



ONLINE GROUP PLAN

Summer 2020 // Proverbs; Song of Songs // Session 5: Following God's Design

Suggested Use Date: 07/05/2020

For use with Explore the Bible Leader Guide, Personal Study Guide, and Daily Discipleship Guide



PREPARATION

Best Practices for Leading an Online Group



PRAY for your group members and for God to grant you insight as you study and prepare your Bible study session. Do this throughout the week.



SCHEDULE your group's online Bible study using the online meeting tool you prefer. Invite group members and guests to participate using a meeting ID if required by your online meeting tool. [Click here](#) to view a Best Practices document for online groups.



SEND digital copies of the next session to group members who do not have a print copy. If using the *Personal Study Guide*, encourage group members to read the passage and comments for the next session. If you are using the *Daily Discipleship Guide*, encourage your group members to follow up your session by engaging with the five daily Bible readings.



CONNECT with your group via email or text messaging early in the week.

Create your own message:

- Briefly tell the group the title of your next Bible study, why it is important, and what they will learn.
- Challenge group members to study before the group session if your group uses a *Personal Study Guide*; remind group members to follow up your online study with their daily readings if your group uses the *Daily Discipleship Guide*.
- Remind group members when your group will meet online.

Or copy and paste this suggested wording into the email or text message to your group:

We expect builders to follow blueprints. Failing to do so leads to problems down the road. The same is true when it comes to sex. God created humans as men and women; sex was part of His creative plan. Failing to follow His design for sex only leads to problems down the road. Join us as we discuss this important topic. Read Proverbs 5:3-11,15-18 and the Session 5 comments in the *Personal Study Guide* or *Daily Discipleship Guide*. List both warnings and blessings you found in these passages. What do these warnings and blessings reveal about God's design for sex?

We will meet at (add time) using (name of online tool). Here is the link to our meeting: (add meeting ID if your online tool doesn't do that automatically)

WEEKLY MESSAGE



PREPARE to lead your group's Bible study.

- **Study** Proverbs 5:3-11,15-18, noting both the warnings and blessings. What do these warnings and blessings reveal about God's design for sex?
- **Listen** to the Explore the Bible Adult Leader Podcast. Go to goExploreTheBible.com/Adults-Training for an overview of the main points and key ideas from each session.
- **Visit** the Explore the Bible blog for additional leader helps at goExploreTheBible.com/Leader-Helps
- **Create** your teaching plan for guiding your group's online Bible study experience. Use the Online Group Plan on the next pages as a starting point, modifying it for your group as needed. Consult the *Adult Commentary*, *QuickSource*, and *Leader Pack* for additional ideas and resources.



REMIND your group members to study and prepare via another email or text message closer to the day your group meets.

- Include a quote from the *Personal Study Guide*, a question, or an insight you plan to discuss with the group when you meet online.



HELPFUL LINKS

- Explore the Bible main landing page: goExploreTheBible.com
- Digital version of Explore the Bible: curriculum.lifeway.com
- Explore the Bible leader helps: goExploreTheBible.com/Leader-Helps
- Explore the Bible Podcast: goExploreTheBible.com/Adults-Training
- Free Coronavirus links and leader helps: lifeway.com/coronavirus



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GREET *people as they join and invite them to picture themselves sitting on the beach while reading a good book or sitting beside a campfire, roasting marshmallows for s'mores. Remind them that fire provides warmth and pleasure when in control, but it's horribly destructive when out of control in a forest or a home. Similarly, sexual pleasure within God's design provides great joy, but sexual pleasure outside of the marriage covenant between a man and a woman leads to destruction of families and relationships. Ask: **How does our world today make sexual sins appealing?***

TRANSITION: Solomon addressed two mistakes people make regarding human sexuality. First, some give in to cultural norms and notions of sexuality, compromising God's intentions. Compromise is the easy choice. Second, Solomon knew that God's people would be tempted to declare what God intended for good as something that was inherently evil and wicked. *Option: Use the Extra! idea. See goExploreTheBible.com/LeaderExtras*

READ Proverbs 5:3-6 *and ask the group to listen for the description of a forbidden woman.*

EXPLAIN: This woman was obviously someone other than the young man's wife. She used her lips and the words that passed through them as tools of seduction. In ancient Israel, nothing could have been sweeter than honey. Likewise, nothing compared with her sweet, seductive speech. In Solomon's day, nothing could have been smoother than olive oil. It flowed smoothly out of its container. So did the flattering words of a woman who used them to seduce. Her flattery could be very difficult for a young man to resist. *(PSG, p. 48; DDG, p. 47)*

DISCUSS: **Why are the consequences of the misuse and abuse of human sexuality so devastating?** *(PSG, p. 49; DDG, p. 47)*

READ Proverbs 5:7-11 and ask the group to listen for instructions for dealing with sexual temptations.

DISCUSS: Lead the group to reread and note specific parts of the verses that reveal the consequences of giving in to sexual temptation. Ask: **What makes avoiding sexual temptations so difficult? How might a person rationalize flirting with sexual temptation?** (PSG, p. 50; DDG, p. 47) Lead in a discussion of how a person can stay on the path to wisdom despite our human emotions and temptations.

READ Proverbs 5:15-18 as the group notes instructions on God's design for human sexuality.

GUIDE: Direct the group to review the verses and share specific words or phrases that reveal God's design for a monogamous marriage relationship between a man and a woman. Emphasize that Solomon's instructions indicate that sexual intimacy is a life-giving blessing.

HIGHLIGHT: Despite the risks of putting themselves in danger of "losing it all," many people continue misusing and abusing their sexuality. It's important to establish safeguards in a marriage. Use comments from Verses 15-18 in the PSG (pp. 52–53) or DDG (pp. 50) to support establishing and maintaining relational boundaries.

ASK: **Who are your role models for marriage? Why?** (PSG, p. 53; DDG, p. 47)

TRANSITION: Today's world depicts sexual pleasure as acceptable in many contexts, but Proverbs describes sexual intimacy as a gift given by God to be expressed in the context of a committed marriage between a man and a woman.

SUMMARIZE: Read the session's main points by reviewing the bulleted summary statements under *In My Context* (PSG, p. 54) or *Apply the Text* (DDG, p. 48). Encourage the group to modify or add to the statements.

CHALLENGE: *Invite volunteers to share their responses to the first question set under on page 54 of the PSG or page 48 of the DDG. Discuss as a group ways of helping others who carry around bitterness and shame as a result of sexual sin.*

How can the group represent God's standard and be redemptive at the same time?

NOTES

NEXT STEPS



- *Contact the group daily to simply pray with them. Pray specifically for individuals in the group who may be struggling with sexual issues.*
- *Send digital copies of the next session to those in the group who do not have a print copy. If using the Personal Study Guide, encourage the group to read the passage and comments for the next session.*
- *Repeat the process outlined in the Preparation section of this document.*