

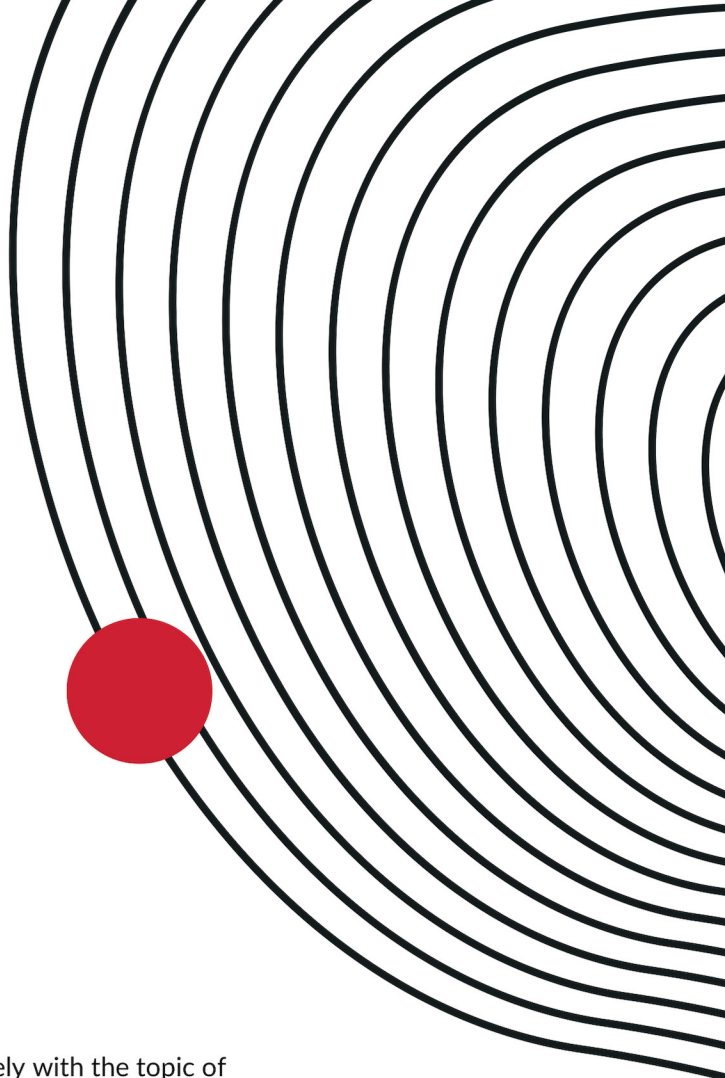
# *Sexuality* AND CREATION



AN INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDY IN GENESIS

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# *Sexuality* AND CREATION



## FACILITATOR'S NOTES

**This Bible study is one of a series aiming:**

- To resource local churches and others to engage positively with the topic of sexuality in the Bible.
- To enable the Church to have a more Biblically-resourced conversation about sexuality, including at Conference.
- To model approaches to scripture and good conversations, including good disagreement.

**This Genesis Bible study has three goals:**

- To familiarise us with Genesis 1 and 2.
- To show how literary patterns are used to convey meaning.
- To consider how Genesis resources our conversations and questions about sexuality.

**There are six sections to this study:**

- Introduction.
- Genesis 1 and activities.
- Genesis 2 and activities.
- Summary of the rest of Genesis and activities.
- Bringing Genesis to our questions.
- Conclusion.

### **In advance of the study:**

- Read the Introduction for Facilitators.
- Look through the materials and make a plan.
- The core activities will take around 90 minutes. Fill the rest of your time by choosing which optional activities will suit your group best.
- Make a schedule for when each activity will begin and end.
- Make a list of what resources you need.

### **You will need:**

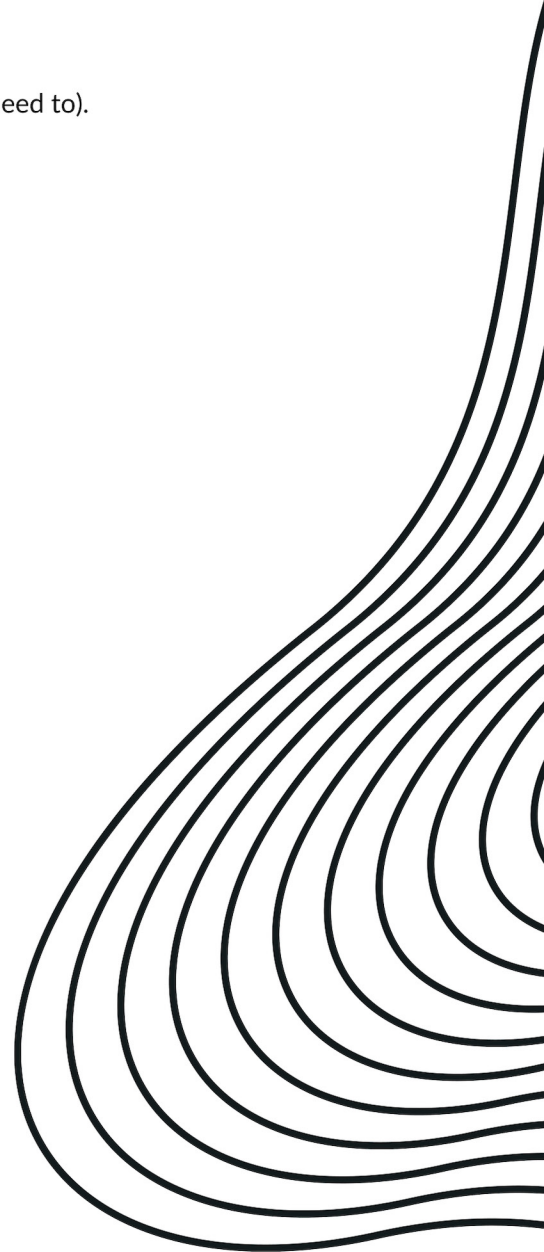
- Water, sweets and fruit for each table.
- A notebook or paper and pen for each person.
- Print outs of the text, A3 or larger (stick two A4 sheets together if you need to).
- Coloured pens.
- A screen with sound.
- A device to play the videos.
- A copy of the videos.

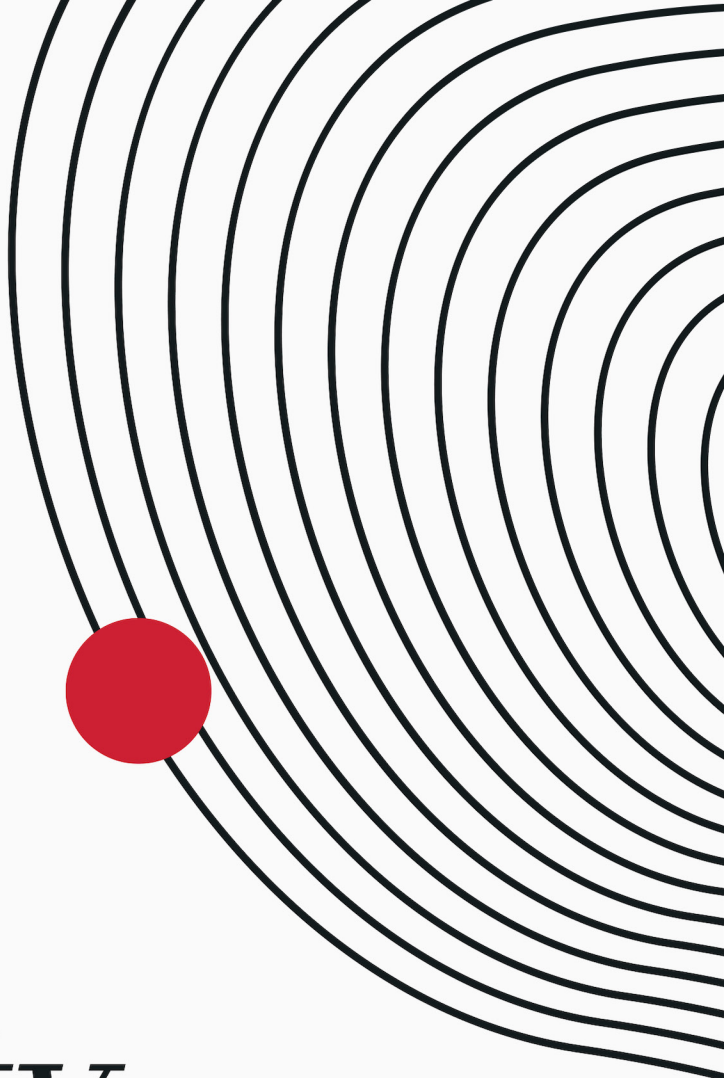
### **You may need:**

- Post-it notes.
- Print-outs of the word bank or discussion questions.
- “Agree” and “Disagree” labels for walking debate.
- Coloured cards for spectrum debate.
- Internet access.
- Slides at [mentimeter.com](https://www.mentimeter.com) prepared in advance.

### **Pray:**

- For the participants.
- For yourself.
- For good, Spirit-filled conversations.
- For God to be encountered in the words of scripture.





# *Sexuality* AND CREATION



AN INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDY IN GENESIS

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## 1. WELCOME

- *Direct people to tea and coffee facilities if you have them.*
- *Explain briefly how the Bible study will run.*
- *Acknowledge the range of abilities and experiences in the room.*
- *Ask for agreement that we will be sensitive and gracious to one another especially where there are differences of opinion.*

*For example:*

“You are all very welcome to this Bible study. We’re going to be looking at the very beginning of the Bible and what it has to say to us about sex and sexuality. We have some short videos and activities to help us get in to it and then we’re going to be engaging with the scriptures together. This means we let the Bible speak for itself and then we bring our questions and our experiences. We talk together, we listen to one another’s perspective, and if we disagree, then the disagreement helps us to understand a different point of view and to see our own point of view more clearly. This is an ancient way of engaging with the Bible and it helps us really get the scriptures into our heads and hearts and allows it to shape our lives.

There will be a range of experiences in the room. Someone might be reading the Bible for the first time, someone might be an expert – both those perspectives are valuable. There will also likely be a range of experiences and opinions about sex and sexuality. These are important too. There is no pressure for anyone to share anything they don’t want to, but when people do share, and especially if there is a difference of opinions, can we agree that we will show Jesus-like grace to one another as we learn together? People need space to talk and think through ideas without being judged, so let’s give one another that space. Finally, when it comes to Bible study, and when it comes to sex and sexuality, we are often much more comfortable talking about the experiences of others than about ourselves. The challenge today is that I allow the scriptures to speak to me – to shape me and change me. Let’s get started.”



## 2. WHAT PEOPLE THINK

*Introduce this activity.*

“Sometimes people assume some things about what the Bible says about sex. Think about what your friends assume the Bible says about sex. Think about anything you’ve seen or heard on TV. What do people think the Bible says about sex?”

*Choose which version of the activity best suits your group:*

### ○ ACTIVE VERSION

**Resources:** *Thick markers, post-it notes.*

*You will need enough post-it notes and thick markers for everyone and somewhere to stick the post-its that is visible to everyone.*

“Think of two or three answers. Write each of them on a post-it note. When you’re ready, come and stick them up where we can all see.”

*Depending on your group you may want to add:*

“If sticking your post-its up yourself is an issue, someone in your group can do it for you.”

*Once everyone’s answers are displayed, give some time for people to glance over them. Read four or five of them aloud, and draw attention to any common answers.*

### ○ ONLINE VERSION

**Resources:** *Internet access. Mentimeter account. Mentimeter presentation prepared in advance.*

- Log on to [www.mentimeter.com](http://www.mentimeter.com)
- Log In.
- Create “New Presentation”.
- Click “New Slide”.
- Select “Word Cloud”.
- Add the question: “What do people think the Bible says about sex?”
- Display the slide on your screen.

“If you have a device with you, go to **menti.com**, enter the code and then enter two or three answers. If you don’t have a device with you someone else in your group can enter your answer for you.”

*Once everyone’s answers are displayed, give some time for people to glance over them. Read four or five of them aloud, and draw attention to any common answers.*



## ○ ACCESSIBILITY VERSION

**Resources:** Thick markers, post-it notes.

*This version is intended for groups where a significant number will have mobility issues and where the Online version would be impossible or inappropriate.*

“Think of two or three answers. Write each of them on a post-it note. When you’re ready, hold up your post-its, or stick them somewhere we can all see.”

*Once everyone’s answers are displayed, give some time for people to glance over them. Read four or five of them aloud, and draw attention to any common answers.*



## ○ WORD BANK VERSION

**Resources:** Print of Word Bank

*This is a very simple version of the activity. It can also be used as a discussion starter. The Word Bank can be used 4 different times throughout the study. Distribute printed copies of the Word Bank and ask:*

“What do people think the Bible says about sex?”  
Choose as many words as you like.”

**Which of the words in the word bank best describe how sex is seen in this part of the Bible? Choose as many words as you like.**

**Sex is:**

Good. Bad. Fulfilling. Connecting.  
Dangerous. Sinful. Messed-up. Powerful.  
Useful. Comforting. Blessing.

**Other:**

*Ask:*

“Based on those answers, do people think the Bible sees sex as something good or something bad?”

*Conclude with words like:*

“That’s what people think the Bible says about sex. Today we’re going to read the Bible for ourselves and see.”



### 3. THE BIG QUESTIONS – PART ONE

**Resources:** Pens, notebooks or paper.

*This, and Part two and Part three at the end of the Bible Study help us take what we've heard in scripture and apply it to our own circumstances.*



"We often come to scripture with questions. What does the Bible say about this? What does God think about that? It can be helpful to remember that the Bible might not be setting out to answer our exact questions. But when it comes to sex and sexuality, what are the questions that people have? What are the questions that you have?"



We're going to take a couple of minutes for each of us to write down the questions we have about sex and sexuality, then, once we've read the scriptures we're going to come back to them.

You might write down some of the big questions that are being asked around the world: What does marriage mean? Why is there disagreement and division in families and churches over sexuality? Why is there suffering and abuse in the world? Your questions might be more personal: When it comes to sexuality, what is God's will for my life?

Fold your page down the middle vertically. Write on the left hand-side only, leaving the right-hand side blank for later.

Take a few moments to think – and then write down your questions."

*Leave a few minutes.*

"We've acknowledged some of the big questions. Now we're going to park them. And once we've dug into scripture together, we'll come back to them and see how the scriptures that we've read might shape our approach to these questions."



### 4. VIDEO 1 – INTRODUCING GENESIS 1

*Play the video until the pause sign appears.*





## 5. READING GENESIS 1:1-2:3

**Resources:** Large format prints of Genesis 1:1-2:3, coloured pens.

Distribute copies of the text of Genesis 1:1-2:3. These should be printed in a large format such as A3. Depending on your group, you may wish everyone to have their own copy, one between two or even one per small group.

“One person in each group should read the text out loud. Choose a coloured pen and as you listen, underline any phrases which are repeated.”

Give enough time for each group to finish reading aloud.



## 6. DIGGING IN – PART 1

**Resources:** Large format prints of Genesis 1:1-2:3, coloured pens, prints of resource sheet.

These activities are designed to help us get deeper into the text. Print a copy of the resource for each group. Read through the activities and make sure everyone is clear on what they are doing.

This can be either an individual activity or a group activity, depending on whether you have given a copy of the scripture text to individuals or groups.



- A.** “The text describes seven days. Choose a coloured pen and draw lines dividing the text into seven sections – one for each of the seven days. Label them 1 to 7.”



- B.** “Each of the days has at least one set of pairs. For example, the first pair is “Heavens” and “Earth”. Day one has “Light” and “Dark” or “Day” and “Night”. Choose a coloured pen and scan through the text circling as many pairs as you can find.”

If there are any questions about where the pairs are you might suggest some of the below. Allow the activity to continue within the group - don't be tempted read these out as a list of “correct answers”:

**Day 1:** Heavens and earth ( “formless and empty” may be considered a pair contrasting with heavens and earth), light and dark.

**Day 2:** Waters above and waters below (sky and water).

**Day 3:** Land and sea, plants and trees.



**Day 4:** Day and night, sun and moon.

**Day 5:** Fish and birds.

**Day 6:** The one is tricky because the animals are described in three categories – the animals and humans are a pair, but the obvious pair is male and female.

**Day 7:** Heavens and earth.



- C.** “Choose a coloured pen and draw a box around the parts of the text that are about sex and sexuality. You may think there are one or two words – you may think that the whole thing says something about sex and sexuality. Whatever you think.”



## 7. DIGGING IN – PART 2

**Resources:** Print of resource sheet.

*These discussion questions follow on from the previous activities. Ensure everyone can see a print out of the questions. Depending on your group you may want to encourage discussion in pairs, in threes, or as a whole table.*



1.
  - a. Which repeated words or phrases did you underline?
  - b. Why do you think they are important?
  - c. What does this say about sex and sexuality?
2.
  - a. What pairs of words did you circle?
  - b. Why do you think Genesis 1 contains so many pairs?
  - c. What does this say about sex and sexuality?
3.
  - a. What sections of the text did you draw a box around?
  - b. Why did you choose these sections?
  - c. What do they say about sex and sexuality?



## 8. WORD BANK: GENESIS 1

**Resources:** Print of word bank.

*This activity is a very simple way to get people engaging in the ideas found in the text. It can also be used as a discussion starter. It can be used 4 different times throughout the study. Distribute printed copies of the Word Bank and ask:*

“Which of the words in the word bank best describe how sex is seen in this part of the Bible? Choose as many words as you like.”

**Which of the words in the word bank best describe how sex is seen in this part of the Bible? Choose as many words as you like.**

**Sex is:**

Good. Bad. Fulfilling. Connecting.  
 Dangerous. Sinful. Messed-up. Powerful.  
 Useful. Comforting. Blessing.

**Other:**

*Depending on your group you may want to extend the activity by having a brief discussion in pairs, threes or with the whole table:*

“Share what words you chose and why.”



## 9. SPECTRUM DEBATE: THE IMAGE OF GOD

*Read a series of statements and have participants indicate their response.*

### ○ WALKING VERSION

*Designate one end of the room “agree” and the opposite end “disagree.” People place themselves somewhere along the line based on how much they agree or disagree with the statement read.*

“I’m going to read some statements. If you agree with the statement go to this end of the room. If you disagree with the statement go to this end of the room. Or, place yourself anywhere in between.”



## ○ TRAFFIC LIGHTS VERSION

**Resources:** Green, amber and red cards for each participant.

Each participant has a green, amber and red card. Read the statements. People hold up cards to indicate how much they agree or disagree.

“Everyone has three cards. I’m going to read some statements. If you mostly agree with the statement raise your green card. If you mostly disagree with the statement, raise your red card. If you are somewhere in the middle raise your amber card.”

## ○ ONLINE VERSION

**Resources:** Internet access. Mentimeter account. Mentimeter presentation prepared in advance. Agree-Disagree Spectrum image.

- Log on to [www.mentimeter.com](http://www.mentimeter.com)
- Log In.
- Create “New Presentation”.
- Click “New Slide”.
- Select “Pin on image”.
- Add the image of the agree-disagree spectrum.
- Change the title text to the statement.
- You will need a fresh slide for each of the statements you read.
- Display the slide on your screen.

Participants log on to [menti.com](http://menti.com) using phones or other devices, enter the code, then place a pin somewhere on the image.

“Log on to [menti.com](http://menti.com) and enter the code. I’m going to read some statements. If you agree with the statement then place your pin at that end of the spectrum. If you disagree with the statement place your pin at that end of the spectrum. Or, place yourself anywhere in between.”

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Read this to begin the activity:

“Genesis 1:27 says: ‘God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.’ There are different ways to think about what that means and different ways it might relate to sex and sexuality. There are three statements to think about.”

Statement 1: “Genesis 1 means that there is equality – both male and female are equally the image of God.”

Statement 2: “Genesis 1 means that the image of God is incomplete without both male and female.”

Statement 3: “Genesis 1 means that Humans are the image of God only when they relate to one another.”

In each case choose people who have indicated different positions and ask:

“Why have you placed yourself there?”



## 10. QUOTE: KARL BARTH, RELATIONSHIP AND THE IMAGE OF GOD

**Resources:** *Print of quote and questions.*

*Provide a printed copy of this material to each group.*



Karl Barth argued that a significant element of the “image of God” in Genesis 1:26 is the relational nature of humanity.

“God created him in His own image in the fact that He did not create him alone but in this connexion and fellowship. . . . God exists in relationship and fellowship. As the Father of the Son and the Son of the Father He is Himself I and Thou, confronting Himself and yet always one and the same in the Holy Ghost. ... He is not solitary in Himself... it is not good for man to be alone, and God created him in His own image, as male and female... similarity in dissimilarity... God is in relationship, and so too is the man created by Him. This is his divine likeness.”

*Karl Barth  
Church Dogmatics III/2 §45  
Pg. 323-324.*

- What do you think of this view?
- How important are sex and gender in this view?
- What could this view add to our understanding of sex and sexuality?



## 11. THE BIG IDEAS: GENESIS 1

**Resources:** *Paper, markers, blu tack.*

*This activity draws people’s reflections together and resources a conversation at the end of the study. This activity can work in pairs, threes, or a whole table.*



“So what are the big ideas about sex and sexuality in Genesis 1? Is it all about goodness, or blessing, or the image of God? Is it about those pairs of male and female, heaven and earth? Discuss in your group, decide on two or three big ideas about sex and sexuality that you find in Genesis 1.”

*Allow a few minutes discussion time.*

*Designate a wall or floor space that everyone can see to display the big ideas.*

“Write each of the big ideas on a sheet of paper, then come and stick them here.”

*If participants are unable to move to place their paper themselves, you or another group member can do it for them.*

*You are likely to get some similar answers. Sort the paper so that similar ideas are grouped together. Or, ask someone from your group to come and sort the similar answers together.*

Invite questions:

“Would anyone like to ask for clarity about what any of these responses mean?  
Or ask why someone thought it was a big idea?”

*If no one asks questions you should ask them yourself. Make sure one or two groups have shared out loud what one of their big ideas was, where in the scripture it was, and why they thought it was a big idea.*



## 12. VIDEO 2: INTRODUCING GENESIS 2

Play the video until the pause sign appears.



## 13. READING GENESIS 2:4-25

**Resources:** Large format prints of Genesis 2:4-25, coloured pens.

*Distribute copies of the text of Genesis 2:4-25. These should be printed in a large format such as A3. Depending on your group, you may wish everyone to have their own copy, one between two or even one per small group.*

“One person in each group should read the text out loud. Choose a coloured pen and as you listen, draw a box around the parts of the text that are about sex and sexuality.”







## 14. DIGGING IN – PART 3

**Resources:** Print of discussion questions.

Distribute a print-out of the discussion questions. Depending on your group you may want to encourage discussion in pairs, in threes, or as a whole table.



1. What sections of the text did you draw a box around?
2. Why did you choose these sections?
3. What do they say about sex and sexuality?



## 15. WORD BANK: GENESIS 2

**Resources:** Print of word bank.

This activity is a very simple way to get people engaging in the ideas found in the text. It can also be used as a discussion starter. It can be used 4 different times throughout the study. Distribute printed copies of the Word Bank and ask:



“Which of the words in the word bank best describe how sex is seen in this part of the Bible? Choose as many words as you like.”



**Which of the words in the word bank best describe how sex is seen in this part of the Bible? Choose as many words as you like.**

**Sex is:**

Good. Bad. Fulfilling. Connecting.  
Dangerous. Sinful. Messed-up. Powerful.  
Useful. Comforting. Blessing.

**Other:**

Depending on your group you may want to extend the activity by having a brief discussion in pairs, threes or with the whole table:

“Share what words you chose and why.”



## 16. DISCUSSION TOPICS

**Resources:** Print of topics resource sheet.

*This activity works well in threes, or as a whole table. Distribute print-outs with the questions.*

Choose one or two of these topics and share your thoughts and questions with one another.

- 1. Genesis 2:18** says:  
"It is not good for the man to be alone."  
  
What do you think this means?  
  
Is this mostly about God creating a sexual partner for the human, or is it mostly about God creating other human beings?  
  
What problems might it cause if we read this as "It is not good for the man to be incomplete"?  
  
Can a relationship complete us?
- 2. Genesis 2:22** says:  
"The Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man."  
  
Does this communicate the connectedness of male and female?  
Does this communicate that male and female are two parts of one whole?  
How else could this be read?
- 3. In Genesis 2:23** the man says of the woman:  
"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh."  
  
Is this communicating familiarity, recognition, attraction, connection, or something else?  
  
Do you think these words relate only to sexual relationships, or to other human relationships? Why or why not?
- 4. Genesis 2:25** says:  
"Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."  
  
Why do you think this detail has this been included? Does it communicate their complete vulnerability with one another, or something else?  
  
In Genesis 3, when the woman and her husband eat the fruit, they realise they are naked and they hide from God. What is this communicating?  
  
What things make people feel ashamed of nakedness?



## 17. INVESTIGATE: GENESIS 2:24

**Resources:** Bibles. Print of resource sheet.

*In this activity different groups read two different scriptures, then report back to one another.*

“Genesis 2:24: ‘A man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh’ appears twice more in the Bible. Find one of the references in the Bible, read around it, answer the questions, then report back to each other.”

*This works well by splitting table groups in half with one half reading Matthew and the other half reading Ephesians. The first part of the discussion happens in those small groups. The second part of the discussion is for two small groups joined together (one Matthew group and one Ephesians group.)*

*Allow about half the time for the first part of the discussion and half the time for the second part.*

### **In small groups:**

Read either Matthew 19:5 or Ephesians 5:31

### **Discuss:**

What is this text about?

Why does it quote Genesis 2:24?

### **In larger groups:**

Report back to one another: What is your text about and why does it quote Genesis?

Discuss together: Why do you think Genesis 2:24 is considered significant?



## 18. THE BIG IDEAS: GENESIS 2

**Resources:** Paper, markers, blu tack.

*This activity draws people’s reflections together and resources a conversation at the end of the study. This activity can work in pairs, threes, or a whole table.*

“So what are the big ideas about sex and sexuality in Genesis 2? When God says ‘it is not good for man to be alone’, is that about God creating a sexual partner for Adam, or about God creating other humans? When it says that man and wife become one flesh, is that about sex or something else? What are the Big Ideas? Discuss in your group, decide on two or three big ideas about sex and sexuality that you find in Genesis 2.”

*Allow a few minutes discussion time.*

*Designate a wall or floor space that everyone can see to display the big ideas.*

“Write each of the big ideas on a sheet of paper, then come and stick them here.”

*If participants are unable to move to place their paper themselves, you or another group member can do it for them.*



You are likely to get some similar answers. Sort the paper so that similar ideas are grouped together. Or, ask someone from your group to come and sort the similar answers together. Invite questions:

“Would anyone like to ask for clarity about what any of these responses mean?  
Or ask why someone thought it was a big idea?”

If no one asks questions you should ask them yourself. Make sure one or two groups have shared out loud what one of their big ideas was, where in the scripture it was, and why they thought it was a big idea.



## 19. VIDEO 3: INTRODUCING THE REST OF GENESIS

Play the video until the pause sign appears.

## 20. WORD BANK: GENESIS 3-50

**Resources:** Print of word bank.

This activity is a very simple way to get people engaging in the ideas found in the text. It can also be used as a discussion starter. It can be used 4 different times throughout the study. Distribute printed copies of the Word Bank and ask:

“Which of the words in the word bank best describe how sex is seen in this part of the Bible? Choose as many words as you like.”

**Which of the words in the word bank best describe how sex is seen in this part of the Bible? Choose as many words as you like.**

**Sex is:**

Good. Bad. Fulfilling. Connecting.  
Dangerous. Sinful. Messed-up. Powerful.  
Useful. Comforting. Blessing.

**Other:**

Depending on your group you may want to extend the activity by having a brief discussion in pairs, threes or with the whole table:

“Share what words you chose and why.”



## 21. SPECTRUM DEBATE: GENESIS 3-50.

Read a series of statements and have participants indicate their response.

### ○ WALKING VERSION

**Resources:** "Agree" and "Disagree" labels.

Designate one end of the room "agree" and the opposite end "disagree." People place themselves somewhere along the line based on how much they agree or disagree with the statement read.

"I'm going to read some statements. If you agree with the statement go to this end of the room. If you disagree with the statement go to this end of the room. Or, place yourself anywhere in between."

### ○ TRAFFIC LIGHTS VERSION

**Resources:** Green, amber and red cards for each participant.

Each participant has a green, amber and red card. Read the statements. People hold up cards to indicate how much they agree or disagree.

"Everyone has three cards. I'm going to read some statements. If you mostly agree with the statement raise your green card. If you mostly disagree with the statement, raise your red card. If you are somewhere in the middle raise your amber card."

### ○ ONLINE VERSION

**Resources:** Internet access. Mentimeter account. Mentimeter presentation prepared in advance. Agree-Disagree Spectrum image.

- Log on to [www.mentimeter.com](http://www.mentimeter.com)
- Log In.
- Create "New Presentation".
- Click "New Slide".
- Select "Pin on image".
- Add the image of the agree-disagree spectrum.
- Change the title text to the statement.
- You will need a fresh slide for each of the statements you read.
- Display the slide on your screen.

Participants log on to [menti.com](http://menti.com) using phones or other devices, enter the code, then place a pin somewhere on the image.

"Log on to [menti.com](http://menti.com) and enter the code. I'm going to read some statements. If you agree with the statement then place your pin at that end of the spectrum. If you disagree with the statement place your pin at that end of the spectrum. Or, place yourself anywhere in between."



**Statement 1:**

“Lamech ‘taking’ two wives is different from how God created sex in Genesis 1 and 2. Agree or disagree?”

*Choose two or three people in different positions and ask:*

“Why have you placed yourself there?”

**Statement 2:**

“Everything that God created for good can cause harm when it is misused. Agree or disagree?”

*Choose two or three people in different positions and ask:*

“Why have you placed yourself there?”

*You might want to ask a follow-up questions like:*

“Can anyone suggest hurtful or harmful activities that were originally intended for good?”

“What are some destructive and harmful ways we see sex being used in the world today?”

“Why do we generally consider sexual abuse to be so much worse than other kinds of abuse?”

**Statement 3:**

“Sexting’ reflects the goodness, connectedness and partnership of sexuality in Genesis 1 and 2. Agree or disagree?”

*Choose two or three people in different positions and ask:*

“Why have you placed yourself there?”

*You might want to ask a follow-up question like:*

“Does ‘sexting’ reflect the harmful expressions of sexuality in Genesis 3-50?”



## 22. QUOTE: TIM MACKIE, CIRCUMCISION AND OPPRESSION

**Resources:** Print of resource sheet.

Provide a printed copy of this material to each group.



BibleProject's lead scholar Tim Mackie draws the parallels between circumcision as the sign of God's covenant in the Abraham story with the sign of the covenant in the flood story:

"The rainbow is ... a sign of the covenant. It's both a symbol of judgment and mercy. Because the storm clouds have to be present for the rainbow to appear. And the storm cloud is God's judgment in the flood story. But the rainbow is this beautiful promise that God will bring new creation somehow out of this whole mess."

He comments:

"a part of Abraham's body through which he wronged the Egyptian immigrant, is now being cut off ....But at the same time, it's marking the very part of the body ... that contains the future promise of the seed. So it's very much like that rainbow. It's both a sign of divine judgment and hope."

*Tim Mackie,  
Abraham, the Immigrant, and Circumcision  
BibleProject Podcast  
December 14, 2020*

In this reading, circumcision is a symbol of blessing because it marked the place of generation, symbolically marking future generations as belonging to the covenant and instruments of God's blessing.

Circumcision is also a sign of inclusion - anyone could become part of the family of God by the symbol of circumcision.

Significantly, circumcision physically marks a warning that sexuality (maybe particularly male sexuality) is something that can be an instrument of oppression and harm if not limited and controlled.

What do you think of this view?

Is there anything you had not considered before?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of this view?

What could this view add to our understanding of sex and sexuality?



## 23. THE BIG IDEAS: GENESIS 3-50

**Resources:** Paper, markers, blu tack.

*This activity draws people's reflections together and resources a conversation at the end of the study. This activity can work in pairs, threes, or a whole table.*



"So what are the big ideas about sex and sexuality in the rest of Genesis ?  
Discuss in your group. This time decide on just one big idea about sex and sexuality that you find in Genesis 3-50."



*Allow a few minutes discussion time.*

*Designate a wall or floor space that everyone can see to display the big ideas.*

"Write each of the big ideas on a sheet of paper, then come and stick them here."

*If participants are unable to move to place their paper themselves, you or another group member can do it for them.*

*You are likely to get some similar answers. Sort the paper so that similar ideas are grouped together.*

*Keep the activity short this time. Only ask further questions if you think any responses need clarified.*



## 24. VIDEO 4: COMING WITH OUR QUESTIONS.

*Play the video until the pause sign appears.*





## 25. THE BIG QUESTIONS - PART 2

“We’ve spent some time engaging with scripture and exploring what it might be saying about sex and sexuality. Now it’s time to return to the Big Questions we noted down at the beginning. Put your questions where you can see them. Now consider what we’ve found in scripture. Look at the “Big Ideas” we’ve explored. And ask: ‘what words, phrases or ideas from Genesis might help my understanding of each question?’

Does this question look different if you start with the ‘It is good’ of Genesis 1?. Does the ‘flesh-of-my-flesh, bone-of-my-bone’ connection of Genesis 2 have anything to say? Does the harm caused when sex is misused in the rest of Genesis resonate with any of your questions?

Write any relevant words, phrases or ideas from Genesis alongside the questions.”

*Leave some thinking time before moving on.*



## 26. THE BIG QUESTIONS - PART 3

*Provide a printed copy of this material to each group.*

*Depending on the other activities you have chosen, this may be the main place where participants get to discuss what scripture says to their circumstances. This activity works well in pairs or threes.*

“Choose one or two of your Big Questions that you might be willing to share.

Describe the question and what scriptures you found that relate to it.

Allow other members to ask questions and suggest how other words images and ideas from Genesis might add.

Let’s remember that sex and sexuality are extremely personal, so we will be talking about things that go deep for people. Let’s model Jesus-like grace and love for one another as we talk.”



## 27. VIDEO 5: SUMMARY AND FINAL REFLECTION.

Play the video until the end.



## 28. RESPONDING

**Resources:** Pens and paper. Print of Responding resource sheet.

Depending on your group you might want to leave them with more than just the two questions from the video to think about. The print out of response suggestions can go home with people, or – if you have some extra time you could do them together.

There are lots of ways we can respond to what we hear in scripture. Here are a few suggestions that you can use to help get the scripture into our heads, hearts and lives.”



This week, ask yourself:

- Where do I see the “goodness” of creation around me?
- Where do I find that “flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone” connection?

You might want to respond in some more ways. Here are some suggestions.

- Make a poster summarizing the big ideas from this scripture.
- Write a personal prayer responding to what you’ve heard in the scripture.
- Read or listen to the scripture again at BibleGateway.com.
- Create something: a poem; a painting; a list; a sculpture; a meal; a photograph; a wordcloud.
- Write a poem or monologue from the perspective of a character in this story.
- Choose just one word or phrase and think about what it means.
- Look at a piece of art based on this scripture and ask questions: why the artist has chosen this setting, this pose, these colours etc...
- List some personal commitments that you want to make in the coming week.



## 29. CLOSING

- Thank everyone for coming and taking part.
- Remind people to respect one another by keeping any opinions and stories shared confidential.
- Remind people where to find appropriate pastoral support if desired.
- Share details of any future Bible studies.







FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD • LIVING WHOLEHEARTEDLY AS FOLLOWERS

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