

Sexuality and Shepherding Children

Main Idea:

Humans are created as sexual beings and the sexual development of a child is an ongoing and inevitable reality. Christian parents must take the lead in establishing a biblical framework for sexuality and provide a long-term, safe, grace-filled place in their homes for children to learn what it means to be God-honoring sexual beings.

Definition of Sexuality:

God's anthropological design and pattern for the procreative relationship between male and female. (Genesis 1-2)

- This includes the created, biological distinctions between male and female, as well as their distinct expressions.
- This includes the specific actions, desires, and experiences that are part of this design.

A Difficult Subject to Address

1. The topic of sexuality might tend to be difficult and/or awkward to address... why is that?
2. What are some of the concerns parents have when it comes to talking about sexuality with their children?
3. Why do parents need to work through their fears and difficulties related to this issue? (Prov 22:6, Eph 6:4)

Beware of Putting This Off

4. Sometimes parents will think "how long can I wait before I need to talk about this?"... Why is this the wrong question? What should we ask instead?
 - a. What are some of the dangers associated with putting this off?
5. When do children start learning about and developing conclusions about sexuality?
 - a. Where are they learning about sexuality?
 - b. How does this reinforce the urgency of parents taking the lead in the matter?

Begin with God

6. The conversations and instruction about sexuality and sexual activities should begin with God and His design.
 - a. Human sexuality was designed & endorsed by God (this was His idea)
 - i. This means that sex is not to be worshipped (Romans 1:14-27)
 - ii. It is not gross, nor is it a necessary evil.
 - iii. It is a gift
 - b. It was designed for specific purposes:
 - i. Procreation (Genesis 1:28)
 - ii. Pleasure (Deuteronomy 24:5, Ecclesiastes 9:9, Proverbs 5:18-19, Song of Solomon)
 - iii. Protection (1 Corinthians 7:2-9)
 - iv. Portrayal of Covenant Union (Genesis 2:23-24, 1 Cor 6:16, Eph 5:31)
7. Why is it important for this (beginning with God) to be the foundation for, and always in the background of our conversations and instruction about sexuality?

Start Early and Keep Building

8. Theological foundation for a progressive conversation
 - a. God made everything (including you!) for His glory
 - b. God made all of your body very special, and it has very special purposes that glorify Him
 - c. God made men and women different, and those differences are part of how we glorify Him
 - d. We glorify God by enjoying Him, loving Him, trusting Him, and obeying Him
 - i. This includes the words we say, the things we do, and the way we use our bodies
 - e. We glorify God by loving others and serving others (we are here to serve, not to be served)
 - i. This includes what we say, what we do, and how we treat other people's bodies

9. Explain these foundational principles pro-actively at age-appropriate levels, and apply them to teaching opportunities in age-appropriate ways. For example:
 - a. Modesty & privacy
 - b. Crudeness/ potty humor
 - c. Early manifestations of sexual behavior
10. Continually and progressively teach the bigger categories of discipleship that inform sexuality
 - a. The principle of being ruled by the spirit and not the flesh
 - b. The wisdom of delayed gratification vs saying yes to every impulse
 - c. The wisdom of Ecclesiastes: There is a time for everything and a time to refrain from everything
 - d. We are not our own – we were bought at a price
 - e. We are here to serve, not to be served
 - f. Everything we do, we do for the glory of God (Col 3:17, 1 Cor 10:31)

Take and Create Opportunities to Talk

11. Don't dodge the opportunities that come up
 - a. Kids will say and do things that give opportunities to shape their thinking – don't avoid them!
 - b. Teach and commend children regarding distinctly masculine or feminine traits/behaviors
 - i. not all sexuality is sexual intimacy – there are other realities on display
 - ii. The cultural differences between men and women – common grace ways of seeing differences
 - iii. The impulse or assumption of sacrificial responsibility by boys
 - iv. The tenderness, grace, and sensitivity of girls
12. Model it
 - a. Distinctly masculine and feminine roles in the home, biblical complementarianism
 - b. Delightful affection between husband and wife – this is an enormously important influence
 - c. Be consistent and be credible in your own life (more is caught than taught in many cases)
13. Read the whole Bible as a family
 - a. The whole bible for is the whole family Deuteronomy 6:7
 - i. Don't avoid texts that give opportunities to teach
 - ii. Answer questions when asked, instruct at age-appropriate levels
 - iii. Be forthright with biblical precepts, emphasizing matters that are questioned culturally

Seize Teachable Moments

14. Many talks, not "The Talk"
 - a. "The Talk" is incredibly awkward & insufficient
 - i. Where else do we do this?
 - b. Create the expectation that they are disciples of Christ in this area

Do - Not's

15. Don't!
 - a. Be afraid to talk about this subject or ignore it
 - b. Abdicate to the school, youth group, church, etc...
 - c. Freak out about sexual sin
 - d. Treat certain sexual sin with bias

Additional Resources/ Works Cited

<https://www.paultripp.com/ask-paul-tripp/posts/how-do-i-talk-with-my-kids-about-sex>

<https://www.paultripp.com/wednesdays-word/posts/lets-talk-about-it>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/how-do-i-talk-to-my-children-about-sex>