



high school group study



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general editor

**resisting
temptation**



Published by Gospel Light
Ventura, California, U.S.A.
www.gospellight.com
Printed in the U.S.A.

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Originally published as *The Word on Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll*
by Gospel Light in 1994.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Uncommon high school group study & leader's guide :
resisting temptation / Jim Burns, general editor.
p. cm.

Originally published: *The Word on sex, drugs, rock 'n' Roll*.
Ventura, Calif. : Gospel Light, 1994.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8307-4789-4 (trade paper : alk. paper)

1. Temptation—Study and teaching.
2. Sin—Christianity—Study and teaching.
3. Church work with teenagers. I. Burns, Jim, 1953- II. Title.

BT725.W67 2009
241'.3—dc22
2009034930

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how to use the *uncommon* group bible studies

Each *Uncommon* Group Bible Study contains 12 sessions, which are divided into 3 stand-alone units of 4 sessions each. You may choose to teach all 12 sessions consecutively, to use just one unit, or to present individual sessions. You know your group, so do what works best for you and your students.

This is your leader's guidebook for teaching your group. Electronic files (in PDF format) of each session's student handouts are available for download at www.gospellight.com/uncommon/. The handouts include the "message," "dig," "apply," "reflect" and "meditation" sections of each study and have been formatted for easy printing. You may print as many copies as you need for your group.

Each session opens with a devotional meditation written for you, the youth leader. As hectic and trying as youth work is much of the time, it's important never to neglect your interior life. Use the devotions to refocus your heart and prepare yourself to share with kids the message that has already taken root in you. Each of the 12 sessions are divided into the following sections:

starter

Young people will stay in your youth group if they feel comfortable and make friends in the group. This section is designed for you and the students to get to know each other better.

message

The message section will introduce the Scripture reading for the session and get students thinking about how the passage applies to their lives.

dig

Many young people are biblically illiterate. In this section, students will dig into the Word of God and will begin to interact on a personal level with the concepts.

apply


Young people need the opportunity to think through the issues at hand. This section will get students talking about the passage of Scripture and interacting on important issues.

reflect

The conclusion to the study will allow students to reflect on some of the issues presented in the study on a more personal level.

meditation

A closing Scripture for the students to read and reflect on.



unit I

resisting sexual temptation

A study once came across my desk that showed that the average 16-year-old male has a sexual thought every 20 seconds. When I told this statistic to a crowd of high school students, I of course got the usual laughs. However, after the presentation, a young man came up to me and said, “Jim, do you know that quote you said about every 20 seconds a 16-year-old male has a sexual thought?” I looked at him, smiled and said, “Yes.” He then asked, “So what am I supposed to think about the other 19 seconds? It’s always on my mind!”

Let’s face it: Whether we like it or not, people of all ages today are being bombarded with sex and sexual innuendoes in one form or another. Advertisers regularly use sexually explicit material to

sell everything from blue jeans to cologne. Young people are particularly susceptible to such come-ons, and this often results in them making poor decisions—and not just in the retail arena. In fact, authorities tell us that teens are making sexual decisions based on these three reasons:

1. *Peer pressure (or the pressure to conform)*. You are in the minority if you haven't had sex by age 18.
2. *Emotional involvement that exceeds their maturity level*. Show me a young person with a low self-image who is totally “in love” and I will show you a young person who will be easily seduced sexually.
3. *Lack of value-centered education*. Studies tell us that the more students receive moral and value-centered sex education, the less promiscuous they will be.

Today's Christian young people will have to go against the grain of popular culture to choose a Christ-centered lifestyle of sexuality. It won't be easy for them, and it won't be easy for you to teach the minority view of sexuality in our culture. But keep in mind that when God created male and female, He created all the aspects of personhood—including sexuality—and said, “It is very good” (see Genesis 1-2). And though the Bible is definitely not a sex manual, it does share some very important principles about sex and the need to resist sexual temptations.

This unit is based on the fact that God created sex and that, because He loves us, He wants the best for us. That is why He gives us certain guidelines: He wants us to be all that He created

us to be. In this section, you have the opportunity to present biblical sexuality to your students from a positive viewpoint while helping them to “learn to discern” the negative consequences of their actions if they follow the world’s standards rather than God’s standards.

As you teach this study, you will help young people make important positive decisions about sex before they get into a tempting situation. You will help them work through the incredible amount of mixed messages they are receiving from school, the media, church, home and friends. You will remind them that God created sex and that it’s to be approached with Christ-centered principles and values. You will enable young people to make some very important decisions.

As you look at each of the four sessions in this first unit, you will see that we are trying to move teens from accepting the standards of the world to developing a lifestyle of biblical standards and morals when it comes to sexuality and relationships. In each session, you’ll have the opportunity to provide information and discuss this topic on a level that young people seldom receive. As you deal with these issues, remember this verse: “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). If you can get even one student to follow this advice, your efforts will have been successful!

One last thought: Thank you for having the courage to bring up this important issue from a Christian point of view with your young people. As you know, young people often have a difficult time distinguishing between their spirituality and their sexuality, and in the next few weeks you will be helping them in both areas of their lives.



session 1

is God the
great killjoy?

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

GENESIS 1:26,31

Pretend for a moment that ice cream is your favorite thing in life. You'd almost rather eat ice cream than do anything else. You have become, so to speak, sensitized to ice-cream-related issues. As you watch TV, an incredible array of ice cream sundaes are shown at their richest and most tantalizing. As you drive down the street, you pass shop after shop where you can indulge your passion for ice cream. Billboards showing ice cream melting sweet richness grab your attention. It almost seems as if the whole world is somehow ice cream related!

If you were indeed the person described in the paragraph above, you'd probably eventually come to the conclusion that you were controlled by a passion for ice cream. And the thing you are controlled by, you are also a slave to, according to the apostle Peter (see 2 Peter 2:19).

Now think for a minute about what life was actually like for you as a teenager. A physically healthy teenager is sex-sensitized. Pause for a moment to remember just how deeply influenced you were by all those hormones that God allowed to pump through your veins!

So remember: Before you will sit a group of sensitized young people who need to know more than what *not* to do. They need to understand what God is up to. After all, how could God make them so ready to have sex and yet tell them not to have it? It seems a cruel joke at first. But let's go back to ice cream. It's not ice cream itself that's a problem. Thousands of people never eat ice cream at all. Ice cream can damage you, addict you, even kill you if it's consumed improperly. But in its proper place and proportion, say after a nourishing meal, it's good stuff. In fact, it's great!

Help your students understand that who they are on the *inside* is so important to God that He doesn't want them to misuse anything He's given them. Help them see that sex is good stuff. In fact, it's great! But only in its proper place can it work without damaging and destroying that inner person God loves so much. It's sort of the ice cream that rounds out the meal of a good marriage!

God's plan for our pleasure has never changed. We can be sure that He intended us to experience full satisfaction in the marriage relationship.

ED WHEAT, *INTENDED FOR PLEASURE*



group study guide

is God the
great killjoy?

starter

GOD AND THE BIRDS AND THE BEES: Individually have students answer each of the following questions. They can choose all the answers that apply.

1. My views about sex have been shaped the most by . . .

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> friends | <input type="checkbox"/> health class/
sex education | <input type="checkbox"/> boyfriend or
girlfriend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> siblings | <input type="checkbox"/> TV/movies | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parents | <input type="checkbox"/> extended family | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pastor/
youth pastor | <input type="checkbox"/> celebrities | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> church | <input type="checkbox"/> own experiences | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Note: You can download this group study guide in 8½" x 11" format at www.gospellight.com/uncommon/resisting_temptation.zip.

2. I think that God views sex as . . .

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> dirty | <input type="checkbox"/> a way to produce | <input type="checkbox"/> a gift |
| <input type="checkbox"/> beautiful | offspring | <input type="checkbox"/> not to be enjoyed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a topic that | <input type="checkbox"/> meant for | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| shouldn't be | married couples | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| talked about | <input type="checkbox"/> shameful | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

3. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(A) (D)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | It's hard for me to think about God in relation to my sexuality. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Abstinence before marriage is just a suggestion in the Bible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | God created sex just as a way for people to produce children. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Within His guidelines, God wants people to enjoy sex. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | God plays a big role in determining the direction and activities of my sexuality. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | These days, it's not possible to remain a virgin until you are married. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I believe that my sexuality is one way that I can demonstrate my faith. |

message

Some people have the perception that God doesn't want us to have sex, talk about sex or even think about it. But God created sex. He designed it and built it to work in a specific way. Know-

ing and understanding what God says about sex will give us strength as we strive for sexual purity and will lead us to wholeness in our sexuality.

Read the following passages in Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:18-25. As you read, keep the following questions in mind: (1) What do these verses reveal about how God viewed His creation of humankind? (2) What was the purpose for man and woman being brought together as “one flesh” (verse 24)?

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. . . .

The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man

to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

dig

1. Genesis 1:26 says, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness." What does it mean that we are made in the likeness of God? What about us is the same? (Notice that the verse uses "us" and "our." This passage is one of the illustrations of the triune nature of God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.)

2. How do you think being made in God's image relates to our sexuality?

3. According to the passage, why did God create woman?

4. Before the Fall, God reveals His ideal situation for a man and his wife. Read Genesis 2:24-25. What is God's plan for the sexual relationship between a man and his wife?

5. Beyond just having sexual intercourse, what does “become one flesh” mean (see verse 24)?

6. Some people are unclear about what God specifically approves or disapproves of in regard to our sexuality. Read and summarize in your own words what God says about each of the following situations, and then think about the negative consequences for each of the actions.

Adultery: voluntary sexual intercourse between a married person and a partner who is not the husband or wife.

Exodus 20:14

Proverbs 6:32-33

Matthew 5:28

Consequences (physical, emotional, spiritual)

Sexual immorality or fornication: **sexual intercourse between unmarried partners.**

Romans 13:12-14

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6

Consequences (physical, emotional, spiritual)

Separating one flesh: Tearing apart two who have become one. Sexual intercourse is the most graphic illustration of two people literally joined (bodily, spiritually and emotionally) as one.

Matthew 19:4-6

1 Corinthians 6:15-16

Consequences (physical, emotional, spiritual)

apply

1. What is a godly view of sex?

2. Your friend Terri is a student leader in the church youth group. As a student leader, she has made a commitment to not have sexual intercourse until marriage. However, she has fallen in love with Ron, and they have been going further and further in their physical relationship. Terri does love Ron and believes one day they will get married, but she wants to live her life by Christian principles, so she comes to you for help and advice. Write a letter of advice to Terri.

Dear Terri,

3. Circle the following actions in the list below that are useful techniques for finding out God's direction and guidance for your sexuality.
- talking about it with my friends
 - asking God through prayer
 - asking my parents
 - talking with my youth pastor
 - seeing how the media portrays sexuality
 - seeing what feels "right" in the moment
 - following the motto, "If it's not intercourse, then it's probably okay"
 - reading Scripture

reflect

1. If God created sex and He sees it as very good, why would He ask us to wait until marriage to have sexual intercourse?

2. What are the benefits of waiting until marriage to have sexual intercourse?

3. Although sex is a gift from God, some people overemphasize sex. Why is overemphasizing sex an ungodly view?

4. Some people view sex as dirty, even within the confines of marriage. Why is this an ungodly view?

5. How can a person create and maintain a godly view of sex?

6. What are some of the physical consequences of having premarital sex?

7. What are some of the spiritual and emotional consequences of premarital sex?

meditation



Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

PSALM 51:10