

THE
Talk

It's not just one talk.

SCOTT WENDAL

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This book is dedicated to my children: Matthew, Jeremy, Megan, Scotty, and Amber; and also to my wonderful daughter-in-law, Nikki, and my granddaughter, Madison.

*I have no greater joy than to hear that
my children walk in truth.*

—3 John 4

Jodie and I could not have the ministry we have without the loving support of our children.

A very special thanks to
Adrienne Amster, Cindy Ley,
Josh Berg, and Matthew Wendal.

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PART ONE

Why Talk about “The Talk”

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. —I Corinthians 7:1–2

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. —I Corinthians 7:8–9

Do you remember where you were the first time you heard the facts about “the birds and the bees”? You do realize that your children are one day going to make the same discovery that you made. Sooner or later, it’s going to happen. There comes a point in every young life when natural curiosity must be satisfied. This book will encourage you and equip you to successfully have “The Talk” with your son or daughter. If you don’t have “The Talk,” someone else will do it for you. Several years ago, the results of a survey revealed the following ways that children have learned the facts of life.

WHERE DO CHILDREN SAY THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT “THE BIRDS AND THE BEES”?

1%	from someone at their church
3%	from their father
7%	from an instructor at school
12%	from their mother
28%	from the media
49%	from peers

I’m sure that, with the easy access of the Internet, more and more children are finding out on their own about sex through what they see and read on smartphones, PCs, and tablets connected to the Internet. Yet, when it comes to teaching children about sex and purity, one difficulty may be the parents’

conspiracy of silence. In reality, parents have no need to fear discussing these topics with their children. God created human sexuality in the first place, and He loves all people—parents and children alike. God wants parents to protect their children and give them loving, Bible-based guidance about these important and highly personal areas of life.

WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT TO TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT SEX?

The Word of God has given fathers and mothers the mandate to train up their children in the ways of God (Proverbs 22:6) and to teach them diligently all the important lessons of life (Deuteronomy 6:4–9). It's the parents' responsibility to teach their children about sex.

The first time children may encounter a situation in which they're tempted to engage in sex is in a dating relationship. It's critically important for parents to understand the dangers of dating for children and teenagers. The earlier children begin dating, the more difficult it will be for them to remain morally pure. Here are the facts:

Dating Age	Sex Before Graduation
12	91%
13	56%
14	53%
15	40%
16	20%

The younger children are when they begin dating, the higher their chances of having sex before marriage.

WHAT KEEPS PARENTS FROM TALKING WITH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT SEX?

Four primary barriers keep parents from having “The Talk.”

1. How parents were taught about sex by their parents.

Unfortunately, many parents didn't have an optimal experience when they were taught about sex by their parents. But that scenario doesn't have to repeat itself with the next generation. The negative experience that a father or mother had can be the roadblock keeping him or her from opening up and talking about the subject with a son or daughter.

2. Parents' lack of a close relationship with their children.

Parents need to have a warm and growing relationship with their children to discuss with them the subject of sex. It's important for parents to focus on building the right relationships with their children so that it's easier to approach the subject of sex. Parents need to take an active interest in their children and get involved in their lives, especially the dads. A father is the most important parent in the process of teaching children to have a proper view of sexuality.

Sex education does not occur at a point in time; it's a lifetime process.

Most of parents' discussions with their children should be centered on character, not biology. In this book, you'll discover

that “The Talk” is actually a series of talks that you’ll have with your children.

3. Parents’ involvement in sexual sin. If a parent has been involved in sexual sin in the past, or is currently involved with it, that parent will generally tend NOT to talk to his or her children about the subject of sex. If you’re currently involved in any form of sexual sin, repent and turn back to God, confess your sin, and forsake this dangerous behavior (see Proverbs 6:27–33). If sexual sin was a part of your past, go before the Lord in prayer, confess that sin, and ask for God’s forgiveness. If you’ve asked for God’s forgiveness and you’re living in the fear that your child is going to ask you what you did in the past, you have to realize that many times that’s the enemy accusing you. Don’t let the devil use your own past failure to keep you at a distance from your children. This is a time when you need to move closer to them. Ask God to give you the words to say when you’re unsure how to answer that child if he or she asks about your past. When discussing past moral failures, you don’t have to reveal all the details, but simply acknowledge your sin and that God has forgiven you.

4. Fear. A parent may be afraid to talk to his or her children about sex because of thinking that...

“I’m not a professional.”—You don’t need to be an expert to talk to your kids. All you have to be is a mom or a dad. Just talk to them. You don’t have to be a professional with all the answers. Know that when you meet with your child to talk about this important subject, you’re empowered by God. You can be courageous and share God’s perspective on this

sacred area of life. It's your responsibility. A recent book documented the success rate of professional counselors versus counseling by friends. Statistics showed that friendship counseling had a greater success rate than counseling with professionals. You don't need to be a professional counselor.

“I might not know the answer.”—Don't be afraid that your child is going to ask you a question that you don't have the answer for.

“The answer may not be age appropriate.”—Don't be afraid that your answer isn't going to be appropriate for your child's age level. Someone shared the story of a little girl who was at the dinner table with her mother. The little girl asked, “Mommy, is it down here?” She put her hands in her lap, and then she put her hands on her chest, and said, “Is it down here or up here that makes me a girl?” Her mother said, “Sweetheart, what was that question again?” trying to buy some time. The little girl said, “You know, Mommy, is it down here?” Then she put her hands in her lap again and asked, “Is it down here or up here that makes me a girl?” Her mother had the discernment to utter a prayer to God, and she replied, “Well, Sweetheart, what do you mean by that question?” The little girl said, “You know, Mommy, is it putting the napkin down here when I eat dinner that makes me a girl, or is it stuffing it in my shirt up here that makes me a girl?” And here, her mother was about to fly off into a great dissertation about the differences between men and women. Awkward moments happen

to all of us. It's best to ask a further question or two before you launch into "The Talk."

"The knowledge I give my children about sex will lead to promiscuity."—We aren't talking about details that will stimulate our children. What's most needed is to educate them and build their character in ways that will help them handle their sex drive. It's risky to share "too much information too early." We as parents want to equip our children to control the powerful urges that will go with them throughout all of life. Parents need to teach their kids what God says about how to handle their sex drive, not just in the teen years, but on into marriage.

Fear is a paralyzing emotion, but God is greater than your fears. It's God's will that has made you a father or mother. Accept your God-given role, and with love and truth be stronger than your fears. Parents have a duty and should have a strong desire to equip their children to control the powerful urges that will accompany the sex drive throughout their lives.

WHAT ARE SOME GOALS YOU CAN SET FOR YOUR CHILDREN?

Personal purity through abstinence from sex until they are married.

A godly view of their sexuality and of the sex drive.

A good understanding of their sex drive and the sex drive of the opposite sex.

A commitment to following principles that help them develop their own convictions.

Picture this: A beautiful, exquisitely wrapped package. Inside are the most delightful, untainted pleasures that you could imagine. Now, wouldn't you want to be able to give that gift to your child? I would! Wouldn't you want to give a gift that would be good, wholesome, and godly? A gift that your child could keep for a lifetime? That's what this gift is all about. We want to help our children understand who they are as sexual beings created in the image of God.

We've been raised to think that the Bible is silent on the subject of sex and that anyone who wants to be a good Christian is silent on the subject as well. The world is constantly bombarding our children with false and perverted messages concerning sex.

The Bible is filled with admonitions and instructions about sex.

Genesis—Joseph left his coat in the hands of an aggressive woman (see Genesis 39).

Judges—Samson lost his life because he lived to fulfill the lust of his eyes. He said to his mom and dad about an attractive woman he saw, “Go get her for me, because she looks good to me.” His life ended in destruction.

Proverbs—an entire chapter consists of a father's conversation with a son addressing the red light district

and how to avoid the snares of the prostitute.

The Gospels—Jesus saved the woman who was caught in adultery.

Paul's epistles—Paul warns repeatedly to abstain from sexual immorality.

The Bible is not silent, but Christians are often frozen with fear when it comes to speaking to their children about sex.

WHERE DID SEX COME FROM?

God created sex.

Sex is good. God placed Adam and Eve in the garden together alone and naked and said, “*This is very good.*” An entire book of the Bible has a theme of marital love that includes the physical relationship—the Song of Solomon.

God invented sex.

Satan did not create sex; neither did Hugh Hefner, nor Dr. Ruth. The Creator of the Universe designed this miracle! God created the sex drive for pleasure and for reproduction. It is a mystery—God’s mystery! Intimacy between a husband and a wife reflects His image. Reproduction is God allowing us to assist Him in creating a life, then allowing us to raise that child to reflect Him and His glory.

We must have “The Talk.” We must teach our children proper sex education. Equally important, we must teach them purity.

Their very lives and their happiness are at stake. Read on and learn that “The Talk” is actually a series of talks that take place at different times.

PART TWO

Explaining Puberty

Deuteronomy 6:3–9

Proverbs 4:1–7

Proverbs 5:1–5

Proverbs 5:15–20

Proverbs 7:7–27

WHAT IS OUR GOAL IN TALKING TO OUR CHILDREN ABOUT SEX?

Protect them? Prepare them? Provide information to them?

Our most important goal is to equip our children to enter adulthood prepared to live godly, wholesome, and fulfilled lives as Christian men and women—Christian husbands and wives. We want them to have deep and meaningful marriages filled with spiritual, sexual, and emotional intimacy. We want them to have an intimate and loving relationship with their future spouse.

Sex is the giving of this amazing gift of ourselves to another in marriage. Sex education is about preparing our children for giving this gift in the way that God has designed—in marriage. When we do this, we also protect them.

Sex education belongs to the parents—not the church, the school, the Internet, or your children’s friends (which is where more than half of kids hear about it). God commands parents to teach their children about loving God and loving others (see Deut. 6:1–9). Don’t delegate your responsibility to someone or something else—biology teacher, friend, Internet, etc.

Guiding Principles

1. Seize teachable moments

Many of the most precious opportunities to shape your child’s character come at unexpected moments: Seeing an expectant mom at church, hearing the foul or off-color word from the playground or seeing it on a magazine cover at the supermarket, the news item about sexual abuse, the affair of a celebrity, the mating of animals in the zoo. All of these are opportunities to

discuss sexuality with your kids.

2. Use Bible stories from Sunday school, church, and family devotions

Another evidence that the Scriptures are true is that they don't sugar-coat the descriptions of heroes of the faith. The Bible tells us about polygamy and adultery. David, a man after God's own heart, sinned with another man's wife; Solomon multiplied wives; Jesus forgave the woman taken in adultery (John 8). When explaining what King David did, you would say to a younger child that he started kissing Bathsheba, a woman who was married to another man.

3. Be age appropriate

The "sex talk" is not a one-off conversation. Many talks about sexuality need to take place between you and your children, and these talks should begin when your children are young and continue until they're married. We live in a sex-saturated culture. Parents aren't going to be able to shelter their kids from every single outside influence. Whether information is coming from neighborhood kids or through inappropriate media content (even when it's viewed accidentally), it's vital to have healthy, frequent times of communication with your children.

Explain to each child that sometimes his or her friends may want to talk about where babies come from. Tell your elementary and preteen son or daughter that God has a special plan to create babies, and when your son or daughter is a little older, you want to have a special talk with him or her about God's plan.

4. Explain puberty and body changes before they happen

Both boys and girls are going to go through an awkward stage when they think everyone is staring at them. If a girl begins having her period before her mom has prepared her, it could be quite a frightening experience for the girl. We will look at some points to cover on this subject.

5. Develop a close relationship with your child

Work at developing a close relationship with your son or daughter while he or she is young, so that it's natural to talk to him or her about something that will become awkward to talk about when he or she is older.

Praise your children when they ask questions—any questions—but especially about sexuality and relationships. When they make good and godly observations, praise them.

6. Do NOT give away all of the mystery

When your 13-year-old daughter asks, “Mom, how do you cook a turkey for Thanksgiving?” you may say, “Well, sweetie, you put the turkey in a roasting pan and add salt, pepper, water, and some other herbs. Cook it for several hours.” But when your daughter is 23 years old and getting ready to cook her first turkey, you will be a whole lot more detailed.

When your 12-year-old son asks, “How do you change a tire?” you say, “Well, you jack up the car, take off the lug nuts, pull the old tire off and put the new one on, and put the lug nuts back on.” When your single-adult son calls from the side of the road and says, “Dad, I have a flat. Where is that jack and how do I get the tire down from under the car?” you can tell

him in more detail how to remove the flat tire and put the spare tire in its place.

7. Use the Scriptures

Genesis 2:24 gives insight about the marital relationship: *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.* God explains the physical union of sexual intercourse with dignity and reverence. Author Dr. Howard Hendricks said, “We should not be ashamed to discuss what God was not ashamed to create.”

The first message about sex is positive, as we see in Genesis chapters 1 & 2. God made Adam and Eve—and us—so that one man and one woman could be blessed to form an exclusive and lifelong marital union. God’s design is for sex to expand the family with the creation of children. In the New Testament, we learn that the Christian marriage is an earthly model of Christ’s love for His bride, the church (Ephesians 5:22–33). The Bible does warn, multiple times, about the sin of sexual immorality, but that is only in contrast to the positive message of how wonderful sex is for married people. Isn’t it interesting that Satan wants to tempt a single person to have sex before marriage, and tempt a married person not to have sex with his or her spouse, but with someone outside the marriage.

8. Sexual sin, though evil and damaging, is not the end of the world

We serve a God who can forgive and heal, though He will not erase the consequences and scars that result from sexual sin. God did forgive David and was gracious in not taking his

life. However, four of David's children died premature deaths because of his sin—the baby born to Bathsheba, and David's sons Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.

9. Be aware of your child's curiosity and easy access to damaging influences

A staggering 90 percent of children aged 8 to 16 have viewed pornography on the Internet, in many cases unintentionally. The average age of first Internet exposure to pornography is 11 years old, and the largest consumers of Internet pornography are 12- to 17-year-old boys. Youth with significant exposure to sexual media were shown to be significantly more likely to have had intercourse at ages 14 to 16. That means that the average age for first intercourse in the United States is now 16.

At age 15, one-fourth of both young men and young women have had intercourse. By age 18, about two-thirds of young people have had sex. By the time they are completing their first year in college, three-fourths of young adults have had sex. And the percentage continues to climb throughout the college years. If your son or daughter is going to remain pure, it will have to be on purpose. Most of those who had intercourse also engaged in oral sex. And many who have not had intercourse have engaged in oral sex. Surveys show that teens think that oral sex is not sex. They think that there is no risk of pregnancy or sexual disease. They are only half right.

Almost 1 million pregnancies occur each year among American teenagers, though that figure is lower than in the 1980s and 1990s. More than 250,000 teenage pregnancies end in abortion each year. About a half-million babies are born to

teenage mothers—most unmarried.

WHO IS ASSISTING US IN SHAPING OUR CHILDREN TO BE SEXUALLY PURE?

- Hollywood? No.
- The media? No.
- The Internet? No.
- Secular education? Not usually.
- The church? YES!

Two of the most powerful predictors of whether teenagers will engage in premarital sex are: 1) whether they feel close to at least one parent; and 2) whether they are seriously committed to their faith in a Bible-believing church.

WHAT IF I START TOO LATE IN TALKING TO MY CHILD ABOUT SEX?

Earlier is better! But don't say "I missed that window of opportunity." If you're starting late, at least you're starting.

1. Start NOW!
2. Evaluate the relationship you currently have with your son or daughter. If you have a strained relationship with your child, you don't want to go home and start talking about the topic of sex.
3. Encourage your child to grow in his or her faith (attend

teen Sunday school, Wednesday Ignite service, teen activities, church services and summer camps, and have devotions, etc.).

4. Pray for your child.

Here are some tips for keeping your environment safe for your kids:

- Children are never to be left with people that are not fully trustworthy.
- If your child plays at a neighbor or friend's home, make sure you know who's there and that a trustworthy adult is in charge.
- Ensure there is no pornography in the home. Assume the worst if the lifestyle of a neighbor or friend does not display a life of godliness and righteousness. Why would you assume that a lost or backslidden or weak Christian would not have a home that has caved in to the temptations of our culture?
- Remember that abuse sometimes comes from other children.
- Begin talking with your child about inappropriate touching and viewing when your child is very young, to help prevent sexual abuse.
- Conversations about sexual contact and inappropriate exposure should happen when your child is no older than age 10.

Sexual conversations with your child can be awkward, so go into each conversation prepared. Here are a few suggestions:

- Write down in advance the big ideas you want to share

with your child.

- Get time in private so your child knows that the issues you're discussing are important.
- Take care not to talk with your child about sex in ways that are shaming or condemning.
- Ask often the simple, open-ended question "Is there anything your mom and I need to know about?" This helps to ensure that the parent can draw the child out to speak about literally anything. Parents' goal is to continually communicate their joy in their children, their hope for them, and their availability to them. If your child should sin or be sinned against sexually, your goal should always be openness and trust so that your child will tell the truth about what's happening in his or her life.

As you share God's standard and your concern, lavish your children with affection and encouragement. By doing so, you'll be making it abundantly clear that you are the safest person to speak to. And finally, don't wrongly assume that everything is "just fine" unless they tell you so.

PREPARING FOR PUBERTY

Usually after a girl's 8th birthday or after a boy turns 9 or 10, puberty begins when an area of the brain called the hypothalamus starts to release hormones.

What to say... (boys and girls)

- Your body is going to change.
- Your body is being bombarded by hormones.
- What is a hormone? Your brain is like a computer, and during the time of adolescence, you are getting one incredible upgrade.
- Puberty begins when your body releases an amount of hormones that's 20 times more than you have ever had before.

For boys, the hormone is called testosterone. For girls, the hormone is called estrogen. These hormones tell your body to grow in different ways. Initially the changes happen slowly, and then they get more frequent and produce stronger emotional feelings. Many things change in your child's life in the space of about half a dozen years. This is part of growing up.

For boys

You are going to go through a growth spurt.

Your muscles will become larger and harder.

Your voice will begin to change—it will be lower in pitch—though it may squeak at times as it changes.

Hair starts growing all over your body. It grows on your arms, legs, under your arms, on your face and around your private parts.

Your private area is your genital area. Your testicles are the little round glands that you can feel that hang below your penis. The testicles are there to make sperm.

It's not right when other guys make fun of you about these

changes and it's not right for you to make fun of others about their changes.

Some guys don't grow beards until they're in their 20s. It's not important how quickly your body changes and how much hair you grow on your chest or legs or face, but what is important is your heart for God and your desire to obey Him. It is who you are in your character and what choices you make that determine how quickly you grow to become a man. Beards and hair on the chest don't make a man a real man. It's his heart for God.

You may wake up in the morning and find some sticky stuff on your underpants.

This is called semen. This fluid contains the sperm. Sometime at night while you are asleep, your body releases the semen. This is called a nocturnal emission or a wet dream. Don't be alarmed. There is nothing wrong. God designed it that way.

Girls tend to go through puberty before some guys do, which means that some of the girls in your class might go through a growth spurt before you have a chance to catch up with them.

From time to time your emotions are going to be difficult to control. You may become angry or feel sad or discouraged for no apparent reason. That is a part of puberty. When this happens, you need to allow Jesus Christ to be #1 in your life.

All of these changes are designed to make you God's man.

Ultimately, these changes are designed to help you be ready to marry a woman and have children—to lead, serve, guide, and protect.

For girls

You'll go through a growth spurt, and you'll grow taller. You'll probably be a year or two ahead of the boys in your class.

You'll begin to grow hair in new places. It'll thicken on your legs, and grow under your arms and around your genitals. I'll teach you how to shave when you're ready.

Your breasts will grow rounder and larger.

You'll start your menstrual cycle, or what people call your period. God designed a woman's body to make a single tiny egg about once a month. The egg is flushed out of the woman's body by blood. This happens to most girls in their teens. I'll show you how to use pads or tampons when you're ready.

From time to time, your emotions will be difficult to control. You may become angry or feel sad or discouraged for no apparent reason. That's a part of puberty.

When it happens, you need to allow Jesus Christ to be #1 in your life.

All of these changes are designed to help you become God's woman. Ultimately, they are designed to help you be ready to marry a man and have children—to love, serve, and enjoy.

For boys and girls

Both girls and boys often get acne and start to sweat more. And unlike kid sweat, your new sweat comes with a smell. Here's how to cut back on body odor. If you find yourself sweating all the time, even when you're not stressed, hot, or exercising, we might see a doctor about it.

Your skin will get oilier. During your teen years, your changing hormone levels will lead to oilier skin and breakouts.

You can fight these blemishes by using the right skin products, but if those don't work, you might want to seek the advice of a doctor or dermatologist.

You may feel self-conscious about your appearance and these changes that are occurring. I want you to know that when God made you, He made no mistakes. God made you exactly as He wants you to be. The Bible says you are fearfully and wonderfully made. You are a living miracle. You may not enjoy all the things that you'll be going through, but these are opportunities for you to grow closer to the Lord and commit to following His Word and His will for your life.

PART THREE

THE TALKS

*What you do with sex will communicate
what you believe about God.*

*For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in
your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

—1 Corinthians 6:20

Many of us refer to teaching our children about sex as “The Talk.” Some of us may find the idea of discussing this topic with our children frightening, maybe even horrifying. We might feel awkward and unsure of ourselves and wonder what we should say.

Why do we even talk to our children about sex? What’s our purpose? Are we trying to protect them? Should our main goal be to prepare them? Is the most important thing to provide our children with information about sex?

Truly, our most important goal in teaching our children about sex is to equip them to enter adulthood prepared to live godly, wholesome, and fulfilled lives as Christian men and women. One day, many of our children will become husbands and wives. We must teach our children about God’s plan for sex so that they can have deep and meaningful marriages filled with spiritual, sexual, and emotional intimacy. We spend time instructing each child because we want him or her to enjoy an intimate and loving relationship with his or her future spouse.

“The Talk” is not just one talk, but rather many talks that start when our children are young and last until they are married. These talks can be uncomfortable at the beginning, but they’ll flow more smoothly when we’ve built loving relationships with our children. We live in a world that’s saturated with sex. More than half of our population hears about sex from a friend, oftentimes receiving information that’s not accurate. Unfortunately, we won’t be able to shelter our children from every single outside influence. Because of this, healthy and frequent times of communication with our children are vital.

Sex education doesn’t belong to the school, the church, the

Internet, or our children's friends. Sex education belongs to us as parents. Although our children may not readily admit it, they want to hear about sex from us. The stronger our relationship with them, the greater their desire will be to hear what we have to share with them on this sensitive topic. In this series of talks that we're going to discuss, each of them builds upon the previous one. We can use these talks as a guide to help us know what we should say and when we should say it while teaching our children what sex is and, most important, what *God's plan* is for sex within marriage.

Talk 1

GOD'S PLAN TO MAKE YOU A MAN OR A WOMAN *Suggested age: Girls 8+; Boys 9–10*

Puberty begins when an area of the brain called the hypothalamus starts to release hormones.

This usually will begin for girls around the time they turn 8, and for boys around the time they turn 9 or 10. Both boys and girls will go through an awkward stage during which they think everyone is staring at them. We need to make sure that we're preparing our children for this time in their lives so they'll understand what's happening in and to their bodies.

WHAT TO SAY TO YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER

Your body is going to change as it goes through a process called puberty. Think of it like this: If your brain were a computer, during the time when you're a teen-ager (we call it being an adolescent), your brain would be getting an incredible upgrade. Puberty begins when your body releases an amount of hormones that's 20 times greater than you've ever had before. For boys this hormone is called testosterone. For girls it's called estrogen. These hormones tell your body to grow in different ways. The process starts slowly but then gets stronger and stronger. Many things will change in your life in the span of about six years. These changes are part of growing up.

For boys

All these changes are designed to help you become a man of God. Ultimately, they're designed to help prepare you to marry a woman and have children. These changes get you ready to lead, serve, guide, and protect. You'll go through a growth spurt that causes your muscles to become larger and harder. Your voice will begin to change to a lower pitch, although it may squeak at times as it goes through the changing process. Hair will start to grow all over your body. It'll grow on your arms, legs, under your arms, on your face, and around your private parts. Your private area is called your genital area. The little round glands that you can feel hanging below your penis are called testicles. The testicles are the part of your body that makes sperm. You may wake up in the morning and find some sticky stuff on your underpants. This is called semen, which

is the fluid that contains the sperm. Sometime at night while you're asleep, your body releases the semen. This is called a nocturnal emission, also known as a wet dream. There's no need to be alarmed when this happens, because nothing's wrong. God designed your body that way.

Girls tend to go through puberty before some guys do, which means that some of the girls in your class might go through a growth spurt before you have a chance to catch up with them.

From time to time your emotions are going to be difficult to control. You may become angry, sad, or discouraged for no apparent reason. That's all a part of puberty. When it happens, you need to allow Jesus Christ to be Number One in your life. Sometimes boys like to make fun of others who're going through these changes, but that's never right. It's not right for other boys to make fun of you, and it isn't right for you to make fun of them. Some young men can't grow a beard until they're in their 20s. An important truth to remember is that it's not how quickly your body changes or how much body hair you can grow that matters—it's your heart for God and your desire to obey Him that's most important. Who you are in your character and the choices you make will determine how quickly you grow to become a man. Beards and chest hair will not make you a real man, but your heart for God will. As we talked about earlier, all these changes are to help prepare you to be the man God wants you to be.

For girls

All these changes are designed to help you become a woman

of God. Ultimately, they're designed to prepare you to marry a man and have children. You'll go through a growth spurt that'll make you grow taller, probably a year or two earlier than the boys in your class go through their growth spurts. Hair will begin to grow in new places. This hair will thicken on your legs and start growing under your arms and around your genitals. When you're ready, I'll teach you how to shave. Your breasts will grow rounder and larger. You'll also start your menstrual cycle, which is often called your period. God designed a woman's body to release a single tiny egg about once a month. This egg gets flushed out of the woman's body by blood. This starts happening to most girls in their teen years. When you're ready, I'll show you how to use pads and tampons. Your emotions from time to time are going to be difficult to control. You may become angry, sad, or discouraged for no apparent reason. This is part of puberty. When this happens, you need to allow Jesus to be Number One in your life. As we talked about earlier, all these changes are designed to help prepare you to be the woman God wants you to be.

For boys and girls

During this time of puberty, you'll often get acne and start to sweat more. This new sweat comes with a smell that can be helped by using a good deodorant. If you do find yourself sweating all the time, even when you're not stressed, hot, or exercising, we might see a doctor about it. During your teen years, your changing hormone levels will lead to oilier skin and more breakouts. You can fight these breakouts by using the right skin products. Again, if those products don't seem to work, we

can get the advice of a doctor or dermatologist. You may feel self-conscious about your appearance and these changes that occur. But I want you to know that when God made you He made no mistakes! You're exactly the way God wants you to be. The Bible tells us that you are fearfully and wonderfully made—you are a living miracle. You may not enjoy all the things that you'll go through, but they're opportunities for you to grow closer to the Lord and commit to following His Word and His will for your life.

Helpful resources

“The Care and Keeping of You—The Body Book for Girls”
by AmericanGirl Library

“Almost Twelve” by Kenneth N. Taylor

Talk 2

**SEX: GOD'S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE AND
HAVING CHILDREN** *Suggested age: 13*

Sex is the giving of this amazing gift of ourselves to another in marriage. Sex education is about preparing our children for

giving this gift in the way God has designed—in marriage. When we do this, we also protect our children. God commands us to teach our children about loving God and loving others. We must not delegate our responsibility to anyone else. Although these conversations with our children may seem awkward, we can go into them prepared. Sometimes this may include writing down the big ideas we want to share with them. We must always be careful to lavish our children with affection and encouragement so they'll know that we, as their parents, are the safest people they can go to for anything. Our goal should be to communicate to our children that we're always available for them and that we want to know the truth about what's happening in their lives. Healthy, frequent times of communication with our children are vital.

What to say

Do you remember that talk we had about your body changing? All of that is God's plan. Your body is preparing itself for you to become a parent someday. The way God planned for a husband and a wife to create a baby together is called sex. "Intercourse" is a word that means "to communicate." "Sexual intercourse" is the physical joining of a husband and a wife in their private areas once they're married. This is how a husband and a wife express their love to one another in a physical way. Some people call this "making love" or "having sex." The Bible refers to it in Genesis 2:24 as two people becoming one flesh: *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.* Sometimes when a man and woman have sex, or "become one flesh," they create

a baby together. God made a man's body and a woman's body to fit together in a marriage relationship. God made men and women different in their private areas so a husband and wife fit together physically.

When a husband and wife show their love for each other, their bodies fit together. God designed this so that after a few minutes the seed from the man's body, called the sperm, is released into the woman's body. The sperm is in search of an egg in the woman's body—in the womb. Even though there are millions of them, if just one sperm unites with an egg, that egg is fertilized and a baby is created by God. God designed a woman's body to release a single tiny egg about once a month. Only a few days a month that egg is ready to be fertilized to become a baby. If it isn't united with a sperm, it's flushed out of the woman's body by blood. This happens to most girls beginning in their early teens. This is what's referred to as a woman's menstrual cycle or her period.

Discussion questions

Do you have any questions about anything you just heard?

How do you feel about what you just heard?

Is there anything that didn't make sense?

Talk 3

GOD'S PLAN OF PURITY *Suggested age: 13–14*

A staggering 90% of children between the ages of 8 and 16 have viewed pornography on the Internet. The average age of first Internet exposure to pornography is 11 years old, and the largest consumers of Internet pornography are 12- to 17-year-old boys. Youth with significant exposure to sexual media were shown to be significantly more likely to have had intercourse at ages 14 to 16, meaning that the average age for first intercourse in the United States is now 16. By age 15, one-fourth of both young men and young women have had intercourse. By age 18, about two-thirds have had sex. Three-fourths of young men and young women have had sex by the time they're completing their first year in college. Sadly, these statistics continue to climb throughout the college years. Most of those who've had intercourse have also engaged in oral sex. Almost one million pregnancies occur each year among American teenagers, and more than 250,000 pregnancies end in abortion each year. About half a million babies are born to teenage mothers, and most of those mothers are unmarried. If our sons and daughters are going to remain pure, it'll have to be on purpose. Hollywood, the media, the Internet, and secular education won't help us train our children to be sexually pure. We, as parents, must be the ones to teach our children God's plan for sexual purity!

In addition to teaching our children about purity, we must also help protect their purity by maintaining an environment that's safe for them. We should never leave our children with any person that's not fully trustworthy. If our children do spend time at a friend's or neighbor's house, it's so important that we know who's there and ensure there's no pornography in the home. Sadly, abuse can sometimes even come from other children. We must prepare and protect our children by teaching them from a young age about inappropriate viewing and touching. We must teach our children God's plan for sexual purity as well as do our part to protect them.

What to say

Do you remember when we talked about the changes that would take place in your body and how God makes a baby? I want to talk to you about something that's really important, and that is God's plan for your purity. Do you remember the story in the Old Testament of Joseph when Potiphar's wife tempted him?

Review the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife in Genesis 39.

Today we're going to talk about why God created sex and how we can follow His plan to stay pure and live a life that brings glory and honor to Him.

Why did God create sex?

1. God designed it to be good. God designed you the way He did on purpose. He isn't ashamed or embarrassed, and He doesn't want you to be embarrassed either. He says in Genesis

1:31 that everything He created is “*very good.*”

2. Sex has several purposes, and one is for procreation.

Procreation means having children. Sex is the way for a husband and wife to have children and expand their family. That’s how you got here. Sex is a gift from God so that husbands and wives could create children. Children are a big responsibility, and that’s why God wants people to be married before they enjoy His gift of sex. It’s very important for you to understand that you should save the act of sex for marriage, because if a baby does come, you want that baby to be born into a family and grow up with a mom and a dad. You don’t want to bring into the world a child that doesn’t have a mom and a dad married to each other and providing everything that baby needs.

3. Sex is for pleasure and closeness with your spouse.

One of the greatest privileges you’ll have in marriage one day is to enjoy sexual closeness with your husband or wife. This is one of the ways husbands and wives become close to one another. It’s how they get to know each other better and become better friends. These are a few reasons why you want to save this gift for your future spouse. A person who’s never had sex with another person is known as a virgin. Virginity is a precious gift God has given you. God wants you to save that gift and give it one day to the person you marry. God wants you to be a virgin when you get married.

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 *...your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own...For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.*

4. God designed sex to bring Him glory. The last thing you need to know about sex is also the most important thing. God designed sex to bring Him glory and honor. When a man and woman stay faithful to each other and only have sex in marriage, it pleases God. It honors Him. Likewise, if a man and a woman do not have sex in a marriage relationship as God planned, then they dishonor God. They grieve God's heart and make Him sad.

What you do with sex will communicate what you believe about God. You'll either say, "I believe God's ways are right and good and I will follow them," or "I believe my way is the better way and I will do what I want to with my body." Ephesians 5:31–32 says: *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.* Marriage is an illustration of Jesus and His church. It shows us how much the Lord loves His church (you and me). It's very important that we believe and follow what God says. Someday, God may allow you to be married and have children. You need to remember that more important than all the fun you'll have being married and having a family, the most important thing is that you honor God with your marriage.

For girls

Marriage is a covenant of companionship (an agreement to be best friends for life). A covenant is a binding agreement involving two parties that's often sealed with the shedding of blood. When a husband and wife who are virgins have their first marital sexual intercourse, the hymen is broken and a small

amount of blood is shed. The hymen is a membrane of skin that can break the first time a virgin girl has sex (sometimes it may break during sports or with the use of a tampon).

For boys and girls

Your virginity is a gift. You can only give it away one time. I want to help you protect this gift that God has given to you. I want to challenge you to protect this gift, this treasure from God. I want to ask you to make a commitment to remain a virgin, to not have sex until you get married. Here are some ways to keep this purity commitment:

Do not date during high school.

Do not give your heart away to someone in high school.

Do not go steady or “go out with” anyone during your teen years. **Parents note: Young people crave attention. If they aren't getting love and attention from home, they'll find it from a friend of the opposite sex.*

Determine to follow God's standards of courting/dating in college.

Think on the right things. *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* —Philippians 4:8

Guard your heart. *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.* —Proverbs 4:23

Look at the right things. *I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes:...* —Psalm 101:3a

Keep your lips off the opposite sex. Determine not to kiss

before you marry. A kiss may start as just a kiss on the cheek but it will slide. It slides closer to the lips, then on the lips, and then turns into heavy petting. This can eventually lead to the total loss of purity.

You'll experience an urge for sex that's called a sex drive. Someone may say to you sometime, "Let's go ahead and have sex this one time. I won't tell anybody. No one will ever know. It's okay because we really love each other." You'll feel a lot of pressure because you may think you really do love that person. But God doesn't want you to give in to that pressure. Sex before marriage brings regrets. Make a promise to God that you aren't going to have sex before marriage. Wait until you're married!

Song of Solomon 8:4 says *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please.* God wants you to control your urges for sex until you're married. [For boys] You're never more of a man than when you keep your sex drive under control. You're never more of a man than when you protect a young lady's virginity. A time will come when you can express those sexual desires in marriage. You need to wait. Glorify God by keeping Jesus Christ pre-eminent in your life. Refuse to spoil what God desires you to have later on.

Helpful resources

Passport to Purity Getaway (familylife.com)

Talk 4

THE PURITY RING/NECKLACE *Suggested age: 13*

As our children grow older and reach their teen years, we should continue to seek opportunities to teach them how to live in a way that brings glory and honor to God. We must instruct, protect, and help them along the way as well as consistently pray for them. We should encourage our teenagers to grow in their faith by attending church and church activities, being involved in their youth group, and spending a daily time with God. It's important that we not only teach them *about* sexual purity or even *why* to stay pure, but that we also *help* and *encourage* them along the way.

What to say

You'll hear a lot about dating as you go through life. Many people use this word to refer to a relationship between a young man and woman who are interested in each other. We're going to talk about dating today—what it is, what it does, and the dangers that come with it. We'll also discuss courting today. Many times people are confused when they hear the word “courting” because it isn't a word that's as commonly used as it once was. Courting also refers to a relationship between a young man and woman who are interested in each other, but as we're going to see today, courting is a much better example of God's plan for relationships. We're going to discuss the

differences between dating and courting. First we'll go over some of the dangers that come with dating and then we'll define and discuss exactly what courtship is.

Dating can either delete or dilute parental involvement. Most dating relationships are exclusive and leave no room or desire for the parents to get involved.

Dating exposes young people to some terrible dangers:

1. Dating is a threat to purity. Today we have high schools that hand out condoms and provide daycare facilities for babies. Sex before marriage is not only just a threat to young people's walk with God but also a threat to their lives.

Example: If someone gave you a plane ticket to fly across the country and said, "Just so you know, 3 out of 10 planes that travel that route crash," would you take that flight? Suppose you were told that only 1 in 10 crashes—would you take the flight? You probably would not. When it comes to life and death, we simply do not take any unnecessary risks. Yet condoms fail 1 out of 10 times. Some studies even say that condoms fail 30% of the time.

2. Dating is a threat to emotional stability. Unfortunately, many people today can give testimonies of months and years of life that were ruined due to harmful relationships. Some boyfriends act as if they own their girlfriends, causing them to become emotional cripples. God wants you to save your emotions for one person—the person you marry.

3. Dating is a threat to spiritual growth and fellowship. Many couples will skip church or church activities so they can spend more time together alone. Dating couples tend to cut themselves off from fellowship with others as well as fellowship with God.

4. Dating is a threat to future happiness.

5. Dating is a threat to having a strong, happy marriage.

Dating can involve deceitfulness.

Dating follows no biblical pattern.

Now that we've discussed several dangers regarding dating, we're going to talk about what courtship is. Courtship is a secure, public relationship, sought by a young man, responded to by a young lady, and supervised and approved by their parents. Courtship is a relationship based on an ideal biblical pattern. Although the Scriptures describe other relational patterns such as divorce and polygamy, those patterns are not presented as ideal.

We find the idea of courting pictured in the story of salvation. First, we see in Ephesians 1:4 that the Heavenly Father and the Son together chose the bride for the Son. *According as he hath chosen us in him from the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.* Then the Bible tells us in Luke 19:10 that the Son of God was sent to win his bride: *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* John 5:30 tells us that the Son was continually in communication with His Father as He sought His bride. Jesus truly paid the greatest dowry in history, as we find in 1 Peter 1:18–19. *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible*

things, as silver, and gold...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. The bride then has the opportunity to either accept or reject the Groom. At this point, He has given His love to us, and we are growing to know Him better and love Him more each day. We also find that though we cannot touch Him now, one day we will. Finally, as seen in Revelation 19:7–9, our marriage as Believers will take place to Him in the future. The story of salvation presents us with a beautiful picture of the idea of courting.

We must teach our children some important concepts about courtship. Our children need to know that courtship is for young couples who are spiritually and financially ready for marriage. This means that no courtship or dating should take place during the high school years. It is important that we make sure we have our children's hearts and that they know they have ours. Our children need to know that they can trust us and that we love them enough to help them make the right decisions.

We should also be sure to teach our children from the time they are very young that there is one person in life for them both physically and emotionally. Just as God made Eve for Adam, He also made one person for each of our children to marry. How great it would be if the only boyfriend or girlfriend each of our sons and daughters ever had would be the person they married. In addition, those who are not old enough to be married should concentrate on seeking God rather than seeking a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Another important concept to teach our children is to

warn them about breaking the 10th Commandment. The Bible tells us *Thou shalt not covet*, and we must instruct our children to guard their hearts from covetousness both before and after marriage. The 10th Commandment does not apply solely to things; it applies to people as well. By allowing our children to play the “dating game,” we are giving them an opportunity to covet.

As parents, we should spend time with our children discussing the character, personality, and commitment of other young people. We must teach our daughters that they are not the ones who are to seek a mate. We must also teach our sons that though they are the ones to seek a mate, they should not begin seeking until they are old enough and mature enough for marriage. Our children should learn to be friendly toward everyone without feeling like they have to pair off in a dating relationship.

Example: A father planned a special date with his daughter to celebrate her 13th birthday. He wanted their time together to be so special that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for his daughter to ever forget it. The father’s purpose was to encourage his daughter to commit herself to a life of purity during her all-important teen years. That morning, her mother presented her with a gold key, along with instructions to give the key as a gift to her father after he had given his gift to her.

The father gave his daughter a beautiful gold heart on a gold chain. He told her that the gold heart represented her purity in life. The daughter then gave her father the gift of the key, understanding that in giving the key to her dad she

was saying, “Dad, I want you to have the key to my heart, to protect it and keep it safe.” The father promised to keep her heart safe and that he would present the key to her future husband on her wedding day.

This beautiful story is an example of how we can encourage and prepare our daughters to live a life of purity, saving themselves for the husband that God has chosen for them. We can apply the same idea with our sons, replacing the purity ring with a beautiful woman’s necklace. The father presents the son with the necklace, which the son in turn gives to the mother to wear until the day the son gets married. The mother wears this beautiful necklace as a constant reminder to the son of his pledge to personal purity and commitment to the girl that God has prepared for him. The mother, in exchange for the necklace, presents her son with a gold ring engraved with the date of his pledge to purity. This ring also serves as a continual reminder of his pledge to personal purity and holiness. On the son’s wedding day, the mother gives the necklace to his bride, symbolizing the fulfillment of their commitment and his pledge.

Although a locket, necklace, and ring are beautiful examples of a commitment to purity, they are still only reminders of a pledge. The important thing is that we as parents provide our children with steady love and encouragement. We cannot wait for our children to come to us with questions about their changing bodies, because that day may never come. We need to initiate appropriate conversations with our children as they grow.

Talk 5

RIGHT BEFORE MARRIAGE

Suggested time: Within two weeks of marriage

The time comes when our sons and daughters meet the one that God has chosen to be their wife or husband. They begin courting, get engaged, and prepare to spend the rest of their life with this special person. We have spent countless years training them in the way they should go and preparing them to enter this God-given relationship with holiness and purity. At this time, just a few weeks before their wedding day, we can offer our engaged son or daughter several helpful books. Though not necessarily a “talk,” these books can serve as useful resources for our children as they prepare to enter this lifelong commitment.

Helpful resources

“Intended for Pleasure” by Dr. Ed Wheat

“The Act of Marriage” by Tim LaHaye

“Intimate Issues: Twenty-One Questions Christian Women Ask About Sex” by Linda Dillow and Lorraine Pintus

As frightening as having “The Talk” (or in this case, several talks) may seem, the end result is worth it. We cannot run, hide, or ignore the responsibility that God has given to us as parents. It’s important that we teach our children God’s plan

for sex and sexual purity so that we can equip them to live godly, wholesome, and fulfilled lives as Christian men and women who one day will become husbands and wives. As we teach our children to honor God with their lives, we as parents honor God by obeying Him and His Word.

