

HOLY

Sexuality

WEEK 5 // SEPTEMBER 25, 2022

SERIES GUARDRAILS:

As this series delves into some topics that can be heavy, complex, and/or personal, we want to start by recapping the ground rules & acknowledgments Pastor Brannon gave us to start this series. These will help guide you and hopefully shape a safe environment for the Holy Spirit to move full of *grace and truth* (John 1).

1. Recognition #1: We recognize this is a deeply personal conversation.

- *Reminder: we may all have different ways that we relate to this conversation, but shaming someone who comes at it from a different viewpoint is **never** Jesus-centered. We see **individuals over issues, and people over policies.***

2. Recognition #2: We recognize this is a deceptively complex conversation.

- *Guidance: this guide may better be utilized for individual conversation. Where you are is where you are, and you may not be in a season where you can have the right conversation the right way with the people around you. That is okay. Don't force it. Fight against the enemy wanting to lead you into the sin of fighting, slandering, or hating one another.*

3. Recognition #3: We recognize this is a deep conversation.

- *Go slow. Don't rush. Don't stop listening. Don't stop learning. Don't stop loving. Don't stop praying. Don't stop seeking Jesus together - as long as it takes.*

4. Recognition #3: We recognize this can be a confusing conversation.

- *Listen well. As James says: "let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." [James 1:19]*

Before you continue, stop to pray for one another (or your personal posture) and that the Holy Spirit would lead your **conversations** and **listening**. Ask Jesus to be glorified in your time together.



SUNDAY TEACHING RECAP:

In week five of Holy Sexuality, Pastor John Mangrum helps us dig into how we live out well God's design for us as sexual beings. We look at what scripture speaks to those who are married as well as those who are single (for whatever space they enter or remain in singleness.) None of us are ever meant for aloneness, and the church needs a deeper understanding of marriage and singleness so that we can understand that the abundant life that is yours in Christ Jesus is available now – not someday.

GROUP CHECK-IN:

If going through as a group, we moved this portion until after the guardrails and recap. This week, the question is: **“What is still challenging about this conversation? How is God moving in ways I previously wouldn't have seen?”**

You may want to pause right here and just take the space to spend some time in prayer. Bring your anger, frustration, hurt, and pain individually to Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your group to see fellow brothers and sisters that God has and is drawing to Himself rightly - to not lost sight of the work of the Holy Spirit because you may only glimpse wilderness.

Guidelines: Jesus sees where each of us are. Jesus loves us in this. And Jesus is always working and calling to Himself. Whether angry or scared, frustrated or burdened - Jesus is big enough to handle and we can together move closer to Him as He is in the business of reconciling and restoring all things (including you and me!) to Himself.

CONVERSATION QUESTIONS:

- Pastor John helped us unpack the question “How do we live out our God-given sexuality well?” We spent time in Song of Solomon (Song of Songs) and the Gospel of Matthew to help us understand this. John listed three key understandings: **INVITATIONAL, PASSIONATE & PLAYFUL, SECURE & CHOSEN.**
 - Which of these stood out to you? How have you understood this clearly from God's Word? How have you seen this distorted in your own understanding or the understanding of those around you?

- ***“When it comes to love, power falls flat.”*** Where have you seen the tension of power in regards to love & relationships? How do we see this modeled in the life of Jesus? *(God who could in His infinite power make us love Him, instead displayed a love that gives itself and invites us into a relationship.)*
- How does the idea of **ONENESS** from a God-centered definition change from your/cultural understanding (whether culture is the church, country, your upbringing, etc.) To rehash: *being with someone else, someone who is not me, someone who is other* - not in the sense of “the complete me” but “they are other than me.”
- Pastor John asked, “Was Jesus’ life incomplete because He wasn’t married?” How does this inform how we should view or lead us to repentance in an unbiblical elevation of marriage? Dialogue about this.
- “Singleness is not condemnation to a lesser life.” Have you believed this? Have you led others to believe that because they are single they are somehow lesser or waiting on something better?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

Pastor John closed by reminding us that the abundant life that is yours in Christ Jesus is here and now - not waiting for marriage or the right relationship. Oneness is experienced in some exclusive ways in Biblical marriage, but Oneness is also to be experienced in the church. Take time to sit with how God is asking you to be faithful with others and sit with how you may need to surrender unhealthy beliefs and understandings at the foot of the cross, that you can experience life in the way of Jesus, led by the Spirit.

If you are reflecting individually, you can reach out to a Pastor to talk. Email matt@ncchapel.com and he can help set that up.