



**Slattery helps us surrender our views, questions, and pain to the God who changes everything. Discover how Jesus gave His life not primarily to change behavior, but to renew our identity—which is rooted in our union with Christ, not our wounds, feelings, desires, past or present sins, or purity.**

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# What Is Surrendered Sexuality?

Sex is never just about sex. It certainly wasn't for Shelly.

Her childhood began in an idyllic small town with a stable and loving family, but when she was seven, everything began to unravel as Shelly's dad was injured and unable to work. He started drinking, which led to an affair. When Shelly was eight, her older brother began molesting her; at age ten, her oldest sister ran away. Desperately wanting to hold her family together, Shelly hid the secret of what her brother had been doing to her.

Shelly was invited to a Vacation Bible School and was comforted to hear of Jesus' love for her. Then she attended Sunday school for a few short weeks where she learned about sin and realized that what her brother was doing to her was wrong. Though she was only ten, she wanted to please God, and Shelly courageously told her brother he could no longer do to her what he was doing. The abuse stopped.

The seed that God planted that summer never grew beyond an initial decision to trust God. Over the years, Shelly began to view Jesus as a faraway God looking down on her with disgust and disappointment for her sexual brokenness.

Shelly married when she was nineteen. Three years into marriage she was unfaithful for the first of many times. This was a behavior she found herself unable to break free of, though she had a loving husband and two children. But finally at thirty-seven, she felt trapped in sin and overwhelming shame. Believing there was no way out, Shelly determined to take her life.

People like my friend Shelly are the reason I write, speak, and podcast about sexuality.



I wonder how you are feeling as you begin reading. Maybe your experience of God and sexuality is a confusing and emotionally charged journey. Maybe you know that God created sexuality and that it's supposed to be a good thing, but your experience of this "good gift," like Shelly's, has been one of pain, shame, and questions.

When you look around, it can seem as if everyone else has their lives together. Could anyone else be suffering or enslaved as you are? Where are the spaces to talk about your erotic dreams, your same-sex desire, your sexless marriage, or your porn addiction? Who is safe enough to hold your questions, your anger, and your trauma?

As Christians, we need to understand that sexuality is not primarily a *cultural* problem. It is a very personal spiritual terrain that plays out against the backdrop of culture.

This book is about your real questions and challenges in the arena of sexuality. We are going to get personal as we examine sensitive and painful subjects like sexual desire, loneliness, pornography, betrayal, lust, and brokenness. So let me share a little about why I care so much about this topic.

## A BIT OF BACKGROUND

My parents became committed followers of Jesus Christ when I was a baby. When God met them, they were in the middle of their own life and marriage crisis and Jesus changed everything. My earliest memories are of Bible studies in our home, and of going to church twice on Sundays and once on Wednesdays. I have had my own relationship with Jesus since I was a small child. I even attended Christian schools all the way through earning my master's degree. As an adult, I became a clinical psychologist with an emphasis on marriage and women's issues.

Even with all that spiritual heritage, biblical and psychological training, my education did not prepare me for most of what I will share with you throughout these pages. The extent of my understanding of Christian sexuality was this: God created sex for marriage and to make babies. Don't mess it up by having sex outside of marriage, dressing immodestly, or watching R-rated movies. When Mike and I got married, I had little to no preparation and nowhere to turn when we ran into problems in our sex life. I felt even less equipped to deal with the challenges of biblical sexuality in ministry, not to mention navigating these conversations as a mother of three sons.

While I don't know what you are personally walking through, I do know what it is like to love God and study the Bible, but still to feel like none of that practically helps you in one of the most painful, vulnerable, and confusing areas of your life.

*Sexuality is never a neutral issue in our relationship with God.*

In 2012, God dramatically called me into this ministry of biblical sexuality. To be transparent, I had no idea what I was saying yes to. I have learned more than I have taught and have been deeply impacted by the pain and wrestling sexuality represents for many of my brothers and sisters in Christ.

I am more committed and passionate than ever about the work God

has called me to do, and here's why: Sexuality is never a neutral issue in our relationship with God. Our questions, our trauma, our longings, and our disappointment will either eventually draw us away from God or draw us to Him.

## THE STRUGGLES ARE REAL

I want to introduce you to just a few of the people I've come to know over the last decade, all who have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ and each one in a crisis of faith around sexuality.

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Devon is a pastor who loves Jesus. He is also a man who has battled pornography and sexual addiction since he was a young teenager. Devon's wife, Amy, was devastated to discover her husband's porn use. Amy had her own battle with a low sex drive and painful intercourse. For a few years, the couple stopped having sex altogether. Their church congregation had no idea of the pain and shame they carried around this aspect of their relationship. While Devon knew he needed to include sexual topics in his preaching rotation, he couldn't bring himself to do so because of his own private struggles and shame.

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When Noah hit puberty, he heard his friends talking about the pretty girls and joked about who they wanted to have sex with. Noah couldn't identify. He could never tell his buddies that his attraction was not to girls, but to other guys. He was a Christian, and in church homosexuality was only discussed as a horrible sin, so he concluded that he must be a terrible mistake. Noah has been honest with a few friends about his same-sex desires, but struggles to accept that he will live a life of loneliness without marriage and children.

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Chantelle and Rich both grew up in the evangelical church and gave their lives to Jesus as teenagers. High school sweethearts, they married young and couldn't wait to enjoy sex. But as they began their marriage, memories of past sexual trauma and exploitation haunted Chantelle. She endured years of flashbacks, disordered eating, and sexual confusion. Through counseling, Chantelle began to work through her trauma, yet she still had no desire for sex. Rich, a godly man, feels like he's been cheated out of a sex life. He struggles between trying to love his wife and anger that his own desires have been so neglected.

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Angie was raised in a Christian home and attended a conservative Christian college. Every talk she's ever heard about Christian sexuality has pointed to marriage. Angie desperately wants to be loved and to have a God-honoring way to channel her sexual desire. Yet she is twenty-nine and still single. She's angry at God for not meeting her needs for love and sex.

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As you read these stories, you may find glimpses of yourself. Without question, you've seen the description of someone you deeply care about. Even if you are not in the middle of a crisis around sexuality, you probably have questions, confusion, and areas of doubt.

I could tell you many more stories about young adults convinced they were born in the wrong bodies, parents heartbroken by a child's sexual choices, and sexual assault victims wading through decades of despair and brokenness.

I care about your sexuality because I care about your relationship with God, and I have learned that they will always be linked. Our sexual wounds, questions, and longings tap into our wrestling with God. Is He good? Is He trustworthy? Does He see me? To ignore your sexual wounds, step over your sexual pain, or dismiss your sexual questions will eventually tear

away at your love and commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. I really don't want that to happen!

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

You might think of a Christian as someone who prays, attends church, and lives by a certain moral code. That's not the right definition. The word *Christian* literally means "little anointed ones" or "little Christs." Being a Christian is not joining a religion or a people group that obeys a list of rules. To be a Christian means that you have exchanged your life for the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus doesn't just want converts, but disciples (see Matt. 28:19–20). Christianity is not just "asking Jesus into your heart," but the wholehearted pursuit of what it means to follow God with every aspect of your life.

One day, Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He responded with the commandment that every Israelite would have recited in morning prayer: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Then Jesus added another commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Do you notice that there is nothing specifically about your sexuality included in these commandments? Nothing about avoiding porn, being straight, or saving sex for marriage? What Jesus said next tells us why: "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matt. 22:36–40).

In other words, God calls you not simply to obey Him, but to give yourself—all your heart, soul, and mind—over to Him. The word *all* means *all*. If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, that means He is worthy of being your Lord. Your life no longer belongs to you as it once did. The only rational response to Jesus' sacrifice is for your whole life to come under His love, His authority, and His power.

Most of us would readily admit that even though we know our lives belong to Jesus, we don't fully live that way. While the blood of Jesus forgives all of our sins, the Christian journey involves a progressive process of



giving Him all of our life. Even if you've trusted in Christ for your salvation, there are likely portions of your life that you're just not quite sure what to do with. And so we can end up feeling like we compartmentalize the parts of us that are more difficult to bring to Jesus.

In my own personal and ministry experience, I have learned that sexuality is very often one of these "compartments":

We have nagging questions about sex the Bible doesn't seem to satisfactorily answer.

We have sin struggles that won't go away.

We have shame and wounds that still haunt us.

Living a compartmentalized Christian life may seem like it's working for a season, but it goes completely against what it means to love, obey, and trust God as our Savior and Lord. Between you and God there may be a great big invisible wall that just might have something to do with sex. A wall like:

How could a good God tell people they can't marry the person they love?

I just can't understand why God allowed me to be sexually abused.

Doesn't God know how lonely I am? Why doesn't He bring me a soulmate?

If God is anything like the people who say they represent Him, I can't trust Him.

I feel like I have to choose between God and loving my transgender child.

I feel so much shame for what I've done (and continue to struggle with). I don't think God could ever fully accept me as I am.

Why would God want me to stay in a marriage that feels unfulfilling?

What have you done with that wall? Maybe you've tried not to think about it. Or perhaps you've tried to break through it by working really hard at living by God's standards. You may have even had some success in all that trying.

But here's the truth. God doesn't want your relationship with Him to be centered on working really hard to please Him.

The call to follow Jesus is a call of surrender.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SURRENDER?

*Webster* defines surrender this way: "To give oneself up into the power of another."<sup>1</sup>

Surrender is not a very popular concept in our day. To most of us, surrendering suggests the picture of giving up or losing. People surrender when they have exhausted every other option and resign themselves to something they never wanted to do in the first place.

Maybe this is what you are thinking as you consider surrendering your sexuality to the Lord. The Bible puts surrender in an entirely different light. A Christian doesn't surrender because he or she has no better options, but rather because only by surrendering can we find our true meaning and purpose in life.

God requires our surrender not because of what He wants to take from us, but what He so desires to give. Picture your life as if it were a container.

Your life only has so much space. Any ounce that is given to water, for example, cannot be filled with oil. One displaces the other. In the same way, our lives can only be filled with the presence and the power of God to the extent that we surrender what we currently live for.

Surrender is when we no longer strive to be in control, asking for God's help to do

***The bottom line is this: We will never surrender to a God we can't trust.***

what *we* think is best. Instead, we turn our lives over to Him. This is what tears down that wall between you and God. When we surrender our sexuality, the wounds, the questions, and the longings become the place where we invite God into the deepest, most intimate parts of who we are, and we discover Him.

One of the most well-known passages of surrender is found in Paul's letter to the Romans.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. (Rom. 12:1)

The first word in this verse is “therefore.” Whenever we see that word, we need to ask, “What is the ‘therefore’ *there for*?” It's referring to something the author has previously written. Backing up a few verses to Romans 11:33–36, we find Paul praising God for His plans, His power, and His wisdom that are so far beyond our understanding:

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments,  
and his paths beyond tracing out!

“Who has known the mind of the Lord?

Or who has been his counselor?”

“Who has ever given to God,  
that God should repay them?”

For from him and through him and for him are all things.

To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Paul is reminding us of God's credentials. Paul writes “in view of God's mercy.” We don't just surrender because we are supposed to. We surrender

in response to *His* overwhelming greatness and mercy.

Imagine that you have a serious heart issue. Your life depends on being sedated on a table in the operating room, your chest wall cut open by a surgeon—you're essentially surrendering to a surgeon's skill. I'm guessing you would do some research before making that decision. Would you rather surrender your outcome to someone who Googled how to do open-heart surgery, or a highly respected expert who graduated from a top-notch medical school? When your life is in the balance, credentials matter.

The bottom line is this: We will never surrender to a God we can't trust, and the only way to trust God is to know that He is good by personal experience. Paul's plea to us to sacrifice our lives and bodies to God depends on the assumption that we know our Lord.

## **KNOWING JESUS CHANGES EVERYTHING**

Unfortunately, in church culture we often talk about changing our behavior more than we encourage one another to know Jesus more deeply. Instead of seeing Jesus as someone to invite into your sexual questions and struggles, you probably feel like you have to get your act together. Maybe this is the first time that you've even considered that Jesus wants you to turn to Him with your doubts and pain.

Honestly, it might feel safer to just keep trying to fix things on your own rather than surrender. When we are trying hard, we still feel like we are in control. But surrender requires trust. The idea of surrendering your sexuality to Jesus might be absolutely terrifying. What might He ask you to change? Will He welcome you? Or will He reject you?

You won't surrender to someone you don't trust. And you can't trust someone you don't know. Most of us just don't know Jesus well enough to surrender an aspect of our life that is personal, vulnerable, and painful.

This is why it is *knowing* Jesus that changes everything. Knowing the Lord and surrendering to Him go hand in hand. The more you know Him,

the more you will want to surrender. You will trust that His ways are better than yours and that He really will work out everything that happens for your good (Rom. 8:28). And the greater your surrender, the more you will experience intimacy with Him. This is the continuing journey that every Christian is called to be on. In reality, very few Christians have been disciplined in the way of knowing Jesus.

There are a lot of very sincere Christians who live compartmentalized lives because they do not know how to surrender their sexuality to the Lord. Dan was one of them.

When the church called me to serve as a pastor, I thought porn was in the past for me. It wasn't. In fact, the pressures of ministry only intensified the shame of my struggle. I'd often ask, "How can this still be in my life?"

What I didn't realize was that my issue ran deeper than pursuing relief through porn. I hadn't fully grasped the heart of God. I was so focused on me: my failures, my perceptions, my performance in ministry, that I missed the God who says, "Come to me . . . for I am gentle and humble in heart" (Matt. 11:28–29). Intimacy with God was my issue. Over time, He would use His truth, fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, and compassionate counselors to drive me toward intimacy with the Savior. Surrendering to Him is now more of a privilege than a compulsion. Being with Him is a source of joy rather than deep shame. And pastoring is an opportunity to comfort others in the way He has comforted me in my struggle.

Elaine was another:

I have spent most of my life believing that Christians should just "do" the right things and "obey" the rules. In the midst of my healing

journey, these past few years I have come to understand that God wants to be with me. Like in the garden, He longs and desires to fellowship with me and He knows me intimately. He is not surprised by anything I have to say or anything I have done. I feel like I have come to personally understand and believe Ephesians 1:17–18, where it says that God will “give me the Spirit,” that the “eyes of my heart may be enlightened.” Surrendering my sexuality is an ongoing journey for me. It is a willingness to expose all of me to a holy God who is worthy of all my worship. It is an intentional yielding of my life and my sexuality to Him and the Spirit who dwells within me.

Both Dan and Elaine began by trying to get rid of sin and do all the right things in order to please God. But what eventually made the difference wasn't self-discipline, but cultivating true intimacy with God.

Most of us have only secondhand knowledge of what God says about us. We read it somewhere or hear it on a podcast or perhaps have a friend tell us about God's love. Frankly, that's not good enough. We have to know God for ourselves for His words to take root in our hearts.

Going to church or even reading your Bible doesn't change everything. You have to know the God whose name you carry. You can be a Christian for decades and never know Jesus in such a way that He makes a practical difference in your life. I know this because I lived this way for many years and even now can fall into the trap of trying to do life with very little of God.

Just yesterday, I felt overwhelmed by

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some conflicts personally and in ministry. I had a two-hour drive all by myself and felt extremely anxious about what was before me. Trying to distract myself, I put on an audiobook, took a phone call, and then switched to some music. Then I remembered this message of surrender. So I prayed to God right there in my car, “Lord, I’ve been trying to do this in my own strength. I need to surrender these things to You and to know Your love, Your wisdom, and Your presence in the middle of it all.”

Surrender is not God’s demand on your life, but rather His invitation to you. He has promised every Christian the resurrection power of Christ Jesus in our lives. The result of His Spirit living in us is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22–23).

Do you honestly have all of those things? Does your life speak of the power of God pouring in and through you?

The answer is probably no. We suppress the presence and power of the Holy Spirit because we want to stay in control. We don’t know what it is to lay down our lives so that we can be filled with God’s Spirit.

When we live our Christian life segmented, inviting God into some areas but not others, we will lack the passion, the power, and the transformation He promises. This is why it is critical for us to approach every area of life, including our sexuality, by inviting Jesus into it.

The message of “surrendered sexuality” is not meant to beat you over the head with shame in your sexual brokenness and struggles. Most likely, you know the “rules” about biblical sexuality, and you probably feel convicted by the ways you don’t live up to them. But what you don’t likely know (I didn’t either!) is that God cares about far more than your sexual behavior.

As a Christian, surrender isn’t ultimately about what we let go of, but about how much of God we are ready to embrace.

It is the choice and journey of laying it all down as Jesus modeled for us in His anguish as He faced the cross with the words, “Not my will, Father,

***Our surrender to God is both a onetime decision, and an ongoing battle to walk out that decision.***

but Yours be done in my life.” Following His example, we surrender with a heart that says, “Jesus, I trust You to define what sex should be. I trust You to forgive and cleanse me. I trust You to make me whole in my brokenness. I trust Your goodness in what You both give and take away. I trust You with my past, my present, and my future.”

Our surrender to God is both a onetime decision, and an ongoing battle to walk out that decision. During some seasons, our hearts are fully committed. And then just a short time later, we find ourselves discouraged or confused, trusting our own wisdom instead of surrendering to God’s care.

We will talk a lot about sex in this book. I will share research, psychological principles, and some of my own thoughts. But on the journey of surrender we are going to return again and again to what it truly means to know Jesus and how that relationship informs everything about your sexuality—in singleness, dating, marriage, shame, sexual desire, forgiveness, love, loneliness—all of it!

As I’ve been on this journey in my own life, I’ve discovered the following things about the Lord.

### ***In His love, God wants all of me***

I am so thankful that God relentlessly pursues every area of my heart! He is not content to have 90 percent of me. He redeemed all of me for all of Him. I gave my life to Christ almost five decades ago. Yet every year and through every season, I can see the Lord pursuing new territory in my heart, setting me free from my negative thoughts, my fears, my sin, and my shame.

God loves you way too much to ignore an area of your life that still looks like the “old you.”



### ***God is full of patience, mercy, and compassion***

While God desires all of me, He also is patient with the fact that surrender and trust involve a journey. Sometimes I wonder what it might be like if God let me see in one moment all that He wanted to claim within me. I'm so incredibly thankful that God is gracious and patient! God knows my limitations and that I would be destroyed by the knowledge of my sin and His holiness if I saw it all in one moment.

God invites you on a *progressive* journey of surrender. He will show you in each season by the searching of His Spirit what piece is for today. You are not supposed to read this book and be "fixed." This is just one step on your journey toward the Lord.

### ***God's love is not dependent on my performance***

Like many who have been raised in Christian homes, I have linked my behavior with God's love. I have genuinely believed that if I did more good things and avoided sin, God would love me more. This has been a trap that has been very difficult for me to unlearn. Perhaps you can relate.

The enemy can take a message about surrendered sexuality and twist it to convince you that God's goodness and love are based on you changing your behavior. Please let this truth sink in: God does not and will not love you any more or less based on how well you follow the rules. It is God's love that will move you toward holiness, not your purity that moves God to love you!

### ***God is good***

In my own journey of surrender, I have not wrestled much with what God's Word says, but I've wrestled to understand how a good God would say such things. I'm thankful to know that many who have gone before me, including godly people we read about in the Bible, have struggled to understand God's ways. The journey to know Jesus isn't about crafting a version of God that I can accept, but believing and pursuing the goodness of God as He is.

As you read this book, you will run into questions that I cannot answer. I cannot and will not try to explain to you how a good God would allow [you fill in the blank]. Some questions are bigger than an answer but require the very presence of God. I have wept with victims of human trafficking who have described evil beyond my imagination. And I have watched in awe as somehow, over time, the presence of God is a goodness far greater than any evil. While our unanswered questions may remain, they become mysteriously irrelevant when confronted by the lavish goodness of God.

Friend, in what ways do your doubts about sex, your shame, your disappointment, and your longings keep you from a deep, intimate relationship with God? What areas of your life do you feel like you must hide, minimize, or ignore when you step into church? What is the secret, relationship, fear, or habit keeping you from fully surrendering to the presence and power of God? God's love is greater than your doubts, your wounds, your shame, and your sin.

Take heart in this: Even as you strive to surrender, Jesus is pursuing you. He takes our meager cries for help and moves heaven and earth to meet us.

Remember my friend Shelly? She has been on a long journey of surrender. Here's how it began:

Racked with pain and seeing no way out, I decided to take my life. Moments after saying out loud to myself "I can't do this anymore," the phone rang. An older woman from the church where I was married seventeen years earlier, the very same woman I would avoid in the grocery store, called out of the blue, extending an invitation to come to church. I heard God's voice in that call telling me to hold on. I asked Jesus, "If You're real, Jesus, show me."

I went to church with this woman and on my way out grabbed the *Our Daily Bread* publication from the back table. The first devotion was in Romans 12:2. "And do not be conformed to this world, but

be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

“God, what is Your good and acceptable and perfect will for me?”  
I begged Him.

I had a nice house with a manicured yard, a good husband who loved me, two beautiful children, a good job. From the outside looking in, I appeared to have it all, yet I was miserable and suicidal. Nothing satisfied the deep longing within me.

God reached down from heaven and humbled Himself to hear my cry for help. He loved me right where I was in the pit of depression and sin. He invited me to come to Him because I was burdened and heavy-laden so that He could give me rest. He told me to draw near to Him, that He was jealous for me and that without faith in Him, it was impossible to please God. He told me that *all* things work together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. He told me to believe that all things are possible. So I pursued a relationship with the living God and He loved me back to health. Although nothing outward had changed in my circumstances, He had given me a new heart and I was joyful inside!

I will be sixty this year. My experience with God hasn't been a sprint; it's a marathon. He saved me both from physical and spiritual death, and I have experienced nothing more satisfying than my relationship with Him. He is everything to me. I don't surrender perfectly, not by a long shot, but He is faithful and just and bears with me along the narrow path.

Like Shelly, tearing down the wall that separates you from God will require honesty, courage, and patience. We are going to look at your wall brick by brick and bring your thoughts and your questions before the supremacy and the power of the One who loves you and gave Himself for you (Gal. 2:20). We are going to look at the process of making that choice

to surrender our sexuality to the Lord, but always and only in light of the journey of knowing Christ Jesus our Lord. Without an intimate relationship with God, the call to reorder your life (including your sexuality) will become a burden of legalism that you won't be able to handle for long.

Shelly's is a true story. Knowing Jesus really changes everything, and it can change everything for you. This book is about that process—the process of tearing down the wall between you and God so that He can give you life.

I am beyond excited to go on this journey with you. Why? Not because I hope God cleans up your sex life or changes your view on cultural issues, but because when God takes over that territory of your heart (the one behind the wall), you will experience a love, a power, and a freedom that defies explanation.

### Application Exercise:

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In what ways have you separated your sexuality from your relationship with God? Honestly mark all that apply.

- ☐ I have a sin struggle that I haven't told anyone about.
- ☐ I question the goodness of what the Bible says about sex.
- ☐ I have sexual wounds that God hasn't healed or redeemed.
- ☐ My sexuality is a source of shame.
- ☐ I don't fully believe that I am forgiven and cleansed from past sexual sin.
- ☐ My sexual identity feels more real and powerful than what the Bible says about me.
- ☐ I don't feel comfortable praying about my sex life.
- ☐ What the Bible says about sex seems outdated and irrelevant.
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Which of these areas of questions and pain are currently creating doubt or distance in your relationship with God?

- ☐ I can't understand why God allows things like sexual abuse or human trafficking.
- ☐ Experiences in the church that were hypocritical, judgmental, or abusive
- ☐ The way Christians argue about sexuality
- ☐ The silence in my church on important sexual issues
- ☐ The unloving stance some Christians have toward the LGBTQ+ community
- ☐ My own experience of God not delivering me from a sexual struggle
- ☐ Unresolved sexual conflict within my marriage
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Talk to at least one Christian brother or sister this week about your answers to these questions. Ask for them to pray for you and with you as you engage in this study.

### Passages to Study:

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#### ***Read John 4:1–26.***

How did this woman possibly have her sexual brokenness “walled off” from her pursuit of God?

How did Jesus invite her to tear down that wall?

What happened as a result?

***Read Psalm 139.***

How does this psalm challenge your assumption that you can separate your sexuality from God's knowledge or presence?

What specific verses in this psalm encourage you to invite and acknowledge God's presence in the most intimate spaces of your life?

***Read Romans 11:33–12:2.***

Paraphrase what this passage means to you personally.

**Questions for personal reflection and discussion:**

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1. "Sexuality is never a neutral issue in your relationship with God."  
Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
2. Why is it a problem to ignore sexual issues, questions, and struggles?
3. How would you describe the difference between surrendering and trying harder?
4. How would you describe the extent to which you have surrendered your sexuality to the Lord?
5. Why do you think Christians tend to "compartmentalize" their sexuality rather than surrendering it to God?
6. Why is knowing Jesus so important to your journey of surrender?

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