

SEX

Pocket Bible Study & Journal

A STUDENT LEADER'S GUIDE

Sex is for marriage. Practice abstinence. The Bible says so. End of story.

Or is it? Most likely, you and your friends have a lot more questions about sex than this simple formula can answer. Like, where should you draw the line physically when you're dating? Or, how far can you go and still be a virgin? And what exactly qualifies as "sex" anyway?

Fortunately, God doesn't leave you clueless when it comes to these nitty-gritty issues; his Word offers real guidance for even the toughest questions about sex. And with Hayley DiMarco's *Sex Pocket Bible Study & Journal* as your guide, you can zone in on the Bible's most helpful passages about the topic and learn God's recipe for a healthy life.

But why study alone? Make your Bible study a group affair and invite some friends to join you on the adventure. From leader tips to activity ideas, this downloadable leader's guide gives you everything you'll need to lead a study with your peers (except for the chips and soda, of course). So grab the *Sex Pocket Bible Study & Journal*, print off this guide, talk one of your friends into bringing the munchies—and get ready to uncover the real truth about sex God's way.

The Plan of Attack

This study requires six group sessions lasting at least one hour each. I also recommend that you keep your discussion group small—no more than eight students. (If your group is larger, recruit additional leaders so you can divide into smaller study groups.) Here's the plan of attack for your group sessions:

GET IT ROLLING Here's a low-key discussion starter to get everyone warmed up for the session's topics.

THE KEYS As your discussion unfolds, you may find yourself on a few rabbit trails along the way. With this list of key points in hand, you can monitor the conversation and steer it back on track when the discussion wanders.

THE QS Since you probably won't have time to discuss every single question, I've highlighted some specific questions for group discussion. (You might want to mark these in your book ahead of time.)

WRAP IT UP Here are two tools to help you tie up your sessions:

FINAL Q: This question helps your students connect to the study in a personal way. Allow enough time for each student to share a response with the group.

CHALLENGE: Before students head home, read this parting challenge and encourage them to put it into practice.

Prep Work

To get the most out of your group discussion, students should complete each study on their own before your group meets. Hand out copies of the book at least one week before your first session and ask students to complete lesson one.

Wait, you say, do you really expect teenagers to prepare a Bible study ahead of time? Are you nuts? Do you live on Mars? Well, even earthlings can accomplish this feat with the right inspiration. Try these motivation methods on your students:

Break It Down. Each week's study can be completed in about 10–15 minutes a day, or a marathon session of 1–1.5 hours. Ask students to look at their schedules and identify a regular time to complete the study each week.

Offer Bribes. Bring pizza to the next session if the entire group has the lesson done. Or bring snacks for those who complete the work. Or force those who didn't prepare to wash your car after the lesson. . . . You get the idea, right?

Don't accept excuses. If students come unprepared, ask them to leave the study group and spend the lesson time preparing for next week in another room. (Send the whole group into personal study time, if necessary.) It may sound harsh, but it's the only way to show your students that you're serious about prep work.

Pray About It. Ask God for help. If he can move mountains, he can probably find a way to give students the time and motivation they need to get their Bible study done!

A Different Approach

If your students just can't find the time to prepare their Bible study in advance, you may want to consider a different approach. Here are two alternatives to consider:

- Work through the material together as a group. If you take this approach, plan on sessions lasting **at least one and a half hours**, or you won't have adequate time to work through the lesson. Or divide the material for each week into two 45 minute sessions, giving you a total of 12 sessions in which to work through the lessons together.
- **Meet every week for 12 weeks**, but alternate between personal study time and group discussion. So, your first week would be a "study hall" setting with everyone working on the first lesson individually. Then, in week two, you can lead a group discussion using the activities and questions in this guide. Continue to alternate until you complete the study.

Help Is On the Way!

If you do want to dig a little deeper into any of the topics and passages you find in the study, consider these sources:

- **iFuse.com** Connect with others who are leading a PB&J Bible study to share questions and encouragement.
- **Hungryplanet.tv** Download videos of Hayley introducing each section of the PB&J series.
- **Biblegateway.com** A great place to check out verses in multiple versions of the Bible or to look up Bible commentaries about verses that confuse you.

- **Study Bible** You may want to invest in a study Bible that offers helps such as historical background, maps, interpretations of confusing passages, and thoughts about how to apply the passages to today's world.

Being the Leader

Without any adults around, you and your friends will probably feel really comfortable talking with each other. This is one of the great advantages of a peer-led Bible study group! But if you're not careful, that comfort level can easily turn your well-intentioned Bible study into just one more chat session. In no time at all, your conversation can derail from God's Word to the words of that hottie in homeroom. Not cool, right?

As the leader, it's your job to hold the group accountable and keep the conversation focused on God's Word. I know it's tricky when you try to wear the hats of leadership and friendship at the same time: You don't want your friends to think you've morphed into a dictator or anything. So try these tips to keep discussion rolling in a meaningful way.

- **Steer the crew back on course:** If the conversation gets derailed, try saying something like "Hey guys, can we talk about that after the Bible study? Let's turn to question #1." or "I really want to talk about this later, but for now, let's stick to our Bible study."
- **Listen.** Good leaders do a lot more listening than talking. Avoid putting words in the other people's mouths or overreacting to comments that you don't agree with. Don't force your own opinions on everyone else. It's okay to respectfully disagree.
- **Dig deeper.** When someone gives a simple response, ask them follow-up questions such as "Why do you feel that way?" "What do you mean when you say that?" "What else do you think God's trying to tell us here?"
- **Allow silence.** Try counting to ten before you say anything further. Sometimes it takes a few moments of awkward silence before someone else will speak up.
- **Bring quiet people into the conversation.** Invite them to talk by saying something like "Sara, I'd love to hear what you have to say about that, too."
- **Bring God into it.** Pray about your Bible study group and ask God to direct your discussion.

SESSION ONE: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SEX

Get It Rolling

As a group, talk about the birds and the bees. Have your parents had the sex talk? How did it go? Did both your parents give it or just one? Or was it someone else all together? How did you learn about the birds and the bees? How old were you? And how embarrassing was it? If your parents have never said a thing, then where did you get your information? TV, movies, friends, church? Where do you hear the most about sex?

The Keys

- Sex is a great gift from God; but it can also be a curse if it's used improperly.
- God gave sex as a way to multiply the species and as a special way of connecting with one other human being.
- Sex is powerful—it can take a great hold on you physically and emotionally.

The Qs

A Hot Topic, questions 1–4, 7, and 8

Genesis 2:23–24, questions 2, 3, and 5

Genesis 1:28, question 3

Proverbs 5:18–19, questions 2–4

Wrap It Up

FINAL Q: What are the most common reasons teens decide to have sex—how do these line up with God's purposes for sex?

CHALLENGE: Put your “Sex Filter” on this week. Pay attention to any sexual references you see when you watch TV, listen to music, page through magazines, or just hang with friends. Make a habit of asking this question: Am I seeing God's purposes for sex here, or something else?

SESSION TWO: WHAT IS ABSTINENCE

Get It Rolling

Give everyone a small piece of paper. Ask half of your group to write down some reasons why teens choose to have sex. Ask the other half to write down some reasons why teens choose *not* to have sex. Ask students to read and compare their answers. Is abstinence just a religious choice, or is there more to it? How do you think Christians and non-Christians look at these reasons differently?

The Keys

- God highly values the marital and sexual relationship. Fooling around sexually weakens that bond.
- Abstinence is a deliberate choice to deny yourself something you like or want.
- A truly godly life requires self-control, and God wants you to have self-control when it comes to your sex life.
- Abstinence serves a holy purpose. It proves who you are to yourself, to others, and to God.

The Qs

Abstinence—For or Against, question 2

1 Thessalonians 4:3–5, questions 3 and 4

1 Peter 2:11–12, questions 2 and 3

A Word Study, questions 1 and 3

Galatians 5:22–23, questions 1 and 3

Proverbs 25:27, question 3

2 Peter 1:5–7, questions 3 and 4

1 Corinthians 6:18–20, questions 3 and 6

Colossians 3:5, question 3

Genesis 2:24, question 4

Proverbs 5:15, question 2

Romans 14:23, questions 1 and 4

Exodus 20:14, question 2

Matthew 15:19–20, questions 3 and 5

Romans 1:26–27, question 1

Leviticus 19:29, questions 3 and 4

Wrap It Up

FINAL Q: Why do you think so many teens fail to live up to their abstinence pledges? What biblical ideas could give greater motivation to someone who's pledged to be sexually abstinent?

CHALLENGE: Do a self-control analysis this week: Are there any areas of your life—sexual or otherwise—where you've been a little out of control? Write a letter to God about it, asking him to help you gain more self-control in that area of your life. Save your letter and reread it every day this week.

SESSION THREE: HOW FAR IS TOO FAR

Get It Rolling

As a group, create a list of physical steps leading toward sex in a relationship (hand-holding, kissing, etc.). When your list is finished, circle all the items that you think are okay for people who are just friends. Put a box around the items you would say are okay, but only when you're dating. Cross off any of the items that you think should be saved for marriage. How many of the items on your list would you define as "sex"? Do you think there's one clear "do not cross" line that applies to everyone who's single? Why or why not?

The Keys

- A virgin is someone who has not had sexual intercourse. And sexual intercourse is any sexual contact that involves the genitalia of at least one person.
- God calls us to more than just technical virginity. He wants sexual purity in mind and body.
- Friends have a lot of control over your life—so make sure you pick the good ones.
- When it comes to your purity, think of alcohol as liquid stupid.
- If you get that guilty feeling when you think about doing something, take it as a sign that you shouldn't do it.

The Qs

The Way You See It, questions 1, 4, 5, 7, and 12

What's Purity?, questions 3 and 4

Ephesians 5:3, questions 2 and 4

Hosea 4:11, questions 3–5

1 Corinthians 5:9–11, questions 1–3

1 Corinthians 15:33, questions 2, 5, and 6

1 Timothy 1:19, questions 2 and 3

Wrap It Up

FINAL Q: Is there a difference between someone who's "abstinent" and someone who's "sexually pure"? Or are they the same thing? Why?

CHALLENGE: Think of one adult (of the same gender) whom you could talk to about sexual choices. Share with them your thoughts on how far is too far and ask if they agree with where you've drawn your line. Be open to their advice and ideas.

SESSION FOUR: WHAT ARE YOU THINKING

Get It Rolling

Take a minute to do a little deconstruction. Think about a famous romantic comedy or drama and look at the guys and girls they depict. Then answer these questions:

Girls

1. Which chick flick has the perfect guy in it, and why?
2. How is this guy different from reality? Like different from the guys you know.

Guys

1. Who is your favorite female actress and why?
2. Think of a movie she was in where you liked her character and talk about how that character is different from reality.

The Keys:

- God demands more than just sexual purity in action. He also wants us to have sexually pure minds.
- According to God's Word, thoughts have a big impact on your life.
- The things you look at and listen to have a major impact on what you think.
- The mind may seem like a good place to hide, but nothing is secret when it comes to God.

The Qs

James 1:14–15, question 7

Proverbs 23:7, questions 2, 5, and 6

Matthew 5:27–30, questions 2, 7, and 10

Exodus 20:17, questions 2 and 6

Mark 7:21–22, question 3

Romans 8:6–7, questions 3–5

Job 31:1, question 6

I John 2:16, questions 2 and 5

Job 31:11–12, question 2

Ecclesiastes 12:14, question 3

Romans 2:16, questions 1 and 3

Wrap It Up

FINAL Q: What are some concrete ways you can help yourself and other teens avoid impure thoughts?

CHALLENGE: Create a “Thinking Inventory.” Write a list of the five things you thought about most during the past week. Identify one thought you’d like to get rid of and cross it off your list. Then think of one thing you’d like to spend *more* time thinking about. Add it to your list. Hang your list where you’ll see it and be reminded of your goal every day.

SESSION FIVE: WHAT ARE THEY THINKING

Get It Rolling

Give a piece of paper to each person in the group and ask them to number both sides from 1 to 5. On one side have them write what they think are the top five things that the average guy likes to do. On the other side, have them write down the five most romantic things a guy could do for a girl. Then have them compare the two lists. How different are they? If the romantic things aren't in a guy's top five list, why does he do them?

The Keys

- God made guys and girls different and wants it kept that way.
- Guys are turned on by what they see; Girls are turned on by romance.
- What you do can affect the spiritual lives of those around you without you even knowing it.
- As Jesus followers, we need to care about the sexual temptations of the opposite sex and avoid doing anything that may lead them to sin.

The Qs

Here's Looking at You, questions 4, 8, and 9

Opposites Attract, questions 2 and 3

1 Peter 3:7, questions 2, 3, and 5

1 Peter 3:3–5, questions 4 and 5

Deuteronomy 22:5, question 3

1 Corinthians 8:9, questions 6–8

Romans 14:13, questions 1 and 2

1 Corinthians 10:23–24, questions 1 and 2

Matthew 18:6–7, questions 3, 4, and 6

Wrap It Up

FINAL Q: In what ways do you think teens are sometimes self-centered when it comes to dealing with the opposite sex? What would it look like to take a *selfless* approach to the opposite sex?

CHALLENGE: This week, whenever you start to interact with someone of the opposite sex, say a short silent prayer for them. Ask God to help you treat him/her the way Jesus would.

SESSION SIX: HOW DO YOU HAVE GOOD SEX

Get It Rolling

Write the following categories on a whiteboard or posterboard: “Premarital Sex” and “Married Sex.” For each category, brainstorm the following lists: **potential problems** (what could make you feel bad about this kind of sex?) and **potential benefits** (what would make you feel good about this kind of sex?). Does going through this exercise give you any insight into why God would want sex to be saved for marriage? Why or why not?

The Keys

- The first step to solving a problem with sin is to admit that you have a problem.
- Confession is agreeing with God that what you did was wrong and telling him and another person about it.
- When you ask for and accept God’s forgiveness, you can start clean, no matter what you’ve done.
- Repentance is an essential step in a clean start. If you want to be holy and clean, then you’ve got to make some changes.

The Qs:

- 1 John 1:9–10, questions 2 and 4
- Proverbs 28:13, questions 1, 3, and 4
- James 5:16, questions 3, 4, and 6
- Romans 3:24–25, questions 1 and 4
- Ephesians 2:1–5, 8–9, questions 6 and 7
- Psalms 103:12, questions 1–3
- Matthew 4:17, questions 2 and 3
- 2 Corinthians 7:10, question 2
- Ecclesiastes 9:9, questions 1 and 2
- 1 Corinthians 7:3–5, question 2

Wrap It Up

FINAL Q: How is God’s definition of good sex different than the world’s? What’s good about sex God’s way?

CHALLENGE: Write a prayer of confession about a sexual weakness in your life. (If you don’t struggle with sexual sin, then write a confession about another area of sin you struggle with.) Find one person with whom you can share your confession. Ask them to pray with you and to hold you accountable for turning away from that sin.