

Cultivate Reflection Guide

Different: A Different Sexuality Pastor Matt Brown | November 12-13, 2022

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It can be hard to stand up for what's different. If we want to live differently, we need to see life through a new lens. The apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians is a reminder and a challenge to us that we live differently because we belong to Jesus.

Our Reflection Guide is a tool to help you grow spiritually wise, relationally kind and emotionally healthy. Use it to start a REAL conversation in community or to cultivate God's word into your life through personal bible study. Choose the questions that most encourage you to reflect and respond to what we're learning. Pair it with your bible, a journal or any resource that helps you learn. *It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you!*

Kindly Note: Sexuality is a topic that the Bible addresses with great purpose, but it can also be uncomfortable or even difficult based on our past and present experiences. Real growth happens when we are real with ourselves and others, but enter this conversation creating space for both grace and truth.

Read: [Ephesians 4:17-24 NLT](#). Up to this point, Paul's letter has reminded us that we are God's prized possession, deeply loved and living under His grace, created for good works which He has already prepared for us. Paul now challenges us who are set apart *by God*, to live *for God*. What are some ways in which you've made a real effort to live differently than the world around you? In contrast, where have you been tempted to conform, fit in or belong?

Reflect & Respond:

1. God **created sex** for comfort, intimacy and union. But **sexual sin** creates disease, insecurity and confusion.
 - Whatever season of life or sexual experience you find yourself in, what is one thing you know about sex now that you wish someone would have shared with you sooner?
 - Is there anything you wish you could unlearn or unbelieve about sex and sexuality?
2. Sexual sin **destroys** our intimacy with God and **diverts** us from His best path for our life.
 - Read [Matthew 19:4-6 NLT](#). We are called to obey a different sexual ethic. This calling is not given by an oppressive God, but by a loving Father who wants us to live whole, healthy and blessed lives. How do you see God's design for sex reflect His love and care for you?
 - In what ways have you been challenged [past or present] to align your views about sex with God's design? This could be reflected in your beliefs, practices and personal obedience.
3. Sexual sin can **disconnect** us eternally from God.
 - [Read Ephesians 4:18 NLT](#). God never wants to leave us, but He does not stay where there is sin. Look back on a time when you felt disconnected from God. Where did you wander that you did not belong? Consider where you went in your head [thoughts], heart [instincts] and body [actions/choices].
 - If you are wandering away from God today, it is **never** too late to change direction. Stop what you're doing and turn toward God. Ask for His forgiveness and the courage to follow Him from here.

Prayer: Jesus, thank you that your love sets me apart to live out a different sexuality. Out of my love for you, I want to honor you with my body, mind and spirit. Give me the courage and the desire to pursue sex for comfort, intimacy and oneness only within the commitment of marriage. Father, help me to guard my wandering heart and flee from any sin that would lead me away from the promise and path that you offer me. I choose you over all else. Amen.

Dig Deeper Opportunity

Who in your life needs to hear that there is a different way to live out sexuality? This could be a REAL conversation with your spouse, children or someone who needs your influence to help them see God's best plans. If you need support or accountability to live differently in your sexuality, start a conversation with a trusted friend or reach out to us at sandalschurch.com/help.