

HOLY

Sexuality

WEEK 3 // SEPTEMBER 11, 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:

Week three was a time to hear real stories of how Jesus brings healing and restoration to sexual brokenness and how God's love empowers us to die daily to the flesh. The reality of the life of a Christian is the tension of now/not yet. We are justified before the Father because of Jesus but our sanctification is ongoing until the day when Jesus comes again when we will experience the fulness of glorification and all will be made new.

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 the posture of your heart and your time with Jesus as we have journeyed through this series?"**

Note: If in whatever we are feeling, we have worn out our keyboards or ears of fellow humans more than we have worn down the carpets in our homes and put holes in our jeans from praying, fasting, and running to our Father with whatever anger, frustration, hurt, pain, brokenness - we are missing the One who can actually deal with all we are feeling.

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:

- In sharing their story, Laurie and Matt brought us to **Ephesians 3:14-21**. Take time to read this out loud. What key words or phrases stand out to you?
 - Where does Paul say our strength comes from? What does Paul say our lives are to be rooted in?
 - Has your private and public life postured itself in a way that shows this true? What about in regards to how you handle topics about sexual brokenness or encounters with those who fight a different battle than you?
- Matt shared that in his battle with pornography, growing up in the church he always knew of God's grace but so often it was not personal. He asked us the question "How personal is God's grace in your sin?"
 - Have you ever thought about God's grace in a personal way in specifics of your sin? You do not need to share specifics but can share generalities of why it is challenging or easier to perceive your sin as being the reason you are separate from a Holy God apart from Jesus and Jesus alone.
 - Take some time to read **Ephesians 2**. What does God's Word say about each of us? What does God's Word say about Jesus? What does God's Word say about what God is asking of us now?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

*We recognize this is a hard conversation. There are a lot of emotions. The enemy wants us to create distance and sow division. But just as we read a moment ago: "**And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.**" - **Ephesians 2:17-18 ESV**) We would encourage you to seek someone out who you trust that is in a different emotional space than you are (don't feed anger with anger, but seek wisdom from another Jesus follower who will be sure anger doesn't lead to sin. Don't feed hurt with hurt, but seek wisdom from another Jesus follower who will be sure hurt doesn't lead to gossip and slander against fellow followers of Jesus.)*

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.