

# Sex Education in the Christian Family

## A Lifelong Approach To Shaping Your Child's Sexual Character

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### Educational Objectives:

Christian parents are the most important sex educators of their children. The purpose of this seminar, as for the *God's Design For Sex* book series, is to equip parents to shape their children to make wise, godly moral decisions in the area of sexuality. We seek to help our children become the kinds of adults who can have deep, meaningful marriages filled with spiritual, sexual, and emotional intimacy, and who can have loving and deep family relationships and friendships.

By participating in this seminar, you should be able to understand and apply:

- the objectives of parenting in Christian perspective
- a biblical understanding of sexuality
- a five-factor model for understanding sexual character
- twelve principles for sex education in the Christian family
- a developmentally-appropriate strategy for sex education in the family
- strategies for inoculating children against contrary moral messages
- how to prepare your children for an adult life of sexual purity, wholeness, intimacy, and sexual fulfillment in marriage

### I. What are our Objectives in Sex Education and in Parenting?

Don't focus too narrowly and negatively: only preventing sexual immorality and the ravages that illicit and irresponsible sex; this goal is too small, too limited, too narrow.

*Our most important goal in sex education is to equip and empower our children to enter adulthood capable of living godly, wholesome, and fulfilled lives as Christian men and women, Christian wives and husbands.*

Our overarching goal as parents:

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, *so that you, your children and their children after them* may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey *so that it may go well with you* and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you. Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. *Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home* and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

(Deuteronomy 6:1-9, emphasis added; see also 10:12-13)

Four Parenting Styles	Low Acceptance	High Acceptance
Nonexistent Standards	<i>Neglecting Parents</i>	<i>Permissive Parents</i>
High Standards	<i>Authoritarian Parents</i>	<i>Authoritative Parents</i>

## II. What are the Challenges we Face?

## III. What is a Biblical Perspective on Sexuality?

A. Understanding sexuality in terms of Creation, *then* Fall, *then* Redemption, *then* Glory.

By God's Creational intent, we are physical, gendered, sexual beings.  
We are fallen and morally broken, but Christ can and does redeem us.

B. The purposes of Sexual Intercourse:

- Procreation (Genesis 1:28)
- Physical Gratification and Pleasure (1 Corinthians 7:1-9; Proverbs 5; Song of Solomon)
- Unity (Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20)
- Instruction (Romans 1:20; Ephesians 5)

C. The Three-Stranded Cord of Christian Morality (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

- Consequences
- Value of Obedience & Loyalty
- Mystery of Unity

## IV. The Five-Factor Model of Sexual Character:

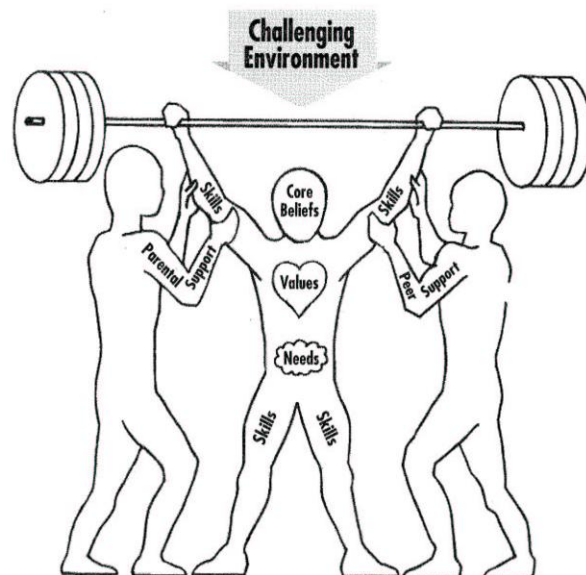
A. Needs  
Relatedness and Significance

B. Values

C. Beliefs

D. Skills

E. Supports



## **V. What are the Twelve Principles of Christian Sex Education in the Family?**

**Principle 1: Sex education is the shaping of character.**

**Principle 2: Parents are the principle sex educators.**

**Principle 3: First messages are the most potent.**

**Principle 4: Seize those “teachable moments;” become an “askable” parent.**

**Principle 5: Stories are powerful teaching tools.**

**Principle 6: Accurate and explicit messages are best.**

**Principle 7: Positive messages are powerful.**

**Principle 8: “Inoculate” your children against negative beliefs.**

**Principle 9: Repetition is critical; repetition is really, really important.**

**Principle 10: Close, positive parent-child relationships are crucial.**

**Principle 11: Sexuality is not everything; keep your perspective.**

**Principle 12: Our God can forgive, heal, and redeem anything.**

## **VI. The Very Young Child: Teaching the Goodness of Body, Sexuality, Family**

- Establish that our children are loved beyond measure by you the parent and by God, their heavenly Father.
- Teach them that God intended the family to be the primary arena for the experience of life-devotion, love, and unity.
- Develop their trust in God’s Law as reliable and good.
- Convince them that their physical bodies, their sexual natures, and their capacity for sexual pleasure are all good blessings from God.

## **VII. The Young Child: What is Sex and Why Do People Do *THAT*?**

Giving accurate, direct, loving messages; creating a dialogue by reading

## VIII. The Elementary-Age Child: Being An Askable, Approachable Parent

## IX. The Prepubescent Child: The Principle of Inoculation

## X. The Pubescent Child: Shepherding Them Through

## XI. The Teenage Child: Love and Limits

### The God's Design For Sex Book Series

*How And When To Tell Your Kids About Sex* is a handbook for parents; the four children's books are designed to be read to children by their parents to facilitate conversation and instruction within the family about sexuality. The overall purpose of the *God's Design For Sex* book series is to equip Christian parents—who are the most important sex educators of their children—to shape their children to make wise moral decisions in the area of sexuality, and thus to become the kinds of adults who can have deep and meaningful marriages filled with spiritual, sexual, and emotional intimacy, and who can have loving and deep family relationships and friendships. The entire series, published by NavPress, is a guide to shaping the character of children.

- [How And When To Tell Your Kids About Sex: A Life-Long Approach To Shaping Your Child's Sexual Character](#) by Stan and Brenna Jones.
- [The Story of Me](#) (Book 1 for ages 3 to 5) by Stan and Brenna Jones
- [Before I Was Born](#) (Book 2 for ages 5 to 8) by Carolyn Nystrom
- [What's The Big Deal? Why God Cares About Sex](#) (Book 3 for ages 8 to 11) by Stan and Brenna Jones
- [Facing The Facts: The Truth About Sex And You](#) (Book 4 for ages 11 to 14) by Stan and Brenna Jones

Other useful broad resources:

- Dennis Hollinger, *The Meaning of Sex: Christian Ethics and the Moral Life* (Baker, 2009).
- Dale Kuehne, *Sex and the iWorld: Rethinking Relationship beyond an Age of Individualism* (Baker, 2009).
- National Association of Evangelicals, *Theology of Sex* (available at <http://www.naegeneration.com/resources>) (Stan served on the board of experts for this document)