

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

RETHINKING

SEX

UAL

ITY

7 PARADIGM SHIFTS TO RETHINKING SEXUALITY

WITH

DR. JULI SLATTERY

RethinkingSexualityBook.com

INTRODUCTION

Although God created human sexuality as part of His perfect design, we more often experience it as a trial. From porn use to the impact of sexual abuse and exploitation to broken sexuality within marriage, sex represents an epidemic of pain. We confront this both within our own lives and as we interact with the world around us. How should we respond to the changing cultural sexual beliefs and moral standards? How do we equip our children when the media talks endlessly about sex? What does the Bible say about issues like masturbation, homosexuality and sexual brokenness?

Many Christians shy away from these topics because they don't know how to discuss them in a way that honors God and respects people. Because we are hesitant to talk about sexuality, we have essentially conceded this area of life to the larger culture to discuss and define. It's time to change that.

In years past, the Christian church's apprehension to address sexual issues has been accepted as normal. Most Christians have just assumed that sexuality is a topic that God doesn't care much about. Sexual questions and pain were buried or reserved for private counseling sessions. The cultural tsunami of questions and changing assumptions related to sexuality have now made it impossible for Christians to continue to avoid these topics. I believe that sexuality represents more than a problem to be solved, but rather a territory to be reclaimed.

This 7-week study is based on a book I wrote called *Rethinking Sexuality*. While the book goes into much greater depth, this study is a great place to begin healthy discussion around biblical sexuality and offers practical ways to apply God's truth to real-life issues. Going through this study will model and guide you in **how** to talk about relevant sexual issues. You will also learn **why** reclaiming the biblical narrative of sexuality is so critical to reaching the world and equipping God's people.

The content of this study addresses seven paradigm shifts we need to make in order to be equipped to live out and share biblical truth around sexual issues. As you will learn in the first video, a paradigm shift is a fundamental change in the way we approach a topic. Here are the seven paradigm shifts the course will cover:

- Week 1: Sexual Discipleship
- Week 2: Every Sexual Issue is a Spiritual Issue
- Week 3: The Gospel is Written Within Our Sexuality
- Week 4: We Are All Sexually Broken
- Week 5: God Invites Us to Pursue Sexual Wholeness
- Week 6: Truth and Love Must Coexist
- Week 7: Change Begins with You!

We have created this course with small groups in mind, but it can certainly be used in larger or more intimate settings. (Note: If you are looking for a personal study through the seven paradigm shifts, check out the *Rethinking Sexuality* e-course). As you go through the material, each week begins with a written overview of the content. This may be particularly helpful for a group leader who wants to prepare for the upcoming discussion. Begin your time together with prayer and perhaps “setting the table” for the week’s topic. Then you will watch a 10-15 minute video for that week’s paradigm shift, followed by the suggested group discussion questions. I highly recommend you read the corresponding chapters of *Rethinking Sexuality* as it will prepare you for more in depth discussion.

Within your small group, you may have some people who are quite hesitant to talk about sexuality and others who can’t wait for these discussions. This is a great environment to learn from each other and also to apply the many Bible passages that urge us to love each other well with patience and understanding.

Leading a group on the topic of sexuality might be a bit intimidating. Here are some practical guidelines to help you keep the conversation on track and edifying.

- Keep the focus on God’s Word. Everyone has different opinions related to sexual issues; some of those opinions are rooted in deep pain and conflicts. Remember the most important opinion is God’s. That’s whose we are seeking!
- Focus on what God is teaching each person – not on sharing intimate personal details (particularly if the group is mixed gender).
- If you sense that someone is “oversharing” or has hit on something painful, be available to talk another time, or perhaps encourage the individual to meet with a Christian counselor.
- Trust the Holy Spirit and allow everyone to go at their own pace. Don’t feel pressure to convince someone to change their views on a sexual issue. Present truth, dig into Scripture, be prayerful and ask God to use you.

- It's okay to say, "I don't know." Leading a group like this doesn't mean you have to be the expert. You are on a journey just like everyone else. Authentic Intimacy has a number of follow up resources, including *Rethinking Sexuality*, and can refer you to other ministries and resources to help you sort through questions and issues from a biblical perspective. All suggested Java with Juli podcast episodes mentioned in this course can be found on AuthenticIntimacy.com. You can go to AuthenticIntimacy.com/Rethinking for a full list of resources.
- Remember that sexuality represents a spiritual battlefield. Spend time praying for wisdom and discernment.

You might feel as though you are forging new ground through this study. After all, many Christian groups and churches haven't addressed sexuality so directly. Remember God equips His people in every generation to be the light of the world in the darkness around them. In our day, this is the topic that presents our greatest challenge. When God sent His people into new territory and challenges, He told them, "Be strong and courageous, for I am with you." Those words still apply to us today.

Juli

WEEK 1: SEXUAL DISCIPLESHIP

(*Rethinking Sexuality* chapters 1-2)

This week's focus is the need for Christians to embrace a discipleship mindset related to sexuality. Discipleship means learning to think and live according to a person or organization's teaching. In Christian discipleship, we endeavor to think and live like Jesus. As disciples we strive to follow Jesus in our thoughts and actions, in every area of our lives. Although we talk about discipleship in many areas of life, rarely do we ever apply it to sexuality.

Most Christians have, in essence, been sexually disciplined by the world. We think about sexuality from a cultural, humanistic perspective. This is because the worldly culture consistently presents a persuasive narrative to help us make sense of our sexuality. Every day, the average person is bombarded with subtle and aggressive messages, training us *how to think* about our sexuality.

Most Christian churches and families have been silent and encouraged very little discussion on sexual issues. This tradition has been passed on through many generations, but it is not a biblical tradition. The Bible is very explicit and direct in addressing our sexuality. (See Appendix in *Rethinking Sexuality* for a partial list of Bible passages that speak to sexual issues). It is not enough to have a problem-solving approach to sexuality. We will not be effective if our only strategy, for example, is to have groups for specific types of sexual problems or to teach only about the harmful effects of pornography.

For the Christian church to reclaim the territory of sexuality, we must begin by reclaiming the conversation. Sexual discipleship is the call to do just that.

BIBLE PASSAGE TO STUDY:

Deuteronomy 6:4-9. This passage contains part of Moses's charge to the nation of Israel before they entered the pagan world of the promised land. Moses pleads with God's people to disciple the next generation. This is discipleship in a nutshell: knowing what we believe, living what we believe and passing down what we believe.



Watch Paradigm Shift 1 Video

1. Do you think those two words “Sexual Discipleship” are a paradigm shift? Why or why not?
2. What do you think about Juli’s statement that “we have been sexually disciplined by the world”?
3. Identify the things in culture that you encounter which are promoting their message of sexuality, and describe how your thinking about sexuality has been influenced by the mainstream culture, your family growing up and church culture.
4. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9. This is part of the charge that Moses gave the nation of Israel before they entered the promised land. Many people believe that these verses provide a model of discipleship. What elements of discipleship do you see in these verses?
5. Many Christians have adopted the tradition of being silent on sexual issues, but the Bible says a lot about sexuality. What are some Biblical passages you can think of that address our sexuality?
6. What is the difference between a problem-solving approach to sexuality and “sexual discipleship”?
7. What do you think would be some practical steps families and Christian culture need to take to embrace a discipleship model around sexuality?

Takeaway: Silence and problem-solving approaches can’t compete with a discipleship model. We must embrace sexual discipleship within the church, family and Christian community.



Follow up resources: *Rethinking Sexuality* book chapters 1 & 2.

Java with Juli podcast episode #182 (Your Generation and Your View of Sexuality) and #198 (Sharing God’s Message for Sexuality*).

**Authentic Intimacy members-only content*

WEEK 2 : EVERY SEXUAL ISSUE IS A SPIRITUAL ISSUE

(Rethinking Sexuality chapter 3)

Many Christians believe their sexual choices and beliefs are a category separate from their spiritual pursuits. They see little conflict, for example, with going to church on Sunday morning and looking at porn on Sunday night. Some of this thinking is the result of the Church's silence on sexual issues. We simply assume that God doesn't speak into our sexuality – that He allows us to make those choices for ourselves.

This is a destructive lie. In fact, sexuality and spirituality were designed to be inseparable. Our sexual beliefs and behaviors are a reflection of what we truly believe about God. Every sexual question is ultimately a spiritual question. What do you think it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? Will it cost you something to follow Jesus? Is the Bible a trustworthy, relevant source of truth? Do you believe that God created our sexuality for a purpose? What does it mean that God loves you? Are your natural desires good or sinful? Questions like these form the foundation of how we view sexual decisions.

Engaging in sexual conversations is a necessary part of the Great Commission (making disciples). People need help understanding their sexuality within the context of God's character and biblical teaching. To ignore sexual issues is to also ignore spiritual issues.

BIBLE PASSAGE TO STUDY:

I Corinthians 6:12-20. Often when we think about the concept “Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit,” we apply it to diet and exercise. Paul actually writes that what we eat isn't all that important, but what we do with our bodies sexually has significant spiritual meaning. Honoring God with our bodies is taught first and foremost within the context of sexuality. Our sexual choices are always spiritual choices also.

John 4:1-26. Jesus intentionally initiates a conversation with a woman about her sexual past. He gently suggests that her sexual longings are rooted in a spiritual thirst. Jesus' willingness to enter into such a private conversation with this woman led not only to her healing, but to a revival in her town.



Watch Paradigm Shift 2 Video

1. What is your reaction to this paradigm shift?
2. How would you describe the term “sexual atheist”? Do you agree that many Christians are sexual atheists? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think many people separate sexuality and spirituality? How have you separated sexuality and spirituality at various times throughout your life?
4. Read I Corinthians 6:12-20 and Romans 1:21-32. What do these passages teach about the connection between our sexual choices and our relationship with God?
5. How are our beliefs and behaviors related to sexuality ultimately rooted in what we believe about God? Share a few examples.
6. How do our sexual experiences and brokenness impact how we view God? Share a few examples.
7. Read John 4:1-26. Why do you think Jesus brought up this woman’s sexual past? How was her sexual need actually a spiritual need?
8. How is this study helping you connect sexuality and spirituality?
9. One practical way to connect sexuality and spirituality is to pray about sex. Spend some time as a group praying that God would bring repentance, truth and revival to His people in the area of sexuality. Pray that the sexual wounds and confusion around us would open up opportunities to share Jesus’ love.

Takeaway: If we neglect sexual issues, we are neglecting spiritual issues and allowing the culture to speak into the nature and authority of God.



Follow up resources: *Rethinking Sexuality* book chapter 3.

Java with Juli podcast episode #117 (How Your Sex Life Is Connected to Your Spiritual Life).

WEEK 3 : THE GOSPEL IS WRITTEN WITHIN OUR SEXUALITY

(*Rethinking Sexuality* chapters 4-5)

This is perhaps the most central of the seven paradigm shifts. It is also the most difficult to grasp. How could our sexuality possibly have anything to do with the gospel? Everything God has created for us here on earth has a spiritual purpose, revealing something about God. **Our sexuality was intentionally created as a holy metaphor reflecting God's covenant love.** Throughout the Scripture, the one-flesh union of marital sex, sexual infidelity and sexual immorality are used as metaphors to describe Christ's relationship with the Church and our call to be faithful to our covenant with God. We also see the language of covenant, sexuality, sexual unfaithfulness and marriage used in the Old Testament to describe the Lord's relationship with Israel. Sexuality was intentionally created with great significance as it is a powerful, holy metaphor to help us understand God's love for His people!

Practically, we experience this connection because:

- Sexual desire invites us to pursue covenant. Our bodies remind us that we were not meant to be alone.
- Sexual intimacy is the celebration of covenant. Having sex within marriage is a physical way of celebrating the vows we made within marriage.
- Sexual fidelity is the promise of covenant. The pain of broken vows or sexual betrayal is a metaphor of the spiritual reality of breaking our covenant with God.

When we think about sexuality or have sexual questions, we need to view these through the filter of remembering the significance of this spiritual metaphor. This is the why... why sexual intimacy is reserved for the covenant of marriage, why male and female matter, why sex is under such spiritual attack in our world and why it's worth it to pursue sexual integrity and sexual healing.

BIBLE PASSAGE TO STUDY:

Ephesians 5:21-33. Paul makes a direct connection of marriage and the one-flesh intimacy between husband and wife as a reflection of Christ and the Church. Paul says this is a "mystery," which means we can't grasp the fullness of this metaphor. Yet, Paul's teaching here and references throughout the Scripture remind us that sexuality and marriage were created by God to teach us about His love, His pursuit, His faithfulness and His passion towards His people.

Note: Because this is such a difficult concept to grasp, I strongly recommend reading chapter 4 of *Rethinking Sexuality* or listening to podcast #160 before leading this week's discussion.



Watch Paradigm Shift 3 Video

1. How would you explain the story of the “gospel”? How does God pursue us with covenant love according to the gospel?
2. Juli talked about the link between covenant love and sexuality. What is covenant love? How is covenant love different from other forms of love?
3. What is the significance of God’s “covenant love” in the overarching message of the Bible? (See Deuteronomy 7:9, Psalm 103:17-18, Hebrews 9:15 and 10:15-17).
4. Read Ephesians 5:21-33. After this teaching on marriage, what do you think Paul meant by, “This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church”?
5. How does sexual desire invite us to pursue covenant?
6. What does sexual intimacy within marriage teach us about the celebration of covenant? What does it potentially show us about God’s covenant love for us?
7. How is sexual fidelity the promise of covenant?
8. Based on Ephesians 5:21-33, why do you think male and female are important within the covenant of marriage?
9. How does the link between sexuality and covenant love help us understand why God cares so much about sexuality?

Takeaway: Sexuality matters (and is under such great attack) because it is a powerful metaphor of the gospel.



Follow up resources: *Rethinking Sexuality* book chapters 4 and 5.
Java with Juli Podcast #160 (Why God Created You to Be Sexual).

WEEK 4 : WE ARE ALL SEXUALLY BROKEN

(Rethinking Sexuality chapters 6, 8 and 9)

In Romans 3, Paul reminds us, “There is no one righteous, no, not one.” We are all sinners, in need of the saving grace provided through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. Yet, often our mindset around sexual issues is that only some people have violated God’s standard of holy sexuality.

The primary way the Christian church has addressed sexuality is through the purity narrative. Young Christians are told that God created sexuality for marriage and that experiencing sex outside of marriage is wrong. There is an implicit (or explicit) promise that if you wait until marriage, God will bless you with a wonderful spouse and great sex life. The purity narrative defines sexual wholeness as walking down the aisle as a virgin. While this narrative has shades of truth, it promotes an incomplete view of God’s design for sexuality and leaves us with the impression that some of us are “sexually pure” and everyone else is broken. Many Christian cultures promote the pure vs. broken perspective by labeling certain sexual sins or experiences as worse than others. This has set up an “us vs. them” mindset that is not consistent with the gospel message that ALL of us have sinned and fall short of God’s glory. Just because we have managed our sin better than the person next to us does not make us sexually whole or pure. For example, there are many virgins who battle with self-righteousness, lust and bitterness.

Our understanding of what it means to be sexually broken is directly related to what we believe it means to be sexually whole. Because we have a limited understanding of purity and wholeness (get married as a virgin), we have a limited definition of sexual brokenness. Sexual wholeness (or holiness) is not the absence of certain sexual sins. It is fully embracing and living according to the holy metaphor of God’s covenant love within our sexuality. None of us does this perfectly. All of us need God’s grace and redemption within our sexuality. The enemy has tainted this masterpiece in every one of our lives, and we have been complicit in his work.

BIBLE PASSAGE TO STUDY:

Luke 18:9-14 and John 8. These passages record Jesus confronting the religious leaders who were confident in their purity. The traditional Christian stance toward “sexual sinners” has been one of self-righteousness—we are whole and pure. Everyone else needs our help. Jesus constantly challenged this belief when speaking to the religious people of His day. I believe He would have the same message for us as we address sexuality: “Let him who is without sin throw the first stone.” We are all sexually broken and humbled before God in our need for His redemption and grace.



Watch Paradigm Shift 4 Video

1. Juli talked about the term “sexual brokenness” being offensive to some people. Do you think it is offensive? Why or why not?
2. To know if something is broken we need to understand what is whole. How did Juli describe sexual wholeness?
3. After discussing the above two questions, what does it mean to be “sexually broken”?
4. How has the traditional Christian approach to sexuality (the purity narrative) set up an atmosphere of “us vs. them” related to sexual issues?
5. Read Luke 18:9-14. Pay attention to the religious leader’s prayer in this parable. How is the spirit of this prayer reflected in the way Christians often address sexual issues?
6. Read John 8:1-11. How is the truth that “we are all sexually broken” reflected in this episode in Jesus’ ministry? How would Jesus challenge our current thinking about what it means to be sexually broken?
7. How do you think the church culture would change if we believed, taught and lived with the truth that everyone is sexually broken?
8. What do you think is the greatest barrier keeping us from embracing this paradigm shift?

Takeaway: We must move from an “us vs. them” mentality to a gospel narrative. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.



Follow up resources: *Rethinking Sexuality* book chapters 6, 8 and 9.
Java with Juli Podcast episode #166 (We Are All Sexually Broken).

Note: One of the questions we often get asked related to this paradigm shift is “What does this look like for leaders in the church?” or “Can I still do ministry if I am dealing with sexual brokenness, temptation and sin?” What disqualifies us from ministry is not our brokenness, but our hypocrisy and lack of authentic repentance. If your group would like to take an additional week to discuss this, read chapter 9 in *Rethinking Sexuality* (there are discussion questions that go with the chapter) and listen to podcast episode #196 (Public Me vs. Private Me).

WEEK 5 : GOD INVITES US TO PURSUE SEXUAL WHOLENESS

(Rethinking Sexuality chapters 7 and 11)

Because we tend to think of our sexuality and spirituality in separate categories, many Christians don't believe that God cares very much about sexual healing. They believe God is disappointed in them or angry at their sin, but that He has no interest in healing their sexual shame and sexual wounds. As a result, Christians can go through life without ever thinking to pray about sexual issues or pursue healing in a way that integrates these issues with their faith in God. We are far more proactive in pursuing physical health than we are in pursuing sexual wholeness.

When a man or woman approaches the church with a sexual question or problem, they may hear a response like "Just pray and read the Bible more and your problem will go away" or "We don't deal with those kinds of problems. You should see a psychologist."

Because broken sexuality compromises the powerful metaphor of God's covenant love, spiritual maturity must also include pursuing sexual wholeness. Our sexuality involves spiritual, emotional and relational aspects of our humanity. The pursuit of sexual wholeness is most effective when it is multifaceted, involving three avenues that can propel us toward freedom and healing:

- God's Word points us to truth in exposing the lies we believe in our brokenness.
- Studying the wisdom of God's created order helps us understand how to live well.
- Engaging in restorative relationships teaches us experientially about God's grace and love.

Jesus is the Healer and Redeemer of every aspect of our humanity, including our sexuality. Part of the work of His Church is to minister to those in sexual sin, pain and bondage.

BIBLE PASSAGE TO STUDY:

Isaiah 61:1-3 and **Luke 4:18-20**. Isaiah prophesied the description that Jesus came to fulfill. Throughout His ministry, Jesus brought healing and freedom to captives of physical illness, spiritual bondage and emotional brokenness. This work now continues through the power of His Holy Spirit and through His children here on earth.



Watch Paradigm Shift 5 Video

1. Do you agree that many Christians are hesitant to pursue sexual healing? Why or why not?
2. Why does it seem more appropriate to pray for healing from physical ailments than from sexual brokenness?
3. Read Isaiah 61:1-3. Then read Luke 4:18-20. How do these passages describe Jesus' ministry? Where do you see overlap with sexual wounds and sin?
4. Why do some people believe sexual sins are somehow unforgivable?
5. How does studying God's Word help in addressing sexual wounds and sin? (See John 8:31-32.)
6. How does applying the wisdom of creation help in the pursuit of sexual healing? (See Proverbs 8:22-36.)
7. How can healthy relationships help in the pursuit of sexual wholeness and healing? (See I Thessalonians 2:7-12.)

Takeaway: Sexual sin and brokenness keep us from intimately knowing God. The Lord invites each of us to pursue Him on a healing journey.



Follow up resources: *Rethinking Sexuality* book chapters 7 and 11.

Java with Juli podcast episode #107 (Surprised by the Healer) and #146 (All You Need Is Jesus!... And Your Therapist*).

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WEEK 6 : TRUTH AND LOVE MUST COEXIST

(*Rethinking Sexuality* chapter 10)

One of the trickiest aspects of talking about sexuality is the fine line of embracing God's truth while also demonstrating His grace. Historically, Christians have been known either to be people who err on the side of doctrine without grace or people who show love while compromising truth. In fact, it seems entire Christian denominations are choosing one side or the other. In our own lives, we frequently face this dilemma in how we respond to loved ones and co-workers. Is it more important to hold onto a biblical view of sexuality or to make sure people know that God loves and accepts them?

While it may seem impossible, the Bible calls us to both 100 percent truth and 100 percent love. We can't squirm our way out of either. Jesus was described as a man full of **both grace and truth**. We see that throughout His ministry, He never compromised either. He had the wisdom to apply both truth and grace uniquely with everyone He encountered. The problem is we are not Jesus. In our own wisdom, we will inevitably compromise love as we proclaim God's truth and compromise truth as we strive to love other people.

There is one aspect of Jesus' character that made Him a man of both truth and grace: humility. Jesus' humility toward God the Father grounded Him in truth, accepting the Father's will without edits or revisions. Because of His humility, Jesus embraced the posture of a servant toward other people, grounding Him in love. In the same way, we can pursue the humility of Jesus grounding us solidly as people of both truth and love.

BIBLE PASSAGE TO STUDY:

Philippians 2:1-8. This passage clearly demonstrates how Jesus' humility impacted His approach to both truth and love. He did not try to be like God, even though He was the Son of God. He submitted Himself fully to the will of His Father and became a servant. Paul tells us to learn from Jesus' humility, becoming like Him in both our obedience to the Father and our love towards others.



Watch Paradigm Shift 6 Video

1. Why do Christians often feel like they must choose between truth and love when addressing sexual issues? Share an example of how you have felt this tension.
2. How do we compromise God's character when we are all truth and no love? How do we compromise God's character when we are all love and no truth?
3. Read John 1:14. What does this verse say about Jesus? How do you see both truth and grace evident in how He interacted with people?
4. Read Philippians 2:1-8. How did Jesus' humility keep Him grounded in truth? How did Jesus' humility keep Him grounded in love?
5. Why is it impossible to compromise truth if we are humble towards God?
6. Why is it impossible to be unloving if we are humble towards people?
7. What is one way that Philippians 2:1-8 challenges you to be a person of love and truth?

Takeaway: The truth vs. love paradigm is a trap. The humility of Jesus can make us people filled with both grace and truth.



Follow up resources: *Rethinking Sexuality* book chapter 10.

Java with Juli podcast episode #203 (Navigating Different Views on Sexuality) and #109 (Messy Grace*).

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WEEK 7 : CHANGE BEGINS WITH YOU!

(Rethinking Sexuality chapters 12-13)

The changes in the landscape of sexual morality and behavior are alarming. We can feel helpless to stop the onslaught of pornography, the redefinition of gender and marriage or the devastation of millions in the wake of sexual abuse and exploitation. Yet we don't have the luxury of apathy. Jesus told us that we are the salt and the light of the world. Our presence is meant to have a profound impact on our culture in every arena, including sexuality.

What could you possibly do to make a difference in light of the sexual brokenness and confusion in our world? God uses ordinary people like you and me to accomplish His work. We cannot wait around for God to use someone else. Revival in our time must begin with us.

Jesus told His disciples that the fields are ripe for the harvest, but the laborers are few. As we survey the landscape of broken sexuality in our world, we see the fields still ripe for the harvest, but few are willing to do the work. God isn't waiting around for the perfect person to make a difference in the world. Jesus already did that! He's asking for willing servants who reflect His love and truth.

Revival is a churchy word we don't use in real life. It refers to when God breathes new life into a person, a church, a family, a city and even a nation. We don't often talk about revival frankly because it sounds too big to ask for. Throughout our lifetime, we have only seen things get worse. In a revival, we depend upon God not just to keep things from getting worse than they already are. We invite Him to take the ground back.

BIBLE PASSAGE TO STUDY:

Nehemiah 1:1 – 2:18. The Old Testament prophet Nehemiah is an encouraging story of an ordinary man who led an extraordinary revival. Nehemiah's life reminds us that when God calls us, He will also give us everything we need to do His will. Nehemiah's response to the spiritual tragedy of his day challenges us to become people God can use to bring revival in our day.



Watch Paradigm Shift 7 Video

1. How is “change begins with you” a paradigm shift related to sexuality?
2. Why do you think we fall into patterns of apathy or anger instead of asking God to use us to make a difference in our world?
3. Read Nehemiah 1:1-4. How did Nehemiah respond to the news of what had happened to Jerusalem? Why is it critical that we have a similar response to the sexual brokenness around us?
4. Read Nehemiah 1:5-10. Why do you think Nehemiah personally repented of his sin when the problems of Jerusalem seemed to have little to do with him? What does this teach us about the need for personal repentance in our current crisis?
5. Read Nehemiah 1:11-28. How did Nehemiah step into the challenge of becoming God’s vessel to bring revival?
6. How is God asking you to step into the challenge of bringing His truth and healing into your relational world? What is a practical step you can take towards this challenge?
7. What is your biggest takeaway from this 7-week study?

Takeaway: We are God’s agents on earth to affect change. It’s not enough to be sad or disgusted by what we see happening around us. We have to be available vessels for God’s use.



Follow up resources: Read *Rethinking Sexuality* book chapters 12 and 13.

Java with Juli podcast episode #192 (Engaging in Restorative Relationships) and #139 (Why Your Story Matters*).

**Authentic Intimacy members-only content*

Thank you for persevering in finishing this study! I pray God is using it to change and equip you to reach a hurting world.

As I mentioned in the beginning of the study, this is just an introduction to the concept of “sexual discipleship.” I trust that you are hungry to learn more about God’s design for sexuality and His redemption in response to our brokenness.



The ministry of Authentic Intimacy exists to encourage you on this journey. We have podcasts, blogs, books, conferences, trainings, webinars, ecourses and other materials to help you apply the biblical narrative to the questions and problems you may face related to sexuality. There are many other ministries doing similar work related to specific issues like sexual integrity, parenting, sexual healing from trauma and intimacy in marriage. You are not alone!

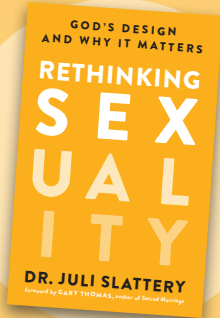
Finally, we would love to hear from you! Please let us know about your group experience and any feedback you have as we strive to serve God’s people more effectively.

For His glory,

Juli

ABOUT RETHINKING SEXUALITY

Rethinking Sexuality is not just a book, but a movement to equip the Church in addressing biblical sexuality.



BOOK

Can Christians reclaim sexuality in a broken culture? We say yes. *Rethinking Sexuality* challenges the paradigm of how Christians have traditionally approached conversations and questions about sexuality.

In this book, Dr. Juli Slattery equips you to:

- understand how every sexual question is ultimately a spiritual one
- view sexuality not as a problem to solve but a territory to reclaim
- see how sexuality is rooted in the broader context of God's heart for us
- grasp the bigger picture of sexual challenges and wholeness
- shift the challenge from combating sexual problems to proclaiming and modeling sacred sexuality.

EVENTS / TRAINING

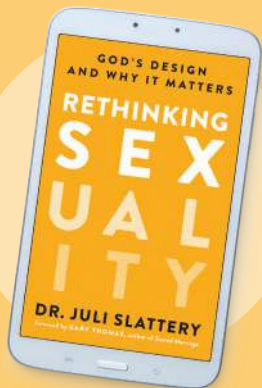
Sexuality in today's world is one of the largest roadblocks to faith in Christ. Most people, including Christians, simply can't make sense of sexuality, and the church has been silent. By contesting long-held cultural paradigms, the *Rethinking Sexuality* event equips you to view how sexuality is rooted within the broader context of God's heart and His work for us on earth. Our prayer is to equip and mobilize the church to have sexual conversations that exalt Jesus as Savior, Lord and Healer. We call this model "Sexual Discipleship."

We believe this is a conversation in which every church needs to engage. The teaching is geared toward Christian leaders, parents and every Christian who desires to be grounded in a biblical understanding of sexuality. Dr. Juli Slattery writes, "One day it dawned on me. We have been sexually disciplined by the world!" We believe it's time to change that.

Bring Dr. Juli Slattery in for a *Rethinking Sexuality* training for your church staff, leadership and community. This can be a few hour event or a full day conference.

E-COURSE

In the *Rethinking Sexuality* e-course, Dr. Juli Slattery coaches you through the seven paradigm shifts of *Rethinking Sexuality*. The course includes seven videos with additional teaching and a weekly personal application guide. The e-course is designed for individual use, helping you practically apply the material in *Rethinking Sexuality*.



Visit RethinkingSexualityBook.com