

Schedule for Class in

Sexuality: *God's Gift*

Edited by Ann Krabill Hershberger

Week 1 Introduction

1. What have we heard and seen about sex, especially during the last week. (Cartoons are welcome.) What do we think about the evidence?
2. Scriptures: Genesis 1:26,27; 2:18-25.
 - Why do you think the Old Testament editors included these materials?
 - What assumptions about male and female and relations between the sexes do they reflect?
 - What contribution do they make to our understanding of the subject?
3. Preview of the course.

-It is proposed to follow the pattern above lesson by lesson along with one chapter from the book.

Week 2 The Gift

1. Reports on what we have heard and seen.
2. Scriptures: Genesis 16:1-6; 17:9-27; 24:1-9. How would it feel to be one of the characters described in these stories?
3. Chapter 1 in Sexuality. Read and reflect on the questions at the end of the chapter.

Week 3 Sexuality and Scripture

1. Opening reports and reflections.
2. Scriptures: Genesis 34, 39. What do these scriptures reveal about the power of sex to distort human relationships? Have you observed this power gone wild in our context?
3. Chapter 2 in Sexuality. Note especially questions 4, 5, 6.

Week 4 The Gift and Intimacy

1. Reports and reflections.
 2. Scriptures: Judges 19-21. This is one of the rawest accounts of sex and violence in the whole Bible. Why do you think the biblical editors included this account? What evidence do we have for such degradation in our own culture?
 3. Chapter 3 in Sexuality. What sort of commentary does this chapter provide on the scripture for this session? What about the Ann Landers survey?
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Week 5 The Gift and Young People

1. Reports and reflections.
2. Scriptures: Proverbs 6:20-35; 7:1-27; 9:1-6. What is here that continues to be useful as sex education?
3. Chapter 4 in Sexuality. What observations do you have about our congregation's program for the sexual orientation of young people? What would you like to see added or changed?

Week 6 The Gift and Singleness

1. Reports and reflections.
2. Scriptures: Deuteronomy 22:13-23:1; Isaiah 56:3-5; 1Corinthians 7:25-35.
3. Chapter 5 in Sexuality. Reflect on the questions at the end. Some time during the course I would like to arrange for an extra session when we can view "The Last Temptation of Christ." About now would be a good time.

Week 7 The Gift and Marriage

1. Reports and reflections.
2. Scripture: Ruth 3:1-4; Matthew 1:2-16. Note: "Feet" in the Old Testament is sometimes a euphemism for the sexual organs. What was Ruth up against and why was the support of Boaz important to her? What is the significance of the women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in Mathew?
3. Chapter 6 in Sexuality. Reflect on the questions.

Week 8 The Gift and Same Sex Orientation

1. Reports and reflections.
2. Scriptures: Romans 1:18-32.
3. Chapter 7 in Sexuality. This issue seems to be troubling most churches and threatens to derail Mennonite integration. Answer the questions at the

end of the chapter.

Week 9 The Gift and Cross Gender Friendships

1. Reports and reflections.
 2. Scripture: 2Samuel 11-18. What is the significance of this account in the Bible? If you had been the editor why would you have included it?
 3. Chapter 8 in Sexuality. What suggestions have you for making us better friends?
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Week 10 The Gift and the Sensuous

1. Report and reflections.
2. Scripture: Song of Solomon. What do you think of the word pictures used in this piece of literature? Can you see anywhere yourself here? Why do you think it is in the Bible? What about the Sunday school song based on this text?
3. Chapter 9 in Sexuality. Are there any topics here you would rather not discuss in our group?

Week 11 The Gift Expressed in the Arts

1. Reports and reflections. Fiction writers typically use sex and/or violence to add color and intensity to their stories, even perhaps as teaching devices. What examples come to mind? How are sex and violence used and what points are made?
2. Scripture; Ezekiel 16, 23. Here is sex used as a metaphor, a vivid troubling word picture. How do you feel about the way Ezekiel has used sex in these prophecies?
4. Chapter 10 in Sexuality. Note especially questions 3-5.

Week 12 The Gift Misused

1. Reports and reflections.
2. Scriptures: Mathew 5:27, 28; John 8:1-11; Ephesians 5:21-32. What view of the relations between the sexes is apparent in each of these texts?
3. Chapter 11 in Sexuality. How do you differentiate between the erotic and pornography?

Week 13 **The Gift Restored**

1. Reports and reflections.
2. Scriptures: Hebrews 13:1-6; Revelation 14:1-5. What does John mean in the passage from Revelation?
3. Chapter 12 in Sexuality.

-Answer the questions at the end of the chapter.

-What is the significance for this course for our congregation?