

Marriage & Sexuality

God's Design, the Bigger Story, and How We Live It Out
Weekly Discipleship Resources - Week of 3.22.26

Personal Weekly Study Guide

Overview

This week's message asked us to see marriage and sexuality not as a political talking point or a list of rules, but as part of the deepest story Scripture tells — the story of God pursuing his people like a groom pursuing a bride. What we believe about marriage and sexuality ultimately flows from what we believe about God, his design, and the life he's calling us into. This study is an invitation to sit with that story personally, honestly, and with your whole heart. Take a few minutes each day to read, reflect, and respond.

A Quick Encouragement

This topic lands differently for different people. For some, it's mostly doctrinal — something to think through carefully. For others, it's deeply personal — touching your own story, your family, or someone you love. Wherever you're coming from, bring it honestly into this study. God is not surprised by your questions, your struggles, or your pain. Read slowly. Let Scripture speak before you decide what you think. And if something stirs in you that's hard to name, bring it to God in prayer before you bring it anywhere else.

Day 1 — The Story Behind the Design

Read: Genesis 2:18-25 | Revelation 21:1-5 | Revelation 21:9-10

Reflection: Marriage isn't just a human institution — it's a theological statement. God chose to frame the entire story of Scripture — from the first pages to the last — using the image of a groom and a bride. Human marriage is designed to be a picture of God's relationship with his people: loving, sacrificial, committed, and moving toward perfect union. That's the foundation everything else is built on.

Questions:

- What stands out to you about the way Genesis 2 describes the first marriage? What does the language of "one flesh" communicate about the kind of union God designed?
- Revelation pictures the culmination of all of history as a wedding. What does it stir in you to see God's ultimate goal described that way?
- How does understanding human marriage as a reflection of God's relationship with his people change the way you think about it — either your own or the institution in general?

Daily Prayer:

Father, thank you that marriage isn't just a human idea — it's yours. You designed it, you protect it, and you use it to show us what your love for us looks like. Help me to see it the way you do, and to honor what you've made it to be. Amen.

Day 2 — What Jesus Said

Read: Matthew 19:3-9 | Mark 10:6-9 | John 8:1-11

Reflection: When Jesus was pressed on marriage, he didn't poll the culture or soften the edges — he went straight back to creation. He quoted Genesis, affirmed the original design, and underscored the depth and permanence of the marriage covenant. And yet the same Jesus who held the standard also met the woman caught in adultery with compassion before correction. Truth and grace were never in competition with him.

Questions:

- Jesus answers a question about divorce by talking about the original design of marriage. What does that tell you about how he approaches hard questions — and what it means for how we should approach them?
- Read John 8:1-11. How did Jesus hold both truth and grace in that moment? What can you learn from the order of his response?
- Is it easy or hard for you to hold truth and grace together on this topic? Which one do you tend to default to — and what does that cost you?

Daily Prayer:

Jesus, you never let truth and grace cancel each other out. You held both — fully. I want to be like that. Help me to love what you love, stand where you stand, and respond to people the way you did. Amen.

Day 3 — A Consistent Thread

Read: Romans 1:18-27 | 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 | Hebrews 13:4

Reflection: One of the most striking things about Scripture's treatment of sexuality is its consistency. Across the Old Testament and the New, across Jewish law and Roman culture, across multiple authors and centuries, the tone and teaching remain the same. Sexual activity outside of marriage is always described with grief, not neutrality. That's not coincidence — it's clarity. God's design has never changed because God has never changed.

Questions:

- Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. Paul says the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. How does that truth change the way you think about sexuality — not as a list of rules, but as a matter of identity and belonging?
- Hebrews 13:4 says the marriage bed should be "honored by all." What does it look like to honor the marriage relationship in the way you talk about it, the way you treat others, and the way you live?
- Why do you think the consistency of Scripture across so many different cultures and eras matters when people argue that the Bible's teaching on sexuality is outdated?

Daily Prayer:

God, you don't change — and neither does your design. In a world where everything feels negotiable, help me to hold your Word as the anchor. Not out of stubbornness, but out of trust that you know what you're doing. Amen.

Day 4 — Grace in the Struggle

Read: Romans 5:20-21 | 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 | Romans 8:1

Reflection: God's standard is real — and so is his grace. For anyone whose life has been touched by brokenness in this area — their own or someone they love — the message of Scripture is not condemnation. It's an invitation. Where the struggle is great, God shows up

greater. Paul had a thorn in his flesh he begged God to remove. God's answer wasn't removal — it was sufficiency. His grace was enough. It still is.

Questions:

- Romans 5:20 says where sin increased, grace increased even more. How does that promise land for you personally — either for your own struggle or someone you love?
- Paul's thorn in the flesh was something he never got freedom from in the way he wanted. But God promised his grace was sufficient. What does that kind of grace look like in the middle of a struggle that doesn't quickly go away?
- Is there an area of brokenness — in this topic or another — where you have been carrying guilt that Romans 8:1 says has already been removed? What would it look like to actually receive that today?

Daily Prayer:

Father, your grace is greater than my struggle — every time, without exception. I don't want to carry what you've already taken. Today I'm choosing to receive what you're offering: not condemnation, but freedom. Not just from guilt, but into the life you designed for me. Amen.

Day 5 — How Should We Then Live?

Read: 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 | Galatians 6:1-2 | James 1:19-20

Reflection: Francis Schaeffer's question — "How should we then live?" — is the right one. Knowing the truth is only the beginning. The harder and more important question is what we do with it when it comes to real people in real situations. Scripture is clear that truth without love is just noise. And love without truth is just sentiment. We are called to hold both — to be people who know what God says and who treat every person around them like someone Jesus died for.

Questions:

- 1 Corinthians 13:1 says that without love, even the most accurate truth becomes nothing more than noise. Is there a relationship in your life where you've been right but not loving? What would it look like to change that?
- Galatians 6:1-2 talks about restoring someone gently, watching yourself, and carrying one another's burdens. How does that picture shape the way you think about walking alongside someone who is living outside of God's design?
- As you close this week, what is the one thing you most want to carry forward — either a truth to hold onto, a conviction to act on, or a person to love better?

Daily Prayer:

God, I want to be someone who is known for both truth and love — not one at the expense of the other. Help me to see the people around me the way you see them. Give me the courage to speak when I should, the wisdom to be quiet when I should, and the love to never stop showing up. Amen.