

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. TAKE TIME BEFORE GROUP TO GO OVER THIS GUIDE.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

In Week 1 of our "SexEd" series, Paul laid the foundation necessary for the next month by reminding us of the clear win over the next four weeks: that personal holiness will increase and public hypocrisy will decrease. He then taught about the purpose of sex from God's perspective.

1. **The purpose of sex:** While culture tries to make sex simply a physical act, God has always had a better plan (one that is being confirmed by science!). His purpose for sex is to produce intimacy between the partners, and his plan was for that to take place in the safety of a long-term committed relationship (which would be marriage). He designed our bodies to release chemicals during sexual contact that would bond us with our partner, which means that **sex is the glue that makes one of two** (this week's Big Idea).
2. **The result of living out that purpose:** As we learned from the story of Lot in Sodom (see Genesis 19), when God's people don't live lives consistent with his purpose, we lose the credibility we need in order to point culture toward God's promises. But when we do commit ourselves to honoring God's design by living lives of sexual purity, we find that we are marked with authenticity in culture.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- Do you have a takeaway from this week's message that you would like to share?
- How important is security to intimacy? In other words, how intimate are you willing to be without security in a relationship? Have you been in a relationship that lacked intimacy? One that had plenty? What made the difference?
- We know from Genesis 2:24 that God's purpose in marriage is that we would be "one flesh" and from Hebrews 13:4 that sex in marriage is worth honoring. What insight do we find in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 that can help us honor the intimacy that is reserved for the relationship between husband and wife? How can we honor God with our bodies as married people? As single people?
- Thinking back through the story of Lot's warning being laughed off by his sons-in-law, why do you think what we say is so easily discounted by our actions when the two don't match? Have you ever had something important to say but not had the credibility to say it? What happened?
- It's so easy to become stuck in the shame of past choices (or even current ones). Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and think about the shame that the believers in Corinth probably felt as they read verses 9 and 10. Now talk about the freedom that comes with the opening phrase of verse 11 – "and that is what some of you were!" What changed us?