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This Book Belongs to:



Date Started:



Published by: **youthministry360**

Live Different: God, Sex, and Holiness

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Author: Andy Blanks

Design: Upper Air Creative

DO YOU NOT
KNOW



» —> that your bodies are temples of the <— «

» —> **HOLY SPIRIT** <— «

who is *in you*, whom you have *received* from

GOD?

You are not
your own;
you were
bought
at a price.

Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20

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GETTING STARTED

So here you are . . .

You're holding an interactive journal that will serve as your guide for an in-depth look at what it means to LIVE DIFFERENT. This means at some point in the not-so-distant past you probably spent some time going through the Live Different study with your youth group.*

Maybe you thought you were done talking about the concept of what it means to live differently than the world around you. Maybe you thought you had learned all there was to learn.

The truth? You're just getting started.

You see, there is a lot to consider when we think of what it means to have a different perspective on sex and sexuality that the world does, so much that we could never have covered it all in a four session study at a weekend event or retreat. So, you're about to get the opportunity to go even deeper into this look at what it means to embrace God's view of sex and sexuality.

So, embrace it. Give it your best. Commit to sticking with this book until the end. It will only take a few minutes each day.

You'll be happy you did.

LET'S GET STARTED.

LOOK AT THE NEXT PAGE TO LEARN HOW THIS BOOK WORKS.

»»» —▶ * You definitely don't have to have gone through the LIVE DIFFERENT study with your group to get a ton out of this journal. But, it might help some to have already been introduced to it.



HOW THIS BOOK WORKS

Here are a few things you need to know to put this book to good use.

Start With This Advice

Whether you're super-committed and read your Bible each day or struggle to read a few verses a couple of times a week, the key to sticking with this through four weeks is commitment. Your routine may change, but your commitment to meet God each day has to be there. Tell yourself that whether or not you read this journal at the same time everyday, or if you read it whenever you get a few extra minutes, you'll make it a priority in your daily life.

Have Your Bible Open

Resist the urge to ignore the spots where this book will tell you to read a passage of Scripture. This book is only a guide for the Book. The close relationship with God that you want only happens by reading and doing what's in the Bible. Have it open as you go through this book.

Each Week Is Structured The Same, But Is Really Different

Each week's content works in similar ways. But, each day is different. And, there are a lot of different kinds of activities. Some will take 3-5 minutes, some 10-15. Some will ask you to look at two or three passages of Scripture; some will just ask you to think about a concept. The variety will make it easier to stick with and help you learn in different ways that are suited to you.

What If I Miss A Day of Reading? Or Three?

Don't give up! Take this at your pace! The goal is for you to grow closer to God. If you miss a day or two . . . or four . . . don't throw in the towel. Pick this book back up and start where you left off. You can do this! And by doing it, you'll show the world that God makes an incredible difference in the lives of His followers. So, hang in there! You've got this!

Well, that's what you need to know to get started! Turn the page to read the introduction to Week 1.



WEEK ONE INTRO

Before starting Week 1, read this short introduction.

You don't have to be told this. But here it is anyway . . .

You live in a culture that is saturated in sexual imagery and messages.

You live each day in a society that is hyper-sexualized. You're bombarded by messages about sex and sexual behavior. And this has an effect on the way in which you follow Christ.

The world tells you a lot of different things about sex. In fact, it's hard to go for very long at all without someone telling you what kind of sex is OK, and what kind of sex isn't, when it's OK to have sex, and when it's not, and so on . . .

You have probably heard thousands of opinions on sex in your lifetime. The thing is, God has some pretty definite things to say about this. Remember, God invented sex. He invented sexual attraction. The Bible tells us He made man and women to be attracted to one another. But that's not always what our world has to say about sex and sexuality. Culture says sex is part of who you are, and that your sexuality is simply one facet of your identity. Culture says sexual expression is an important aspect of being young. Culture says that sex between two consenting teenagers is OK, if not normal. As long as sex is not coercive, marriage, and maybe even love, doesn't really matter.

The problem is that this flies in the face of how the Bible talks about sex and sexual expression.

Because of the world you live in, it's pretty important that you learn God's intention for how you are to make choices about sex and sexuality.

Live Different will help you do just that. This first week is an exploration of what God has to say about sex and sexuality.

You're going to love it. Let's get started. Turn to page 5 for Week 1, Day 1.



WEEK 1 - DAY 1



Read today's devotion below and answer the questions on page 6.

Think of some of the different foods that are perfectly suited for one another.

Peanut butter and jelly
Macaroni and cheese
Milk and cookies
Bacon and, well, anything

There are things that were just meant to be together. We can see the same thing in the very beginning of the Bible.

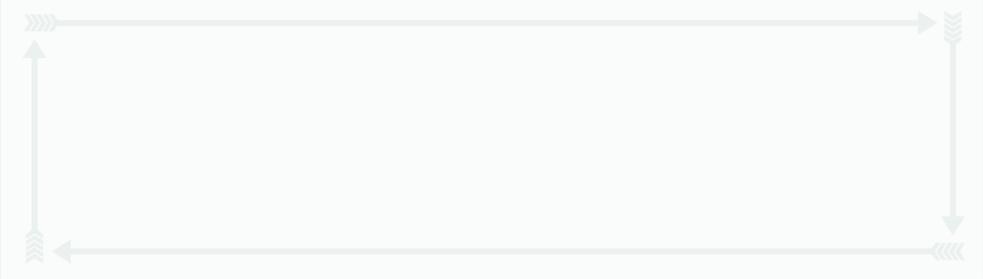
Take a second and read Genesis 2:20-25. Pay close attention to verse 20. There's something going on here that is easy to miss. Adam is searching. Adam is looking for something . . . though we don't even know for sure if he realizes it. Adam is searching for his helper, that other person perfectly suited for him. And God allows him to search in vain. The process of Adam going through the animals and naming them is directly tied to this concept: "But for Adam no suitable helper was found." God had given Adam a task (to care for the Garden). And Adam appeared to be destined to live life on his own with no suitable companion. Until God changed all that.

Verses 21-25 is the story of God creating the perfect partner for Adam. And then God goes a little further. God blesses the institution of marriage (v. 24) and sex between a husband and a wife (v. 23). When God had a blank canvas and created the world from scratch, it's important to see that He designed man and woman and marriage and directly tied it to sex and filling the world with their offspring (Genesis 1:28).

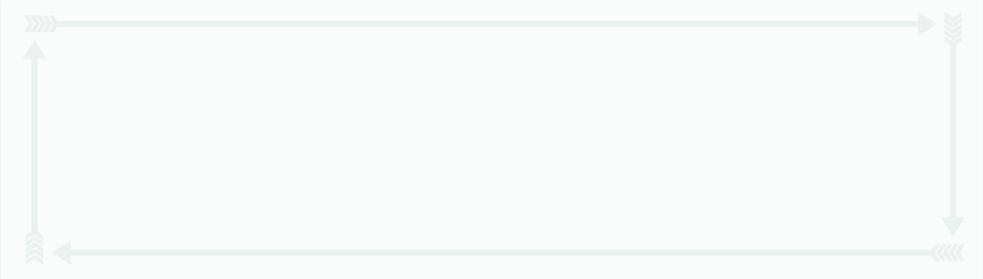
The world has turned sex into a twisted version of the awesome gift God had in mind. Pornography. Sexually explicit song lyrics. Sexually suggestive messages in advertising and marketing. You're surrounded by this all the time. But it wasn't how God intended it. And as a Christ-follower, you're called to see sex and sexuality differently than the world around you.

Take a moment and think about these questions. Write your answers in the space provided if you choose.

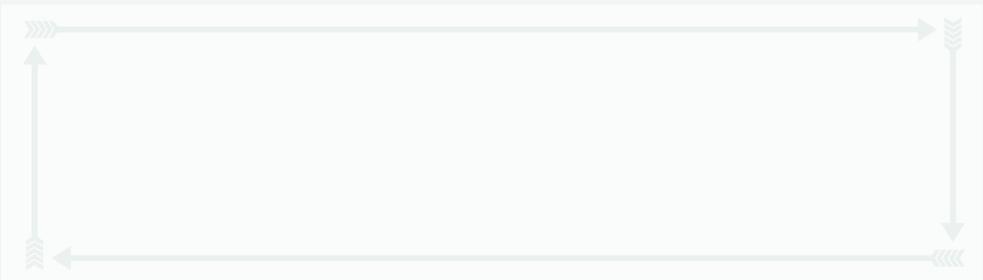
1. What does it mean to you that God saw Eve (woman) as Adam's (man) perfect companion?



2. Verse 25 says that Adam and Eve were naked and felt no shame. Why do you think this is such an important distinction to make?



3. How does the world's attitude toward sex and sexuality differ from God's?



WEEK 1 - DAY 2



Read the text below and answer the questions on page 8.

As we've discussed, the world sends you a ton of messages about sex. But God has something to say about sex, too. And here's the truth: what the world says about sex and what God says about sex rarely (if ever) line up.

But don't take our word for it. Spend a few minutes thinking about how you see sex represented by the world and by the Bible.

Use the prompts on the next page to help.

WHAT THE WORLD SAYS ABOUT SEX

How does the world define sex that is OK and acceptable?

What messages does the world send about sex and sexuality?

WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT SEX

How does the Bible define sex that God says is OK and acceptable?

How does the Bible address sexuality and sexual expression?

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...

1. Why is it so challenging to stand on God's side when it comes to sex and sexuality?
2. Why does it matter? Why can't you just go with the flow? Or not take a stand at all?
3. What do you think you stand to gain by living your life according to God's will when it comes to how you approach sex and sexuality?

WEEK 1 - DAY 3

Read today's devotion below and answer the questions on page 10.

Whenever a grown-up talks to you about sex there's always this discussion about marriage, isn't there? After all, the Bible is really pretty clear: anytime it talks about sex that is right and good it is always in the context of sex between a husband and a wife. Period. There is no positive mention of sex that happens within any other arrangement. Sex that God sees as right and good is sex between a man and a woman married to one another.

Take a second and read Hebrews 13:4. You can probably pick up what's being said here. The marriage bed is probably both a reference to the act of a husband and wife sharing a bed together for the first time on their wedding night, and also a way of talking about the sexual relationship between a husband and wife in general. The writer of Hebrews is urging his audience to consider two things: sexual purity before marriage, and sexual faithfulness during marriage. Both are important. It's God's will that you would arrive at your wedding having not had sex with anyone. And if it's God's will for you that you get married, He desires that you would spend your life married to one person, staying sexually faithful to him or her.

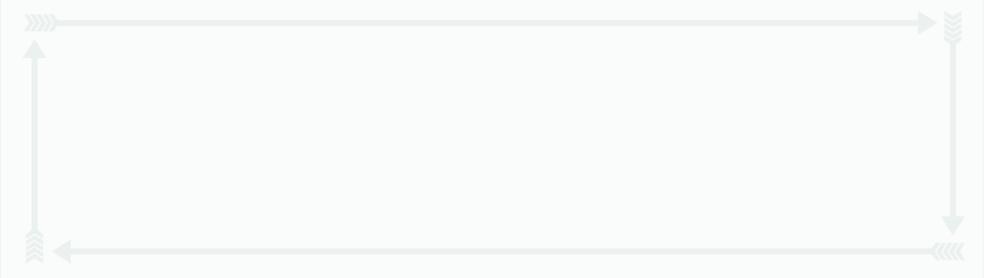
So, here's a few questions for you: Does marriage seem like a million years away? Does it seem like it's something that's foreign, and maybe kind of even useless to think about now?

Let's be honest: It can be really frustrating to know that you really should work to stay sexually pure until marriage. It's perfectly OK to admit it. The sexual feelings you have that sometimes feel like they're impossible to reign in? They're actually created by God. And when they find their intended fulfillment-that is, when you finally do get married and your husband or wife becomes the object of those sexual feelings-they are an amazing gift. Not only is sex physically fulfilling, but it unites a husband and wife unlike any other experience.

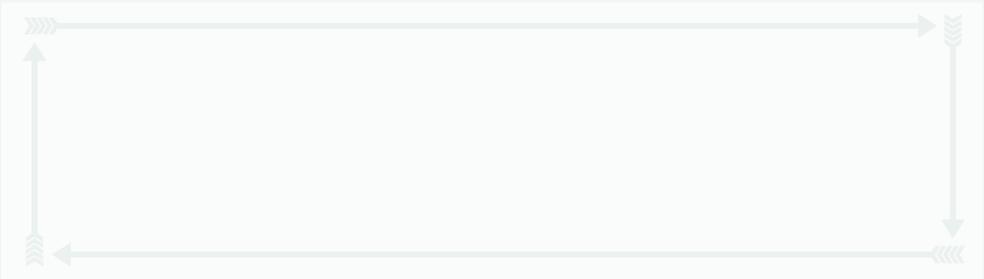
And yes, this can feel like it's a million years away. It can feel like you'll never make it. But trust me, it's worth it. As difficult as the struggle can be at times, it's worth it.

Take a second and think about the following questions. If you want, write down your answers in the space provided.

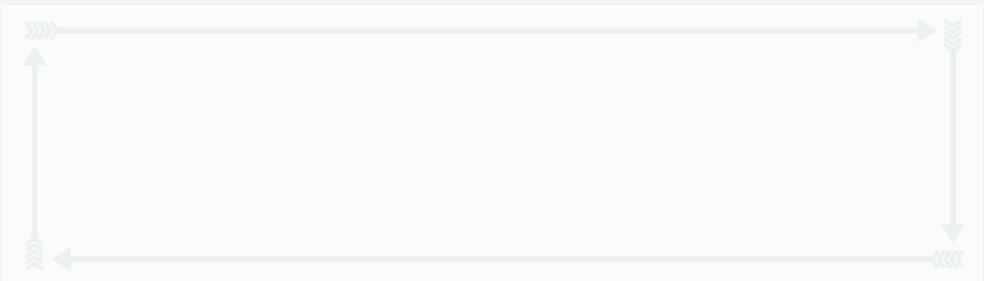
1. Read Song of Solomon 2:7. What do you think the challenge here has to do with what you just read?



2. Are there things you do or places you put yourself that cause you to really struggle to stay sexually pure? What can you do to NOT put yourself on those spots?



3. We've acknowledged the fact that staying sexually pure is really challenging. But think about this: What are some of the benefits of obeying God in this way? What are some positives from staying sexually pure until marriage?



WEEK 1 - DAY 4

Today is a day where you'll be challenged to spend some time thinking and reflecting on what you're learning so far.

We're four days into a four-week discussion of what God and the Bible has to say about sex and sexuality.

Now is probably as good a time as any to get this out in the open.

WHERE ARE YOU SEXUALLY

»»» ————— → ??? ← ————— «««

Have you made some mistakes in the past?

If you have, you're not alone.

READ PSALM 32:5.

You know, you don't have to carry any guilt from your sin.

Guilt is something Satan uses to drive a wedge between you and God. If you have come to a saving faith relationship with Jesus, your sins are forgiven. What you need to do is put the past behind you, accept the forgiveness Jesus offers, and ***move forward***, striving to be like Jesus.

Take this time to think today about your attitude and actions regarding your sex life. If you need to spend some time talking to God, do so.

FEEL FREE

to use the space on page 12 to write down any thoughts you may have.

WEEK 1 - DAY 5



Read the quote below and spend some time today thinking about it. Use the prompts on page 14 to help guide your thoughts.

the
FIRST
SEXUAL
THOUGHT
in the universe was
GOD'S
not human's.

- Doug Barnett

Use these questions to help you reflect on this quote.

1. How does this quote help remind you that sex is actually a good thing and not something shameful or perverted?

2. What does this say about what sin can do to God's intentions?

3. How does this quote make you feel?

4. In what ways does this quote challenge you to re-consider your actions or attitudes toward sex and sexuality?

WEEK 1 - DAY 6



Part of embracing this new outlook on sex and sexuality, and the call to pursue holiness (more on that in Week 3), is that you need to share it with the world.

In light of that, we're going to devote Day 6 of each week to challenging you to do just that. Today, and the three remaining Day 6's, you're going to be presented with a verse. Your challenge is to take this verse and come up with some way to share it on Twitter or Instagram or Snapchat or Vine. Be creative. Take a picture or video of something that comes to mind when you read this verse. Have fun with this. And remember that sharing your faith journey with others is all part of leading people closer to Christ.

Here's your verse:

But just as he who called you is

HOLY

so be holy in all you do.



-1 PETER 1:15

WEEK 1 - DAY 7



TAKE TODAY OFF... YOU'VE EARNED IT.



If you want, reflect on some of what you have learned. Pray to God and ask Him to help you truly internalize His standards for sex and sexuality. Pray that He would give you the strength to follow through on living a life of holiness as it pertains to your attitude toward sex and sexuality. Listen for what God may be trying to tell you.

