a light for others. But when we dare to live as forgiven men and women, we join the wounded healers and draw closer to Jesus... Grace and healing are communicated through the vulnerability of men and women who have been fractured and heartbroken by life.*

—Brennan Manning, *The Rabbi’s Heartbeat*



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# SEXUALITY MINISTERED WELL

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**I**N CHAPTER 3 JOSEPH'S STORY SHOWED US HOW TO RESIST SEXUAL TEMPTATION. David's story shows us how to respond to moral failure after it happens—and that's where many of us find ourselves sooner or later.

## David and Bathsheba

Read 2 Samuel 11. List several of the sins David committed. Also speculate on what lies David told himself in order to justify or give himself permission to commit those sins.

Now read 2 Samuel 12:1-25 as well as Psalm 51. How did David respond inwardly and outwardly to the Lord's rebuke through Nathan?

Has anyone ever been a Nathan to you . . . or have you ever been a Nathan to someone? Explain why it's so important to be and to have a friend like Nathan.

What were the consequences of David's sins, both immediately and throughout his life?

In what ways do you think God "redeemed" much of the pain surrounding this dark chapter of David's life?

Summarize any principles or practical strategies from this story that can help us respond to our own moral / sexual failure, or that of someone else.

## The Example of Jesus

Jesus had a wonderful ministry of mercy to sexually active people. In the following three stories He was both tough on sin and tender toward the sinner. Try to put yourself emotionally in the place of the person struggling with shame and guilt related to sexual issues. From each story, write down whatever you observe about how Jesus ministered to these individuals. Also write any questions you have about Jesus' ministry to sexually broken people.

### **Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-26)**

### **The Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:1-11)**

### **Jesus Anointed by the Sinful Woman (Luke 7:36-50)**

*Jesus caught this woman (see John 8) in the place where everyone else would throw her away—the place of her sin and shame. But he takes her by the hand and leads her to freedom... Jesus does not turn away. He steps right into the mess we have made and offers us not another stone of condemnation, but—of all things—mercy... Out of this place where we have been loved in our shame, we come to know ourselves as [people] worthy of love. And this love changes everything.*

*—Paula Rinehart, Sex and the Soul of a Woman*

From any or all three of these stories:

- **How do you imagine these women felt? (Especially consider the impact of their shame.)**
  
- **What did Jesus see in them and call their attention to? Why?**
  
- **How was Jesus both tough on sin and tender toward them? How was He merciful?**
  
- **Why do you think sexually permissive people respond to Jesus' type of love and truth?**

How can we show love to people who are practicing sexuality in forms that deny the original design found in the Bible?

From these encounters, what can we apply both to our own struggles and in our ministry to those who struggle sexually?

## Prayer Pause

Take some time to pray for those whom you are ministering among. Ask God to give you the freedom and opportunity to minister in those areas of sexual brokenness.

## Reflection on Ministering to the Sexually Broken

Any authentic exploration of the topic of sexuality inevitably opens up a whole can of worms—other related topics that you may have questions about. Topics like sexual abuse, abortion, rape, homosexuality, different forms of sexual addictions, etc. They are facts of life. And some of them just might also be significant, huge, personal issues for you.

It's also a fact of life that there's no way we can explore these topics in depth (or even superficially) in this Bible study. But we don't want to dodge any issues that might be blocking your journey into spiritual healing and transformation.

So here's a compromise: Below you'll find a short list of issues that can and do negatively impact our ability to live well as sexual beings. It isn't exhaustive by any means. But it's our way of saying "We feel your pain." Perhaps none of these are personal issues for you. Or you may feel overwhelmed, ashamed, or hopeless about some of these issues. But be assured: not one of these issues is too big or too difficult or too messy for your Father to deal with. He can bring healing and freedom to you as He has done for many others. He wants you to talk with Him about what's happened to you and how it is affecting your life and relationships today.

For each issue, we'll simply make a brief comment and suggest resources that might help you explore the specific issue deeper, both from a biblical viewpoint and also for practical help. These are also resources that may help you minister to others. We suggest that you budget for and selectively acquire some of these materials over time.

Last, we hope your training environment is becoming a safe place where you can bring up issues without fear of condemnation or gossip. At any age, every follower of Christ needs relationships of trust and environments of grace so he/she doesn't have to hide struggles. If you aren't comfortable doing that, please find a mature believer whom you can trust to walk this part of your journey with you.

### Singleness

To develop your intimacy with Christ, ask the Bridegroom to reveal His delight in you, His desire for you, His committed presence with you, and His deep understanding of your soul.

#### *Resources*

***Choices: Finding God's Way in Dating, Sex, Singleness, and Marriage***, by Stacy and Paula Rinehart

***Gift Wrapped by God: Secret Answers to the Question "Why Wait?"*** by Linda Dillow and Lorraine Pintus

***Sex and the Soul of a Woman: The Reality of Love and Romance in the Age of Casual Sex***, by Paula Rinehart

***Revelations of a Single Woman: Living the Life I Didn't Expect***, by Connally Gilliam (Tyndale, 2006)

Sexual Abuse, Assault, Rape, Promiscuity, And Sexually-transmitted Diseases

Sexual abuse is rampant in our culture and around the world. So are sexually transmitted diseases. If you have experienced sexual abuse or acquired a sexually transmitted disease, please seek a support group and/or professional help.

*Resources*

*Sexual Assault: Will I Ever Feel Okay Again?* by Kay Scott

*The Wounded Heart: Hope for Adult Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse*, by Dr. Dan B. Allender

*Gift Wrapped by God: Secret Answers to the Question "Why Wait?"* by Linda Dillow and Lorraine Pintus

*Sex and the Soul of a Woman: The Reality of Love and Romance in the Age of Casual Sex*, by Paula Rinehart

*A Return to Modesty*, by Wendy Shalit

*What Our Mothers Didn't Tell Us*, by Danielle Crittenden

*No Stones: Women Redeemed from Sexual Shame*, Marnie C. Ferree

Abortion / Unwanted Pregnancy

Few decisions are more heart-rending and emotionally scarring than the decision to end an unwanted pregnancy by committing abortion. This is a complex issue, often involving a conflict of perceived rights. It also forces one to grapple with difficult questions like, "When does life begin? When does a fetus become a person?" But for the Christian, even deeper issues arise, such as the source of the sanctity of human life and the "rights" of the sovereign God over the life He creates. (See Genesis 9:6, Jeremiah 1:4-5, Psalm 139:13-16, and Ezekiel 16.) The resources listed below can help you minister to those struggling both before and after an abortion.

*Resources*

*Her Choice to Heal*, by Sydna Masse and Joan Phillips

*A Season to Heal*, by Freed & Salazar

*Fatherhood Aborted*, by Bye Condon & David Hazard. Ministering to fathers whose children have been aborted.

*No Stones: Women Redeemed from Sexual Shame*, Marnie C. Ferree

*Abortion: A Rational Look at an Emotional Issue*, by R. C. Sproul, Especially good for exploring the theological and biblical issues surrounding abortion.

*Schizophrenic is the best way to describe modern society's view of sexuality. ...Society's schizophrenia develops from an attempt to reduce sex between humans to a purely physical act. ...Yet any rape counselor knows that the real violence occurs on the inside and may lead to years of depression, nightmares, memory loss, and sexual dysfunction. Victims of abusive relatives and pedophilic priests testify that something far more than a body gets hurt when a trusted adult abuses a child sexually. Decades later suffering persists."*

*–Philip Yancey, Rumors of Another World: What on Earth Are We Missing?*

*Abortion is a global issue. The lives of tens of millions of babies are terminated each year. Couples and individuals faced with the challenge of an unwanted baby or a problem pregnancy deserve our compassion regardless of where they fall on the scale of political or biblical "correctness."*

*–Philip Yancey, Rumors of Another World: What on Earth Are We Missing?*

### Pornography, Masturbation, Cybersex, and Sexual Addictions

So you look at porn. What's the big deal? Everybody does it. And besides, how can you avoid it these days? In response to these questions and excuses, research shows that porn is both destructive and highly addictive. The Bible says that it is practically adultery—like having “an affair of the mind.” And that is only the beginning when you consider what's coming in terms of the interactive sexualization of video games. If you've ever gotten hooked and tried to free yourself, then you know how porn can put you in bondage. Have hope! Freedom is possible! These resources can help.

#### **Resources**

***Breaking Free: Understanding Sexual Addiction & the Healing Power of Jesus***, by Russell Willingham

***False Intimacy: Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addiction***, by Dr. Harry W. Schaumburg

***The Struggle***, by Steve Gerali, NavPress (on masturbation)

***Falling Forward: The Pursuit of Sexual Purity***, by Craig Lockwood

***An Affair of the Mind***, by Laurie Hall

***Contrary to Love: Healing the Sexual Addict***, by Patrick Carnes

***Recovering from Infidelity and Overcoming Sexual Addiction*** by H. B. Ondonondon—(two cassette tapes) Focus on the Family

#### **Organizational Resources:**

***National Association for Christian Recovery***

(<http://www.christianrecovery.com>) This organization provides information on Christian 12-step recovery groups and related resources.

***Covenant Eyes*** (<http://www.covenanteyes.com>) This organization assists those struggling with Internet pornography by offering a great filter and also helping with accountability, among other services.

### Gender Identity & Confusion

The bell curve of sexual behavior has expanded to include homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, trans-sexuality, and androgyny (like androids—neither male nor female) alongside the Biblical ideals of virginity and monogamous, life-time heterosexual marriage relationships. The popular media raise our awareness of these options as never before. No wonder some of us are confused about gender issues! For some people, confusion about gender may also have roots in unresolved issues from childhood. Again, the Bible offers hope in this area. Remember the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:27? He probably had some gender issues, yet he found great hope and help in the Gospel.

#### **Resources**

***Strength in Weakness: Healing Sexual and Relational Brokenness***, by Andrew Comiskey

***A Parent's Guide to Preventing Homosexuality***, by Nicolosi and Nicolosi

## Homosexuality

Traditionally, even talking about homosexuality has been taboo in some Christian circles. However, in today's world this issue has come out of the closet and is impacting society, families, politics, and the church, to name only a few. Biblical passages from both the Old and New Testament speak against practicing homosexuality. See Genesis 19:1-7; Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26,27; Ephesians 2:1-5. It is no secret that people are very divided about homosexuality. In this study we can't possibly deal with all the voices speaking for and against homosexuality. We encourage you to examine the Bible on the topic and to practice extending love in Jesus name to all people.

### **Resources**

***Strength in Weakness: Healing Sexual and Relational Brokenness***, by Andrew Comiskey

***The Crisis of Homosexuality***, a Christianity Today series edited by J. Isamu Yamamoto

***Setting Love in Order: Hope and Healing for the Homosexual***, by Mario Bergner

***Crisis in Masculinity***, by Leanne Payne

***Healing Homosexuality***, by Leanne Payne

***Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth***, by Jeffrey Satinover, M.D.

### **Organizational Resources**

***Exodus International*** ([www.exodusglobalalliance.org](http://www.exodusglobalalliance.org)) acts as an umbrella organization for many evangelical ex-gay ministries. Their mission is "Proclaiming that change is possible for the homosexual through the transforming power of Jesus Christ." They equip Christians and churches to uphold the biblical view of sexuality, and also respond with compassion and grace to those affected by homosexuality. Contact: PO Box 77652, Seattle, WA 98177, TEL 206-784-7799.

***Pure Intimacy*** ([www.pureintimacy.org](http://www.pureintimacy.org)) is a ministry associated with Focus on the Family that addresses intimacy and addiction, homosexuality, and a theology of sexuality.

***Desert Stream*** ([www.desertstream.org](http://www.desertstream.org)) aims to minister the Life of Jesus to the relationally and sexually broken.

*"At the heart of the homosexual condition is a deep loneliness, the natural human hunger for mutual love, a search for identity, and a longing for completeness. If homosexual people cannot find these things in the local 'church family,' we have no business to go on using that expression."*  
– John Stott

### Infertility, Childlessness, and Miscarriage

These can become painful issues for many reasons: medical problems, STDs, the death of a child, singleness, for starters. More and more often these days, people are adopting children to address the loneliness related to infertility and childlessness. But often these conditions impact negatively our sense of masculinity or femininity . . . causing some to feel incomplete or ashamed. And that can lead to damage in marriage relationships and, ultimately, to deep disappointment with God. So we play the tape again: why not find a support group and/or seek out the help of a professional?

#### **Resources**

***A Hope Deferred: A Couple's Guide to Coping with Infertility***, by Jill Baughan

***Childless Is Not Less***, by Vicky Love

***Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death*** (<http://www.mend.org>) serves mothers who have suffered a miscarriage

### Infidelity, Marital Life And Problems

Marriage includes joy and challenges. Here are some resources to consider in your journey.

#### **Resources**

Read the Song of Solomon for ideas on romance.

***The Mystery of Marriage: As Iron Sharpens Iron***, by Mike Mason

***Torn Asunder: Recovering from Extramarital Affairs***, by Dave Carder

***Solomon on Sex***, by Joseph C. Dillow

***Intended for Pleasure***, by Ed and Gaye Wheat

***Rebuilding Your Broken World***, by Gordon MacDonald

***Restoring the Fallen***, by Wilson, Friesen, and Paulson

***Restoration Manual***, by Tom Pedigo

***Torn Asunder: Recovering from Extramarital Affairs***, by Dave Carder (book and workbook)

***Recovering from Infidelity and Overcoming Sexual Addictions*** by H. B. Ondonondon, (two cassette tapes) Focus on the Family

#### **Organizational Resources**

***Family Life*** (<http://familylifetoday.org/default.asp>) is a division of Campus Crusade for Christ that provides practical, biblical tools to strengthen marriage and family relationships.

***American Association of Christian Counseling (AACC)***

(<http://www.aacc.net>) is a national Christian organization of Professional Counselors. The site provides a referral network of its membership.

#### **A Closing Word of Comfort...**

*Apart from the presence of God, there is no deep healing for our grief. Time can make it easier, but that is all. The good news when our hearts are broken is that God invites us to freely mourn in the great space of His loving presence. Our pain does not threaten Him; it does not cause Him to fear that we will ruin His reputation. He is not repulsed with the ugliness we feel. Even when we hurt so much that we can hardly bear it, we are still His beloved.*

*–Sally Breedlove,  
Choosing Rest*