

CRAZY, SEXY LOVE.

LUST, LIES AND LOVE TRIANGLES | Discussion Notes

Start by reading 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. We're going to focus first on the idea of 'sin' and then ask what it means to 'sin against your own body'.

- 'Sin' can be quite a loaded word; it will bring to mind different things for all of us. What do you think of when someone says 'sin'? What do your friends outside of church think?
- The word used in the original Greek is hamartia, or "to miss your aim, wander off the path or be mistaken". How does this change how we think about sin?
- Ignatius (founder of the Jesuits) gave another definition of sin: "sin is the unwillingness to trust that what God wants for me is only my deepest happiness". How does this definition change how you think about sin, especially when it comes to sex and relationships? Why do you think we struggle to trust that God has our deepest happiness in mind?

CONNECTED VS DISCONNECTED

Paul makes it clear in 1 Corinthians that sexual sin is dangerous because it is committed against our own 'body'. However, for many of us we have a 'disconnected' view of sex. We see it as just a physical thing that isn't related to spirit and soul - our emotional health, capacity for love and relational wellbeing.

- Do you agree that our society has a disconnected view of sexuality? And do you agree that the Bible argues for a connected view of sex, one that's tied to our whole being?
- What are the dangers of this 'disconnected' view?

Philip explained the 'love triangle' - the three brain systems around romantic desire, sexual intimacy and emotional attachment. What happens in our bodies in these three areas impacts our ability to enjoy long term loving relationships. The act of sex can have huge influence on the other two systems. It is never totally casual, actively bringing our emotional attachment and romantic systems online.

In an ideal world, the three parts of the love triangle are self-reinforcing, working together to promote our deepest happiness. But they can sabotage each other. Inappropriate emotional attachment can lead to romantic desire and the affair. Casual sex can greatly enhance the emotional pull and fallout of an unsuitable relationship. Lack of sex can weaken a marriage.

- With this in mind, re-read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. Does anything different jump out to you about the verse now?

Finally, give some time for people to reflect on their own about what it means for them to 'flee from sexual immorality'. We are all coming to this stuff from different places, and so sometimes an individual and private response can be most helpful. You could encourage people to write down just a couple of practical ways in which they are going to 'flee from sexual immorality' on Post-It Notes or a piece of paper. Then people may want to share in smaller groups or just pray for one another.

OPTIONAL EXTRA: SINGLENESS

Susanna shared her experiences of being single and how church culture can often make this quite a challenge.

- What is helpful or unhelpful in our culture as a community when it comes to singleness?
- How can we do singleness in a way that values it as highly as the Bible does?
- What are the challenges for us, either as individuals or in how we support our friends?