

A Christian Understanding of Sex and Human Flourishing

Part 1

Understanding and Responding to
the Sexual Revolution



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Introduction

OVERVIEW

What do your neighbours and colleagues think about sex before marriage or homosexuality? What messages about these matters do your children receive from television, movies, and social media? How do the laws and cultural trends of your country treat Christian sexual ethics?

There is a view of sex and human relationships being adopted and propagated across the Western world. And it is having a devastating impact on individuals, families, communities, and societies.

It is not an exaggeration to call this transformation a sexual revolution. Whether you are a leader in your church or just a Christian trying to live faithfully, the sexual revolution is all around you. We cannot avoid facing and addressing sexual promiscuity, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, pornography, and transgenderism because the world insists that we think the same way that it does about them. The world is moving rapidly away from biblical norms.

Yet most Christians are unprepared for this challenge. We do not know what to say or how to say it, despite having the truth on our side. The temptation is to either retreat from all public engagement or to lash out angrily and simplistically.

We know we can do better. God's purpose for sex and human relationships can not only be defended, it can be joyfully proclaimed. Where do we start?

Firstly, we must fully grasp what is going on and why. We will remain one step behind, if we fail to understand how and why the sexual revolution has been unfolding over the last fifty years. Discovering its impetus, logic, and trajectory equips us to recognize exactly where it can and must be challenged. Seeing past the headlines and trends to the root issues allows us to understand the nature of the challenge and helps us fight the right battles in the right way.

Secondly, we need to truly understand God's plan for sex and human relationships. We must be so thoroughly familiar with the creational and biblical vision that we can both positively explain it and demonstrate it in our own lives, proving to the world that God's ways are designed to allow humans to flourish and thrive.

Thirdly, we can take the opportunity to more effectively communicate God's plan for sex in relationships. We do not need to choose between the gospel and moral vision. Both reverberate with the love and grace of the Lord, who is making all things new. Sinful views of sex leave human brokenness and tragedy in their wake,

but our message about God's better way can and should be rooted in the gospel.

This study, therefore, will help you to be socially aware, biblically informed, morally consistent, and equipped to communicate the gospel in response to the sexual trends of the modern world, with timeless grace and truth. It is a tool, designed as a means to drive you further into prayer and the Word, relying on the God who "has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, [and] will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you" (1 Pet. 5:10).

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Either an individual or a group can productively use this study. If you feel (as we do) the urgency of addressing this issue, please consider gathering fellow Christians to think through it with you.

a) Individual study:

If you choose to use the curriculum for individual study or devotion, it will be important—as you watch the videos, answer questions, and complete assignments on your own—to find ways to formulate responses and turn your reactions into thoughts. When we study individually, particularly if videos are involved, it is easy to be passive. Therefore, it is helpful to go through the material with pen in hand (or a keyboard at your fingertips), ready to take note of important concepts and references and, more importantly, to write down your own ideas when the study calls for discussion. In this way, you can help yourself to benefit from this study. Make sure that you also discuss what you are learning with another brother or sister, particularly if you are a verbal processor.

b) Group study:

If you use the curriculum as a group study, it is important to have a leader or facilitator (either by appointing one person or taking it in turns to lead). A facilitator invariably makes group studies more focused and meaningful, but he/she should not be expected to do all of the work. The more united a group is in its commitment to seriously think through this issue, the better it will be.

Therefore, all group members should read and answer the questions for each week's entire study before meeting together. Group members should also watch the opening video ahead of time. This will both give the group adequate time for discussion together and ensure that participants are prepared to engage with the points raised in the video.

LEADER'S GUIDE

- A. It is important for you, as the group leader/facilitator, to communicate goals and expectations to the rest of the group. Once these expectations and goals have been communicated, you can help to ensure that they are met.
- B. As discussed earlier, an essential expectation is the group's mutual commitment to think and study seriously. While this means that everyone should be reading through the material carefully before each gathering, you should be especially prepared, thinking through possible specific applications, contentious issues, and follow-up questions each week.
- C. This preparation is also important because your group will likely not cover all of the material in this study. Therefore, if you thoughtfully read through everything, you can select the materials and questions in each lesson that are most relevant to your group's context and needs.
- D. There are six lessons in this study, so plan on having six group sessions of approximately ninety minutes each.
- E. Every lesson in the study has three main components: Sharpen Your Mind, Dig Deeper, and Prepare for Action. Again, depending on your group's particular needs and context, you will probably want to adjust the relative emphasis you place on these components in each lesson.
- F. We have assembled some of the best Christian thinkers on these topics to assist you, and we have tried to help you consider them wisely. But, as you are aware, this is a spiritual matter that is part of a spiritual battle. The sexual revolution is one of the devil's most effective tools of deception, and he does not want you to "put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). Therefore, as believers, we need a prayerful reliance on God, who is the source of all purity.

Lesson 1

How the Sexual Revolution Is Changing You, Your Church, and Your Ministry

As the cultural deconstruction of gender continues to accelerate, people across Europe and the United States now recognize and celebrate a broad range of sexual identities and preferences. The church is badly prepared for these new ideologies, lacking both the intellectual and apologetic resources to resist the media and cultural elites that stand behind them. So what does the future hold? Will our churches gradually accommodate the sexual zeitgeist, or can we model a better vision of human flourishing?



Glynn Harrison was formerly Professor and Head of Department of Psychiatry, University of Bristol, where he was also a practicing Consultant Psychiatrist. He now speaks widely on issues at the interface between Christian faith and psychology, pastoral ministry and psychiatry. His new book, *A Better Story: God, Sex and Human Flourishing*, is published by IVP.

SHARPEN YOUR MIND



1. Video: [How the Sexual Revolution is Changing You, Your Church, and Your Ministry](#) (26 minutes)
2. Discussion: After you have watched the video as a group, discuss the following questions:
 - A. How would you define the sexual revolution?
 - B. In what ways have the ideas of the sexual revolution challenged biblical ethics?
 - C. What ideas are at the root of the sexual revolution?
 - D. Can you think of specific ways in which the ideas behind the sexual revolution have manifested themselves in your culture and community?¹
 - E. Which moral concerns are emphasized in the sexual revolution, and how are they deployed to make it a moral cause? How does it help us to consider these moral concerns?
 - F. In what ways is the sexual revolution a narrative? How does that give it power?
 - G. How and why has the Christian response to the sexual revolution been mostly ineffective?

1. Some viewers will be unfamiliar with Glynn's reference to "the winner of the Eurovision song contest." Eurovision is an annual televised event that is like a continent-wide American Idol. In 2014, it was won by a transvestite man who, upon winning, said, "I dream of a world where we don't have to talk about unnecessary things like sexuality, who you love. I felt like tonight Europe showed that we are a community of respect and tolerance."

DIG DEEPER

1. What next? We have started to think about the sexual revolution's foundations and implications. Start to dig deeper into this by writing down two questions you would like to explore regarding the sexual revolution and our response to it. Share and discuss your questions.
2. Answers to Questions: Below are several short videos with answers to important questions about the sexual revolution. Choose three to watch with your group.
 - A. [How did the sexual revolution of the twentieth century change attitudes towards sex?](#) (Stefan Gustavsson)
 - B. [Why has sex become such an important apologetic issue?](#) (Stefan Gustavsson)
 - C. [What is healthy sexuality and how can we practice it?](#) (Richard Winter)
 - D. [What are the shortcomings in the Church's traditional response to sexuality?](#) (Richard Winter)
 - E. [What are the most harmful messages about sex today?](#) (Richard Winter)
3. Discussion: Summarize, in your own words, some of the answers given, discuss whether or not you agree and why, and consider their application and implications.

PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. Personal Reflection

- A. How prepared do you feel to engage with the ideas of the sexual revolution? In what ways are you susceptible to its assumptions and influence? Where do you need to grow and what do you need to know in order to better respond to it?
- B. Does this discussion reveal any of your own attitudes, beliefs, or practices, which need correcting or adjusting? Explain.

2. Application

- A. How have the ideas and consequences of the sexual revolution affected your friends, family, and colleagues? How and why has this influence occurred? How can understanding the foundations and implications of the sexual revolution help you reach out to them more effectively? What is one way you can do that this week?
- B. Is there any topic from this lesson that you would like to investigate further? Make a commitment to spend some time on it this week and share what you find with a fellow believer (see below for resource ideas).

3. Prayer and Scripture

- A. Spend time praying that the Lord would give you wisdom and knowledge with which to respond to the ideas of the sexual revolution, as well as the compassion and humility to love friends and family who are influenced by it or advocate it.
- B. Memorise and meditate on Romans 12:1–2.

Resources for Further Study

- Glynn Harrison, "The Long Shadow," <http://www.solasmagazine.com/the-long-shadow.html>
- ["The Sexual Revolution and the Christian Response," Interview with Glynn Harrison](#)
- Ian Paul, "Sexuality and Same-Sex Relationships," <http://www.bethinking.org/christian-beliefs/sexuality-and-samesex-relationships>

Lesson 2

Re-Imagining a Biblical Culture of Sex and Human Relationships

The attacks and challenges of the sexual revolution can prove a blessing to Christians if they compel us to re-discover and live out the biblical vision for relationships and human flourishing. How can we both refresh our understanding of God's design and communicate it anew? And in what ways do our churches and our families need to change?



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SHARPEN YOUR MIND



1. Video: [Re-Imagining a Biblical Culture of Sex and Human Relationships](#) (28 minutes)
2. Discussion: After you have watched the video as a group, discuss the following questions:
 - A. How have Christians failed in our response and critique of the sexual revolution?
 - B. On what basis should Christians reconstruct a critique of the sexual revolution? Why?
 - C. What did the sexual revolution promise and how has it failed to deliver?
 - D. In what ways has the sexual revolution and the consequent degradation of marriage been especially devastating to children?
 - E. What are the essential elements of the biblical story of sex and human flourishing?
 - F. How can we live out and re-tell the biblical story of sex and human flourishing?

DIG DEEPER

1. What next? We have started to critique the sexual revolution and develop a Christian response to it. Start to dig deeper into this by writing down two questions you would like to explore about a Christian critique of the sexual revolution and the Christian story of sex and human flourishing. Share and discuss your questions.
2. Answers to Questions: Below are several short videos with answers to important questions about the sexual revolution and the biblical view of sex. Choose three to watch with your group.
 - A. [What is God's blueprint for sexuality?](#) (Michael Ots)
 - B. [What is the biblical perspective on human sexuality?](#) (Stefan Gustavsson)
 - C. [What historically were the main perspectives on human sexuality?](#) (Stefan Gustavsson)
 - D. [How does a biblical view of sexuality help us to share the Gospel?](#) (Michael Ots)
 - E. [Why does God put limitations on sex?](#) (Michael Ots)
 - F. [Is the push for same-sex marriage part of the sexual revolution?](#) (Glynn Harrison)
3. Discussion: Summarise, in your own words, some of the answers given, discuss whether or not you agree and why, and consider their application and implications.

PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. Personal Reflection

- A. Why is a Christian vision of sex and human flourishing so important to your own life? Where do you need to grow and what do you need to know in order to better live out a Christian understanding of human flourishing?
- B. Does this discussion reveal any of your own attitudes, beliefs, or practices that need correcting or adjusting? Explain.

2. Application

- A. How can understanding the foundations and implications of a Christian view of sex and human flourishing help you better share the gospel? How would you explain the biblical story of sex and human flourishing to a non-Christian? (Write out your answer and share it with another person in the group)
- B. Is there any topic from this lesson that you would like to investigate further? Make a commitment to spend some time on it this week and share what you find with a fellow believer (see below for resource ideas).

3. Prayer and Scripture

- A. Spend time praying that the Lord would help you to consistently live within his beautiful plan for sex and relationships. Pray for opportunities to compassionately and humbly share the Christian story of human flourishing with others who need to hear this good news.
- B. Memorise and meditate on Jeremiah 29:11.

Resources for Further Study

- Glynn Harrison, "[A Better Story: Faith in the Shadow of the Sexual Revolution](#)"
- Amy Orr-Ewing, "[What's Wrong with Sex before Marriage](#)"

Lesson 3

Homosexuality as a Serious Apologetic Issue

As part of the ongoing sexual revolution, Western governments have used the law to legitimize, and enforce the equal acceptance of, same-sex relationships. This has forced Christians to be clearer than ever about where we stand and why. There are important questions about homosexuality that we need to be able to clearly answer. Why do some people find themselves attracted to the same sex? Is it true that people are made this way? Does the Bible condemn homosexuality as sin; and, if so, why? We must think about how to respond to the tide of popular opinion and (in some cases) legal pressure. How can we rebut the fashionable celebration of homosexuality with a robust biblical understanding?



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SHARPEN YOUR MIND



1. Video: [Homosexuality as a Serious Apologetic Issue](#) (28 minutes)
2. Discussion: After you have watched the video as a group, discuss the following questions:
 - A. What is the difference between ethical and anthropological statements about homosexuality?
 - B. What are the four main perspectives on homosexuality?
 - C. How does the Christian definition of human identity challenge contemporary ways of viewing homosexuality?
 - D. What are the clichés used to defend homosexuality and how are they flawed?
 - E. What are the causes of homosexuality? What part does genetics play in homosexuality?
 - F. How does Natural Law help us to evaluate the ethics of sexual behaviour and sexual lifestyles?
 - G. Summarize how the following biblical texts help us evaluate the value of sex and the ethics of sexual behaviour: Genesis 1:26–28; Genesis 2:23–25; Romans 1:18–28; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Timothy 1:10.

DIG DEEPER

1. What next? We have started to develop a Christian response to same-sex marriage and why it is ethically wrong. Start to dig deeper into this by writing down two questions you would like to explore about homosexuality and sexual sin. Share and discuss your questions.
2. Answers to Questions: Below are short videos with answers to important questions about homosexuality, sexual sin, and God's design for sex. Choose three to watch with your group.
 - A. [How has homosexuality become a serious apologetic issue?](#) (Stefan Gustavsson)
 - B. [How does same-sex marriage threaten marriage in general?](#) (Pasi Turunen)
 - C. [What has driven the changes in moral attitudes to sex over the last 50 years?](#) (Emőke Tapolyai)
 - D. [Is the push for same-sex marriage part of the sexual revolution?](#) (Glynn Harrison)
 - E. [What has God created marriage to both represent and achieve?](#) (Tim Kimmel)
 - F. [What are key principles to remember when engaging non-Christians about same sex marriage?](#) (Pasi Turunen)
3. Discussion: Summarise, in your own words, some of the answers given, discuss whether or not you agree and why, and consider their application and implications.

PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. Personal Reflection

- A. Is it possible to defend the truth about sex and marriage in an ungodly way? Where do you need to grow and what do you need to know in order to better explain God's plan for sex and marriage?
- B. Does this discussion reveal any of your own attitudes, beliefs, or practices that need correcting or adjusting? Explain.

2. Application

- A. How can you integrate the biblical message about sex and marriage into your witness? Imagine you are speaking with an advocate for same-sex marriage: How would you use both Natural Law and the Bible to explain why same-sex marriage is ethically wrong? (Write out your answer and share it with another person in the group)
- B. Is there any topic from this lesson that you would like to investigate further? Make a commitment to spend time on it this week and share what you find with a fellow believer (see below for resource ideas).

3. Prayer and Scripture

- A. Spend time praying that the Lord would help you to be loving witnesses to the truth about sex, with kindness and boldness, in word and deed.
- B. Memorise and meditate on Genesis 1:26–28 and 2:23–25.

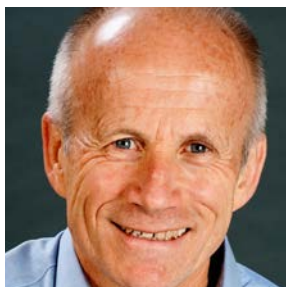
Resources for Further Study

- Richard Winter, "[The New Normal? Understanding Same Sex Attraction and Gender Fluidity.](#)"
- William Edgar, "[Homosexuality and the Bible: Whose is the Best Narrative?](#)"
- Interview with Kevin DeYoung: "[What does the Bible Really Teach about Homosexuality?](#)"
- "[Sam Allberry on Ministering to Same-Sex Attracted Friends,](#)" The Gospel Coalition.
- Al Mohler, Sam Allberry, and Russell Moore, "[Homosexuality: Our Third Rail?](#)"

Lesson 4

Whatever Became of Sex? Black, White, and Fifty Shades of Grey

Sex is a powerful force for creativity and goodness, but, when perverted, it becomes a means of destructiveness and evil. It can give us a taste of heaven or hell. We have reached a point in our culture in which “anything goes” in regard to sex—all boundaries are despised and ignored. Which voices are you listening to? In an age like this, can we know and cherish an approach to sex that is good and healthy?



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SHARPEN YOUR MIND



1. Video: [Whatever Became of Sex? Black, White, and Fifty Shades of Grey](#) (23 minutes)
2. Discussion: After you have watched the video as a group, discuss the following questions:
 - A. What is the purpose of sex?
 - B. What are the contexts in which sex is experienced as “agony” in our culture? In what way should sex be understood as “ecstasy”?
 - C. What shapes people’s understanding of sex today? Which voices are people listening to?
 - D. How does the “hook-up culture” degrade the value and importance of sex, as well as particularly harm women?
 - E. What impact is ubiquitous pornography having on men and women, their view of sex, and the society? How has it entered the mainstream?
 - F. What is the attraction of pornography and how does it poison relationships and sex?
 - G. How have Christians also confused people and distorted God’s plan for sex?
 - H. In this culture, how can Christians be faithful to the divine purpose and meaning of sex?

DIG DEEPER

1. What next? We have seen that there are many voices in our culture distorting God's purpose for sex. Dig deeper into this by writing down two questions you would like to explore about the culture's view of sex and our response to it. Share and discuss your questions.
2. Answers to Questions: Below are several short videos with answers to important questions about sex. Choose three to watch with your group.
 - A. [How does pornography distort the biblical view of sex?](#) (Tim Chester)
 - B. [What can the sexual failings of biblical characters teach us?](#) (Richard Winter)
 - C. [How does viewing pornography affect one's relationships with others?](#) (Tim Chester)
 - D. [How can a person become locked in sexual addiction?](#) (Emőke Tapolyai)
 - E. [How do we protect our bodies from sexual sin?](#) (Jim Cecy)
 - F. [Why do preachers often ignore the Song of Songs?](#) (Grenville Kent)
3. Discussion: Summarise, in your own words, some of the answers given, discuss whether or not you agree and why, and consider their application and implications.

PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. Personal Reflection

- A. Are there ways in which you put yourself in danger of sexual temptation rather than running away from it? Have you presented God's view of sex in a way that glorifies his grace and beauty?
- B. Does this discussion reveal any of your own attitudes, beliefs, or practices that need correcting or adjusting? Explain.

2. Application

- A. How can you help yourself, your family, and your brothers and sisters in Christ to resist the temptations and distortions of a sexualised culture? How can you and your church bless those who have been sexually exploited and abused? (Write out your answers and share them with another person in the group)
- B. Is there any topic from this lesson that you would like to investigate further? Make a commitment to spend time on it this week and share what you find with a fellow believer (see below for resource ideas).

3. Prayer and Scripture

- A. Spend time praying that the Lord would help you resist the devil and his schemes to use sex to shipwreck your faith. Pray that our families, churches, and nation have wisdom to stand against, rather than submit to, the evils of pornography, homosexuality, adultery, and all other distortions of sex as God made it to be.
- B. Memorise and meditate on 1 Peter 1:13–16.

Resources for Further Study

- Jim Cecy, "[Sex and the Single Person](#)."
- Diane Langberg, "[The Churches Role in Helping Victims of Sexual Abuse and Trauma](#)."
- "[Rethinking Sex Ed in the Church](#)," The Gospel Coalition.

Lesson 5

Whatever Became of Sex? Living by the Maker's Instructions

God has not left his good plan and purpose for sex a mystery. In the Bible, from Genesis to the New Testament, God gives us perfect guidance about sex and sexuality. We do not have to be defensive when talking to the world about sex; we have a better story than the world's 'anything goes' culture of degradation and momentary pleasure. The Apostle Paul even tells us that sex gives Christians a foretaste of the coming intimacy between the bride of Christ and her divine lover.



Richard Winter is Professor Emeritus of Practical Theology and Counselling at Covenant Theological Seminary in St Louis (USA). He is also a psychotherapist and counsellor who was trained in medicine and psychiatry in England before serving as a staff-member and director of the English branch of the L'Abri Fellowship for 14 years. He is the author of a number of books, including *When Life Goes Dark: Finding Hope in the Midst of Depression* (2012).

SHARPEN YOUR MIND



1. Video: [Whatever Became of Sex? Living by the Maker's Instructions](#) (21 minutes)
2. Discussion: After you have watched the video as a group, discuss the following questions:
 - A. What truths about sex and sexuality can we learn from the creation story in Genesis 1–2?
 - B. What are the differences between “good sex” and “pornographic sex”?
 - C. What can we learn from Proverbs, Joseph, David, and the Song of Songs about both the blessings and dangers of sexuality?
 - D. What are the sexual differences between men and women, and why are they important to understand?
 - E. What is a high view of sex? How is it established in the Bible?
 - F. What are the consequences of casual sex?
 - G. What do the maker's instructions for sex and sexuality mean for a single person?
 - H. How does sex point to God's purpose for us?

DIG DEEPER

1. What next? We have thought about God's high view of sex. Start to dig deeper into this by writing down two questions you would like to explore about God's purpose for sex. Share and discuss your questions.
2. Answers to Questions: Below are several short videos with answers to important questions about sexuality and purity, scriptural instructions for sex, and a Christian response to sexual abuse and immorality. Choose three to watch with your group.
 - A. [How do biblical models of lust and idolatry help us understand sexual sin?](#) (Emőke Tapolyai)
 - B. [What do we need to protect our minds from in order to guard our sexual purity?](#) (Jim Cecy)
 - C. [How can a church community care for a recovering sex addict?](#) (Emőke Tapolyai)
 - D. [What mistakes do Christians frequently make in trying to help someone scarred by sexual abuse?](#) (Diane Langberg)
 - E. [What are some ways we can help guard friends from sexual immorality?](#) (Jim Cecy)
3. Discussion: Summarise, in your own words, some of the answers given, discuss whether or not you agree and why, and consider their application and implications.

PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. Personal Reflection

- A. How do and can you honour scriptural boundaries for sex in your own life? How does the world's view of sex battle against God's in your single life or marriage?
- B. Does this discussion reveal any of your own attitudes, beliefs, or practices, which need correcting or adjusting? Explain.

2. Application

- A. How would you use scripture's high view of sex to convince someone that casual sex is damaging to people and relationships? How can you and your church reflect the reality that sex points us to God's purpose for humans? (Write out your answers and share them with another person in the group)
- B. Is there any topic from this lesson that you would like to investigate further? Make a commitment to spend time on it this week and share what you find with a fellow believer (see below for resource ideas).

3. Prayer and Scripture

- A. Spend time praying that the Lord would give you opportunities to compassionately and humbly share God's view of sex with friends, family, and, where appropriate, children. Pray that your country would be delivered from a culture of pornography and embrace God's plan and purposes.
- B. Memorise and meditate on 1 Corinthians 6:18.

Resources for Further Study

- Tim Chester, "[How to Pastor People Who Are Struggling with Pornography](#)."
- Keller, Moore, DeYoung, "[How to Speak to Our Culture about Sex](#)", *The Gospel Coalition*.
- John Piper, "[Sex Belongs to Believers](#)".

Lesson 6

Winning the Purity War: The Abuse of God's Design for Sexual Purity



Sexual immorality is any thought or action that violates God's intended design for our sexuality. This lesson presents the deadly process of seduction that results in the many devastating consequences of moral sin.



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SHARPEN YOUR MIND



1. Video: [Winning The Purity War: The Abuse of God's Design for Sexual Purity](#) (27 minutes)
2. Discussion: After you have watched the video as a group, discuss the following questions:
 - A. What is the importance of "oneness" in the Bible and where do we see this applied?
 - B. How does the devil attack God's plan for "oneness"?
 - C. How does sexual immorality conflict with the glory of God?
 - D. What is lust? Why is lust destructive?
 - E. What are the steps that lead Christians into sexual sin?
 - F. Why is maturity an important part of God's design for sexual purity?

DIG DEEPER

1. What next? We have looked in this lesson at God's design for sexual purity and how it is abused. Dig deeper into this by writing down two questions you would like to explore regarding sexual purity and how to practice and protect it. Share and discuss your questions.
2. Answers to Questions: Below are short videos with answers to important questions about sexual purity. Choose three to watch with your group.
 - A. [How do we start a revival of purity?](#) (Jim Cecy)
 - B. [How has the Church distorted a Biblical view of sex?](#) (Grenville Kent)
 - C. [What has God created marriage to both represent and achieve?](#) (Tim Kimmel)
 - D. [What is the Christian understanding of marriage?](#) (Pasi Turunen)
 - E. [How does sex point us toward a deeper need for intimacy with God?](#) (Richard Winter)
 - F. [How do we prepare our minds to resist sexual temptation?](#) (Jim Cecy)
3. Discussion: Summarise, in your own words, some of the answers given, discuss whether or not you agree and why, and consider their application and implications.

PREPARE FOR ACTION

1. Personal Reflection

- A. Each of us is susceptible to sexual sin in slightly different ways. Try to identify the areas and situations in which you are vulnerable and consider how you can safeguard yourself, your family, and your church from sexual impurity.
- B. Does this discussion reveal any of your own attitudes, beliefs, or practices, which need correcting or adjusting? Explain.

2. Application

- A. Are there any of the steps to sexual sin described by Jim Cecy on which you need to particularly focus? How can you enjoy and celebrate the beauties and blessings of God's design for sexual purity? (Write out your answer and share it with another person in the group)
- B. Is there any topic from this lesson that you would like to investigate further? Make a commitment to spend time on it this week and share what you find with a fellow believer (see below for resource ideas).

3. Prayer and Scripture

- A. Spend time praying that the Lord would help you and your family live purely. Pray for opportunities to glorify God in this way before non-Christian friends, colleagues, and family members. Pray that the Lord would give you unity and oneness in your walk with him, your marriage, and your fellowship.
- B. Memorise and meditate on 1 Thessalonians 4:1–5.

Resources for Further Study

- Jim Cecy, "[Immorality in the Ministry](#)"
- Marshall Segal, "[Never Harmless, Never Private, Never Safe: Fighting Porn with Superior Pleasure](#)" (Desiring God)
- Julia Huisman & Tammy Johnston, "[Purity after Impurity](#)"