

The Love Spectrum Week 1: February 5

Main idea: Friendships are an important part of healthy sexuality

Main passage: 1 Timothy 5:1-2

I feel...slide

There are different stages in a relationship. Have students come up, use note cards, clarify what we're talking about tonight.

My hope through the next few weeks is that you learn about God's perspective on sexuality, not just sex. When we think of sex we think of the physical act of sexual intercourse. Sexuality is so much more than that. Sexuality includes our physical anatomy, our gender as guys and girls, our thoughts, our feelings, our attractions, and our interactions with other people.

Sexuality: How we understand our bodies and how we understand relationships.

Goal: Teach you what God has to say about your body and your relationships.

It was all God's idea! **Genesis 1:27 "Male and female he created them."**

Genesis 2:24: That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

God cares about your sexuality, no matter how old you are. Because he cares about your body and your relationships.

Do you have healthy friendships with the opposite gender? **Picture of me with 8th grade friends.**

I want to specifically encourage and challenge you to develop healthy friendships with the opposite gender. Not because you like them, not to flirt but because it's good and healthy to have friends of the opposite gender. It's healthy.

Share with someone next to you: Who has been your closest opposite-gender friend?

Ask students to raise their hands: How can you have good friendships with the opposite gender? Guys go first. Then girls.

Paul's letter to Timothy talks about having healthy relationships with the opposite gender. **1 Timothy 5:1-2** Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, ²older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

Joe, how can I have healthy friendships with the opposite gender? Think of a family member of the opposite gender who you're close with. Sibling, cousin, or someone who is basically a family member. How can you be close to them?

- Have fun together
- Laugh together
- Use your words carefully
- Treat one another kindly
- Put their interests before yours
- Act purely toward them

Relationships are a good gift in our lives. Relationships with the opposite gender are a special gift because they bring variety into our lives and challenge us in good, unique ways.

I'm not going to say it's wrong for middle schoolers to date. That's something for you to discuss with your parents. But I've seen lots of middle school dating relationships get weird, awkward, distracting, and not fun. However, over the years I've seen some awesome friendships between guys and girls, and it's just encouraging to watch!

I want the Middle School Ministry to be a place where you can be friends with the opposite gender without any pressure. I want it to be normal to be guy-girl friends and for it to not be a big deal. I don't like the phrase "No purpling."

Friends of the opposite gender can be frustrating and confusing, yes, but they can be life-giving too! Go, make some friends of the opposite gender and be a good friend to them. Think of what the Valley Middle School Ministry could be like if we were treating everyone with honor and respect, boys being kind and encouraging to girls and girls being kind and encouraging to boys.

PAIR UP 8TH GRADE BOYS AND GIRLS GROUPS FOR SMALL GROUP ON THIS NIGHT?