

“You don't change the old by resisting it but by replacing it with a superior technology.”

—Buckminster Fuller,
20th-century inventor and social critic

These ideas were huge, not because smart people wrote about them, but because ordinary people lived them out. Think of what we know about sexual abuse—most abusers were themselves victims of abuse when they were young. There's every reason to believe it's always been that way. Which means that adult believers who were abused as children chose to break the cycle of abuse—they chose to give better than they got. Adult believers chose to treat their wives as partners instead of property. Adult believers who grew up one way chose another way to live by the power of God's Spirit, so children weren't disposable, marriages weren't temporary, and sex wasn't violent. That was world-changing stuff.

Maybe it's time to do that again. Somehow, the church has lost the thread of sexual wholeness. We still talk a good game, but people don't listen anymore.

So maybe it's time to stop talking and instead, steadily but quietly, help kids grow into their sexuality healthy and whole. We can do that with God's grace, not because we're good, but because God is so very good. Maybe it's time for adult believers to give better than we got. It's within our reach.

what's in this lesson...

IN OUR OWN WORDS

LOVELINE your students' reactions to MTV's "Loveline" scenarios

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH...MAYBE video discussion starter about the sources of sexual messages

WORD FROM GOD

TO OBEY OR NOT TO OBEY a look at Genesis 2 and 3

THE LAST WORD

BOMBARDMENT a discussion starter about absorbing God's views on sex

WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE YOU? an anonymous survey to gauge where your students are at

IN OTHER WORDS

See page 23 for additional teaching activities

reflect a moment...

To help your students most effectively, you need to make every effort to process your own sexual experiences, questions, and struggles. Here are some questions to get you thinking:

- Q:** If a totally objective stranger had absolute access to your life, where do you think she would say you got your ideas about sex?
- What influences do you think she would say were healthy for you?
 - What influences do you think she would say were unhealthy?
- Q:** Forget about the totally objective stranger. What do you wish you had learned sooner?
- Is there anything you wish you could go back and unlearn?
- Q:** If you had just one hour to talk with kids about sex, what would you try to communicate?
- Why do you think that's so important?
 - How would you try to communicate during that hour?

In our own words

jumpstart the session

LOVELINE

The types of questions and answers about sex that are tossed around in our culture.

How many of you have heard of the show "Loveline"? It airs nearly every night on the radio and is shown regularly on MTV. As I'm sure some of you are more than aware, this show consists of people calling up and asking Dr. Drew, Adam Carolla, and various special guests questions about their sexuality.

Here is just a sampling of actual questions asked during one of their shows.

Adam, 18 years old, calls in and says that when he was 16 he slept with his high school English teacher about 10 times. She got pregnant not long after and refused to have any more contact with him. He saw the baby recently and says that it looks exactly like him. He's sure the baby is his, but he doesn't know what to do.

- Q:** What advice do you think the "Loveline" hosts gave to Adam? Why do you think that?
- Q:** What advice do you think your youth leader would give to Adam? Why do you think that?
- Q:** What advice do you think Jesus would give Adam? Why do you think that?

The "Loveline" hosts told Adam to stay out of the situation because he has absolutely nothing to offer this child. It's better if the child never knows who his father is.

Toni, a 25-year-old female transvestite, calls in to ask for some advice. She slept with a girlfriend's fiancé. The girlfriend has no idea that her future marriage partner is thinking about becoming a transvestite as well. Should Toni tell her girlfriend what she knows?

- Q:** What advice do you think the "Loveline" hosts gave to Toni? Why do you think that?
- Q:** What advice do you think your youth leader would give to Toni? Why do you think that?
- Q:** What advice do you think Jesus would give Toni? Why do you think that?

The "Loveline" hosts told Toni to stay out of it. Let them work this stuff out themselves.

Melissa, 19, was at a house with three male friends when they spiked her drink with speedball (part heroin, part cocaine). When she had completely lost control of her senses, these three so-called friends gang-raped her. That was six months ago. Since then, Melissa has had compulsive sex with over 30 men—all one-night stands. She doesn't know why she is doing this.

- Q:** What advice do you think the "Loveline" hosts gave to Melissa? Why do you think that?
- Q:** What advice do you think your youth leader would give to Melissa? Why do you think that?

If "Loveline" becomes irrelevant or goes away before you use this lesson, just change everything to the past tense. "There used to be a show called 'Loveline'..."

All questions were taken from the "Loveline" episode aired on July 25, 2000, on MTV.

In February 1999, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation released a study indicating that two-thirds of prime time TV shows and 56 percent of all TV shows include sexual content. The shows with the most sex are soap operas, movies, and talk shows. According to this study, relatively few of these shows offer "responsible" sexual messages about contraceptive use, abstinence, or protection from sexually transmitted infections.

These findings prompted Health and Human Services secretary Donna E. Shalala to compare TV sex to the distorted mirror at a carnival fun house.

—Cheryl Wetzstein,
Washington Times (September 13, 1999)

YOU'LL NEED

- VCR or DVD player
- TV or video projection unit
- Good Sex video, cued to "Nothing but the Truth" [2:35]
- copies of *Nothing but the Truth...Maybe* (page 27), one per student
- pencils

Q: What advice do you think Jesus would give Melissa? Why do you think that?

The "Loveline" hosts told Melissa that she had a compulsive addiction to sex that had been triggered by this event. She was told to get counseling and hook up with an AA-type group.

Q: Given the advice that the "Loveline" hosts gave, would you recommend that a friend who is struggling with a sexual issue call in to try to talk to them? Why or why not?

At times, the hosts and guests of "Loveline" give straightforward and sympathetic advice. Granted, it's generally not based on anything related to God, but sometimes it still seems relevant.

But at other times, the advice of "Loveline" is less than healthy. I wonder if folks, even Christian folks, turn to places like "Loveline" because they believe that most churches and Christians are too scared to talk about sex in as real and honest a way as they do on "Loveline."

Q: Do you agree that most churches and Christians are scared to talk about sex in real and honest ways? Why or why not?

Q: How would you rate the quality of information you've received about sex from the church or from the Bible?

- From your friends?
- From TV and movies?
- From magazines?
- From the Internet?

Q: Where has the best and most helpful sexual info come from? Why do you think that is?

— video discussion starter —

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH...MAYBE

VIDEO

Evaluating the quantity and quality of the sources of sexual messages we're exposed to.

Introduce and show the video clip. It portrays a variety of teens explaining how they've heard and learned about sex.

Q: What sources of sexual messages were mentioned in the video? What others can you think of that weren't mentioned in the video?

- Of these, what do you think are the most common sources of sexual information for teens?

Q: There seemed to be a common belief that sex ed at school wasn't very helpful. What do you think about that?

Q: Is it true that students get clean info from their parents but the dirty version from other kids at school? How would you even define clean, and how is it different from the dirty version?

Q: How comfortable do you think parents are talking to their own kids about sex? How comfortable do you think kids are talking to their parents about it?

Q: Many people would say that the sexual messages implied in the Bible are not positive. In fact, many would say that the Bible gives a very negative view of sexuality. Discuss this observation and give some reasons why people might think this.