

# KNOWN

## Resource Management Session 1—Principle Owner

### The Question

Who owns my stuff?

### The Point

Everything comes from God and belongs to Him.

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 29:10-18

### OPENING

> **God's Stuff:** Before students arrive, tape signs that read "God's" on everything in the room. As students arrive, pin the same type of sign on each of them. Provide materials (index cards and pens) for students to make similar signs to tape to any personal items they have with them. After everything is labeled, discuss these questions: Why does everything in the room belong to God? Do you have anything, anywhere that belongs completely to you? On what are you basing your ownership?

**Option:** Show a clip from *Finding Nemo* (Walt Disney Video, 2003) in which the seagulls repeatedly say, "Mine. Mine. Mine." A clip is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXRgpum7OUo>. How are we like those seagulls? Why do you think we have such a need to claim what we believe belongs to us?

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Yours* by Steven Curtis Chapman (This Moment, Sparrow Records, 2007)

*All My Heart* by Stellar Kart (Everything Is Different Now, Sony, 2010)

*The Stand* by Hillsong United (United We Stand, Sony, 2006)

*And That My Soul Knows Very Well* by Hillsong (Shout to the Lord: Platinum Collection, Sony, 2000)

*Blessed Be Your Name* by Tree63 (Blessed Be Your Name: The Hits, InPop, 2008)

*Breathing the Breath* by Matt Redman (Facedown, Sixstepsrecords, 2004)

### PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

*My Own Little World* by Matthew West (Story of Your Life, Sparrow Records, 2010)

*American Dream* by Dominic Balli (American Dream, CSD, 2011)

*Count It All* by John Waller (As for Me & My House, Provident, 2011)

*This Is the Stuff* by Francesca Battistelli (Hundred More Years, Fervent Records, 2011)

*Everything Is Yours* by Audrey Assad (The House You're Building, Sparrow Records, 2010)

### VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.

> "Tithe (Donuts)" BlueFish TV

(Use this video clip to introduce the session and set the idea that God is the provider of all we have and enjoy.)

### REVIEW

The first session Bible study stresses that we are responsible and accountable to God for our stewardship of the resources He provides. This midweek study will point out that everything belongs to God and everything we have comes from God.

## DISCUSS THESE POINTS

> **Illustration:** Read aloud these *Toddler's Rules of Possession*: **[Slide 4]**

If I like it, it's mine.

If it's in my hand, it's mine.

If I can take it from you, it's mine.

If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.

If it's mine, it must NEVER appear to be yours in any way.

If I'm doing or building something, all the pieces are mine.

If it looks just like mine, it is mine.

If I saw it first, it's mine.

If you are playing with something and you put it down, it automatically becomes mine.

[Provided by Travis R. Grant. <http://www.k-state.edu/wwparent/humor/rules.htm>. Available on the internet 3.1.11.]

> Human beings don't have to be very old before we begin to believe that most things around us somehow belong to us.

> Where do you think this sense of ownership comes from?

> How is this similar to the way we approach God in relation to our stuff?

### A. Everything belongs to God. **[Slide 5]**

> Near the end of his reign as king, David gathered the Israelites together and prayed a prayer recorded in 1 Chronicles 29.

> Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-13. **[Slides 6-7]**

> What do you see as the main emphasis of David's prayer?

> How do you think David's words affected his people? How do his words affect you?

> On the board or on large sheets of paper, create two lists: a list of everything David indicates belongs to the Lord and a list of everything David indicates comes from the Lord.

> David acknowledged that "from eternity to eternity" everything in the heavens and on earth has always and will always belong to God. **[Slide 8]**.

> How would you define the word *everything*? **[Slide 9]**

> Based on your definition, what does that indicate about the stuff you believe is yours? Can you claim anything as yours?

> Why does everything get to belong to God? Is this difficult for you to accept? Why or why not?

> David's acceptance of this truth caused him to praise God and to give Him thanks.

> What is your response to this truth?

**Option:** Call for two volunteers to come to the front of class. Explain that you have something of yours that you want to give each of them. Give one student a twenty dollar bill and the other student a one dollar bill. Allow both students to express how they feel about what you have chosen to give them. Use this illustration to launch discussion about all things belonging to God; therefore, it is up to Him to determine what He will give to each of us.

### B. Everything we have comes from God. **[Slide 10]**

> Read 1 Chronicles 29:14-18. **[Slide 11-12]**

> As a wealthy king, it would be tempting for David to take pride in all he possessed. But David indicated again his understanding that everything belongs to God and comes from God.

> Do you struggle with God's ownership of your stuff because you feel like you have earned it, worked for it, received it as a gift, or deserved it? Explain.

> Are you ever tempted to take pride in your stuff rather than humbly accepting that everything you have came from God?

> David recognized that the only reason his people were able to give so generously to God for the purpose of building Him a temple was because God had so generously given to them first. David is describing a "continuous cycle" in which God gives to us so we can give to Him. **[Slide 13]**

> In his song "Breathing the Breath," Matt Redman sings: "We have nothing to give/That didn't first come from Your hands/We have nothing to offer You /Which You did not provide." Why are these lyrics true?

> What are some things God has given to you? How can you give these back to Him?

> With what attitude did both David and his people give to God? Are you able to give to God in the same

manner? Why or why not?

> How can an understanding of everything coming from God help you respond by giving back to Him?  
How can that type of understanding help you understand who owns your stuff?

**Option:** Provide a supply of paper and pens, or index cards. Direct students to draw an item that “belongs” to them. Lead students to work together to see how their items can be traced back to originate with God. For example: My car: Given to be my Dad who earned the money from his job in the oil business. The oil was put in the earth by God, not to mention the machines made from the metals of the earth to get to the oil.

### **WRAP IT UP**

> According to 1 Chronicles 29:17, God knows who is giving willingly to Him and who is not. The key is to have an honest heart that wants to please God. David asked God to create and keep a desire for joyful giving in the hearts of his people.

> How can we work together to change our attitude and behavior toward those things that are God’s (everything) and those things that are ours (nothing)?

> Do you believe God is pleased with what and how you give?

> Is David’s prayer for his people a prayer that you need to pray for yourself?

> Close the session by reading in unison 1 Chronicles 29:10-13. **[Slides 6-7]**

**Option:** Create a PowerPoint® presentation with a broad sampling of things that belong to God—big and small, in heaven and on the earth. Include items to which students will particularly be able to relate. After viewing the presentation, discuss the impact this study will have on students’ attitude and actions toward their stuff.

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# KNOWN

## Resource Management Session 2—Your Time

### The Question

What should I do with my time?

### The Point

Make good use of your time.

Scripture: Psalm 90:9-12; Ephesians 5:15-17

### OPENING

> **Measuring Time:** Fill your space with a variety of time keeping pieces: clocks, hourglasses, stopwatches. As students arrive, give index cards and pens. At a specific start time, call out each minute as it passes for a total of five minutes. After you call the end of the five minutes, instruct students to quickly record on a card what they did during those five minutes and to put the card in a basket you placed in the center of the room. Gather students around the basket and read aloud what is recorded on some of the cards. Discuss the five minutes that are now gone and can never be regained. Were you surprised at how quickly five minutes passed? If you had those five minutes back is there something you would do differently with that time?

**Option:** Remove anything that measures time from your room. As students arrive collect their time-keeping devices such as watches and cell phones. Prepare an activity for students to complete that must be finished in five minutes. Inform them that not only must the activity be completed, but that they must finish when they believe five minutes is up. At the end of five minutes, call time and debrief the activity. Did you have an enhanced sense of time passing because of your task and because you didn't know what time it was? How did you figure out how to complete your task in the time allotted since you had no way to track your time?

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Time by Day of Fire* (Day of Fire, Jive, 2004)

*Time Is...* by DC Talk (Welcome to the Freak Show, Forefront Records, 1997)

*How Great Is Our God* by Chris Tomlin (Arriving, sixstepsrecords, 2004)

*Yours* by Steven Curtis Chapman (This Moment, Sparrow Records, 2007)

*The Stand* by Hillsong (United We Stand, Sony, 2006)

*And That My Soul Knows Very Well* by Hillsong (Shout to the Lord: Platinum Collection, Sony, 2000)

*Blessed Be Your Name* by Tree 63 (Blessed Be Your Name: The Hits, InPop, 2008)

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*Count It All* by John Waller (As For Me and My House, Provident, 2011)

*This Is the Stuff* by Francesca Battistelli (Hundred More Years, Fervent Records, 2011)

*Everything Is Yours* by Audrey Assad (The House You're Building, Sparrow Records, 2010)

### VIDEO IDEA

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- > “Chick-fil-A Story” BlueFish TV  
(Use this video clip during Life Principle B to highlight one way to invest your time. Discuss reactions to the clip.)

## REVIEW

The second session Bible study examines biblical attitudes toward giving. The key in giving is not the amount given, but the attitude of the heart. This midweek study will present the challenge to pay attention to the stewardship and use of our time.

## DISCUSS THESE POINTS

- > **Illustration:** Identify different things people say about time. (“Time flies when you’re having fun.” “You have all the time you need.” “Don’t waste your time.” “The older I get, the faster time goes.” “If I only had more time.” “We’re just killing time.” “He died before his time.”) **[Slide 4]**
- > Why do people spend their time talking about time?
- > Why do we talk about time like it can be “spent”?
- > What is it about time that is so precious?
- > Is time important to you? Explain.

### A. Treasure it. **[Slide 5]**

- > Read Psalm 90:9-12. **[Slide 6]**
- > This psalm was written by Moses most likely during the forty years of wilderness wandering he endured with the Israelites.
- > In his only psalm, what attitude did Moses have toward time? Do you think his situation influenced his attitude? What influences your attitude toward time?
- > Last week, we learned that everything comes from God. Does this include time? Why do we have a tendency to think our time is ours to do with what we want?
- > Moses indicated that people in his day had about the same lifespan as we do today (men average about 75 years, women average about 80 years). **[Slide 7]**
- > Does this seem like a long time to you?
- > God gives each of us 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for as long as He determines we will live. If He gives our time to us, does that mean He should determine how we use our time?
- > Does God really care about what you do with your time? Explain.
- > Moses specifically made this request of God: “Teach us to number our days carefully so that we may develop wisdom in our hearts.” **[Slide 8]**
- > What do you think Moses meant? How does making good use of your time indicate a level of wisdom?
- > How do you develop the wisdom to know how to use your time carefully? How can you use your time to develop wisdom?
- > Because our time on earth is limited, time is something that should be treasured. Does the way you use your time indicate you treasure the time God has given you? How can someone treasure their time?

**Option:** Provide paper and pens. Instruct students to draw a timeline of their life from birth to today, recording highlights along the way. In what ways have you treasured the time you have already spent on the earth? Guide students to extend their timelines to 75 years old and to record what they think might occur in their life if they lived that long. If you knew in advance exactly how much time God has given you to live, would you be inclined to treasure your time? Why or why not? Would you use your time differently? Why or why not?

**Option:** Play the song “Live Like We’re Dying” by Kris Allen (Kris Allen, Jive Records, 2009). What is the main message in this song? What does it mean to you to live like you are dying?

### B. Invest it. **[Slide 9]**

- > If I give you \$100 and you spend it all on whatever you want, can you ever get that money back? If I give you \$100 and you invest it, will you end up with more money than you started? How does this concept about money apply to the way you invest your time? Can time be invested?
- > Read Ephesians 5:15-17. **[Slide 10]**
- > The Book of Ephesians was written by the apostle Paul who, after he became a Christian, invested his

time on earth in things of eternal significance such as witnessing, serving others, starting churches, and writing books of the Bible—all things that honored God.

- > In what ways is God still giving the apostle Paul a return on his investment? Do you think in 2000 years people could still be affected by the way you used your time on earth? Why or why not?
- > Both Moses and Paul indicated that wise people pay careful attention to the way they use their time.
- > What do you believe is a wise investment of your time? What will be the return on your investment?
- > How can you know what God's will is concerning the way you use your time?

**Option:** Call on volunteers to describe specific activities that take up a large part of their time on a regular basis. How could you use the time spent in this activity as an investment for the kingdom of God? For example: A student spends two hours every day after school at soccer practice. How could this student turn those two hours into something of eternal significance? A student spends two hours every day surfing the Internet and checking into Facebook. How could this student turn those two hours into something of eternal significance?

### **WRAP IT UP**

- > Our time on earth is limited and we are to use it wisely, not living for the moment, but with eternity in mind. Each of us has 168 hours of time each week. **[Slide 11]**
- > What are some of the ways you have used your 168 hours in this past week?
- > Do you think you are currently using your 168 hours wisely?
- > We have to continually evaluate the way we treasure and invest our time so we can maintain the right balance through the different activities in which God wants us to be involved.

**Option:** Give each student a small pad of paper, a pen, and three colored markers. Tell students that these are their "Time Journals." With the journal, provide these instructions: Use this journal to record the ways you use your time for one week. At the end of the week, circle in one color of marker any time you feel you treasured. In a second color, circle time you believe you invested for God. In a third color, underline time you wasted. Evaluate your week's worth of time and answer these questions: How did I treasure my time this week? How did I invest my time this week? How did I waste my time this week? What are some changes I need to make in my weekly schedule? Now that I have focused on the way I use my time, what are three specific things I want to change so that I will make better use of my time?

**Option:** Give each student a sheet of tiny stickers. Instruct students to place a sticker on any time keeping devices they use in their lives on a regular basis: watch, cell phone, alarm clock, and so on. Challenge students to use these stickers as reminders to make good use of their time.

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# KNOWN

## Resource Management Session 3—I Can't Afford It

### The Question

How can I give when I don't have much?

### The Point

Giving is not based on what you can afford.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8:1-9

### OPENING

> **Give It Now:** Before the session, ask church staff about a specific need in your church. Present this need to students and then think of specific ways they can meet the need at this moment based on what they have with them. Since they will not be prepared, they will have to be creative and will need encouragement to see that it is not the amount of what they give that matters, but the willingness to give what they have. Ensure students you will take what they have given and apply it to the need presented.

**Option:** Obtain a large container of Legos<sup>®</sup>. As students arrive, give each a different number of Legos needed to cooperatively build a specific structure. Show students a picture of the structure they are to build. Do not tell them that every piece distributed will be needed to complete the structure. Inform students that if anyone has any Legos left, you will trade each Lego for a piece of candy. Allow students to work. After about five minutes, ask: How did it feel if you had less Legos than someone else? Did you wonder why you didn't each have the same amount? Did each individual Lego matter? Did you hold back on giving your Legos? How did it feel to sacrifice your Legos to finish the activity? How does this relate to God's desire for us to give?

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Little Is Much* by Downhere (Wide-eyed & Mystified, Centricity Records, 2006)

*Know My Heart* by Sara Groves (Conversations, INO Records, 2005)

*Legacy* by Nichole Nordeman (Woven and Spun, Sparrow Records, 2002)

*Yours* by Steven Curtis Chapman (This Moment, Sparrow Records, 2007)

*And That My Soul Knows Very Well* by Hillsong (Shout To the Lord: Platinum Collection, Sony, 2000)

*Breathing the Breath* by Matt Redman (Facedown, Sixstepsrecords, 2004)

### PLAYLIST IDEAS

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> "Eternal Rewards" BlueFish TV

Use this video clip during Wrap It Up to emphasize all the ways our money can minister to others and reap eternal rewards.

### REVIEW

The third session Bible study identifies tithing as obedient giving which God blesses. This midweek study will stress that giving is not based on what we can afford but on the example of Jesus Christ, and that giving should be viewed as a privilege.

### **DISCUSS THESE POINTS**

- > **Illustration:** In his book *Tortured for Christ*, Richard Wurmbrand wrote about the years he spent in Communist prisons. Wurmbrand was often tortured and nearly starved to death. But giving to others in Jesus' name was so much a part of his life that Wurmbrand regularly gave other prisoners his own food—even though he only received dirty soup every day and one slice of bread a week. **[Slide 4]**
- > How do you think Wurmbrand was able to continue to give generously to others even when he didn't have much? How do you think the other prisoners reacted when they received his gift?

### **A. Develop a joyful perspective. [Slide 5]**

- > Why do we assume we need to have a lot of money or resources before we can give to others?
- > Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-2. **[Slide 6]**
- > The believers in Macedonia were poor, yet they gave generously and willingly to poverty-stricken believers in Jerusalem. **[Slide 7]**
- > If people are in "deep poverty" then how can they be described as people who gave from the "wealth of their generosity"?
- > The Macedonians gave with joy in the midst of their own poverty and afflictions. Paul, the writer of 2 Corinthians, attributed this spirit of joyful giving to the grace of God.
- > How does God's grace affect a believer's attitude toward giving?
- > The word "grace" is used throughout the Scripture studied today. Why is God's grace toward us an integral part of our giving to others? Discuss how this equation works from God to us and then from us to others: Grace = Generosity. **[Slide 8]**
- > What was the Macedonians' source of joy?
- > Why does giving produce joy in the giver? Is the joy derived from the amount given or from the act of giving? Can you describe a time when the act of giving brought you joy?

**Option:** Discuss with students that when we think of giving, we tend to think of money first. Create a list of other ways students can give besides money. Remind students that the source for everything on the list is God. Would anything on this list be harder for you to give than money? Why would it be difficult for you to give some things on this list? Which items would bring you the most joy to give?

**Option:** Show the clip from *The Apostle* (Universal Studios, 2009) where the preacher is discussing all the ways to praise God, and to praise Him joyfully. The clip is available at WingClips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/the-apostle/praise-him>. The preacher mentions tithing at the very beginning. How can you joyfully give to the Lord, regardless of how much you have? Are you joyful when you give to the church? Why or why not?

### **B. See giving as a privilege. [Slide 9]**

- > What is a recent act of giving you believe God prompted you to do? Would God have made this need apparent to you if He didn't want you to do something about it?
- > Through this unit of study, we've learned that everything we have is God's and that He has given to us so we can give to others.
- > Read 2 Corinthians 8:3-7. **[Slide 10]**
- > The Macedonians not only gave beyond what they seemed able to give, they actually pleaded for the privilege of being allowed to give.
- > Discuss this definition: Privilege—A special advantage, immunity, permission, right, or benefit granted to or enjoyed by an individual, class, or caste; Such an advantage, immunity, or right held as a prerogative of status or rank, and exercised to the exclusion or detriment of others; The principle of granting and maintaining a special right or immunity. (*thefreedictionary.com*) **[Slide 11]**
- > How can these definitions be applied to giving to the Lord? Why is giving a privilege?
- > How could they give when they didn't have much to give? Does God expect the same from you?
- > Is giving based on what you can afford to give? Why or why not? What do you think would currently be

beyond your ability to give?

- > Why are we so focused on the amount of what we give rather than on the privilege of giving?
- > Do you see giving as a part of God's will for your life? How can knowing it is His will for you help you see giving as a privilege rather than an obligation?

### **C. Follow the example of Jesus. [Slide 12]**

> Read 2 Corinthians 8:8-9. [Slide 13]

> Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to the believers in the Corinthian church. In this letter, he wrote about the generosity of believers in Macedonia. Rather than commanding the Corinthians to give, Paul hoped the example of the Macedonians would inspire them to generosity.

> Does the example of the Macedonians inspire you to give? Are there people in your life today who inspire you to give? Do you believe these people give because they can afford it or because they understand that giving is a way to demonstrate genuine love? Why is the motivation behind why we give more important than what we actually give?

> Paul also used the example of Jesus to inspire the Corinthians to give. [Slide 14]

> How could the Son of God be described as becoming "poor" when everything in heaven and on earth belongs to Him? What kind of riches did Jesus give up to come to earth? What do you believe was Jesus' motivation for such sacrificial giving? How does His poverty in turn make us rich?

> If we are to follow the example of Jesus in our giving, how much might we be required to give?

### **WRAP IT UP**

> The amount you give actually means very little; the attitude with which you give it means everything. Seeing giving—whatever it may be—as a joyful privilege that demonstrates the love of Christ is the right motivation for giving.

> Challenge students to look for a "Macedonia Moment" during the next week. Describe this as a time when they become aware that God has presented them with a need and they realize they can give in some way to this need. Remind them that it will not be the amount they give that will matter but that they are giving from what God has given to them. Encourage them to text, email, or Facebook you during the week to tell you about what God allowed them to give.

**Option:** Before the session, do some research about a need in your community or a mission project in which students could become involved. Present the need to your students and ask them to consider how, as a group, they could contribute to this need. Plan a specific day and time for your students to participate together in meeting this need. Help students to see that it will be a privilege for them to be a part of giving to this need—no matter how large or small their contribution.

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# KNOWN

## Resource Management Session 4—A Ball and Chain

### The Question

What's wrong with debt?

### The Point

Debt distracts and encumbers you.

Scripture: Proverbs 22:7; Philippians 4:19; Deuteronomy 28:12; Luke 16:10-13

### OPENING

> **Pay Now or Pay Later:** Create a game with limited amount of play money but plenty of play credit cards. Use images from magazines and the Internet to prepare a “store” at which students can buy items the average teenager desires to own, or display some physical examples of items such as iPod, cell phone, computer, food items, and so on. Most of the items should cost more than students receive in play money. To create a more realistic environment, give students varying amounts of money so that not everyone has the same amount of cash. (Suggested maximum for this experience would be \$50 cash with the majority of the items with price tags of \$50 and above.) Have a limited number of the best items so students will be tempted to make impulse purchases. Tell students they can borrow money from your designated banker or they can buy on their credit cards. Each time students buy on credit give them something heavy to carry. Instruct the banker to periodically call for payment of all debts. If students cannot pay their debt with cash, give them additional heavy items to carry. Discuss how real debt can weigh a person down.

**Option:** In advance of the session, request that leaders collect credit card advertisements and offers they receive in the mail (or, print ads from credit card company websites). Present these to students and read various ways credit card companies entice people to use credit and how easy it can be to go into debt. Discuss the struggles buying items on credit can cause in people's lives. When students comment that you can get “free stuff” by points from purchases (such as free airline tickets on Southwest Airlines with their credit card), read the fine print and determine how much you would have to spend to actually earn the “free” stuff. Is it really free if you have to spend that much to “earn” it? Why or why not?

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Dear Money* by Josh Wilson (Trying To Fit the Ocean in a Cup, Sparrow, 2008)

*My Help Comes From the Lord* by The Museum (Let Love Win, BEC Recordings, 2010)

*You're All I Need* by Planetshakers (Worship Him, Planetshakers Ministries International, Inc., 2011)

*Yours* by Steven Curtis Chapman (This Moment, Sparrow Records, 2007)

*And That My Soul Knows Very Well* by Hillsong (Shout to the Lord: Platinum Collection, Sony, 2000)

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> "Building in Financial Trust" BlueFish TV

(Use this video clip to introduce the session to highlight the dangerous trap of debt.)

## REVIEW

The fourth Bible study session challenges us to have an attitude of contentment toward our money and our stuff. This midweek study will help us recognize debt as a distraction and a hindrance in the life of a believer.

## DISCUSS THESE POINTS

> **Illustration:** Average Americans have over \$10,000 in credit card debt. The average interest rate is over 13 percent. Typically, the minimum payment on a credit card is two percent of the balance. In an article on About.com, it states, "If you owe \$2,000 or more, and you only pay the minimum balance of 2% each month, it will take you approximately 30 years to pay off your balance even if you never charge another penny." **[Slide 4]**

> When you hear financial numbers presented like that, how does it make you feel about incurring debt?  
> Are you concerned about being in debt or about going into debt? Do you think debt is a big deal or that it's just a part of life?

### A. Debt enslaves you. **[Slide 5]**

> Display an image of a person carrying a ball and chain. Discuss the image and how it might relate to debt. **[Slide 6]**

> In what ways can debt be equated to a ball and chain? If you do not think this is an accurate picture of debt, what other image would you suggest?

> What do you think a person who is wise with his or her money might say about debt?

> Read Proverbs 22:7. **[Slide 7]**

> The Book of Proverbs was written by King Solomon, who is considered the wisest man who ever lived. Solomon shared nuggets of wisdom that he had learned through a wide variety of life experiences (some of which can be found in the Book of Ecclesiastes). Since the biblical proverbs came from God, we know they are true and that they can be beneficial when applied to our everyday lives.

> In this verse, what piece of wisdom did Solomon give about debt?

> In Solomon's time, his words were true in a literal sense. Those who borrowed money put themselves under the power of the person who loaned them money.

> Can a person in America today become enslaved to a credit card or loan company? Why doesn't God want you to be enslaved to debt? How can you minimize your potential to be enslaved by debt?

**Option:** Invite someone who at one time had a great struggle with debt to talk to your students. Ask this person to share what the experience was like and the affect it had on his or her life. Encourage this individual to include the four points of this session in his or her testimonial.

### B. Debt causes you to distrust. **[Slide 8]**

> Even if it just was owing your parents or a friend money, have you ever been in debt? How did it feel?

> Without revealing private family matters, how has debt affected your family?

> Read Philippians 4:19. **[Slide 9]**

> There is a big difference between needs and wants. God promises to supply our needs. **[Slide 10]**

> Do you think people are more inclined to go into debt because they purchase what they need or what they want? How could being in debt cause you to distrust God? When you start to distrust God, what happens to your spiritual life?

> When we trust God to provide for our needs, we may not get everything we want, but we learn to accept what He provides for us.

> How could this attitude guard you from going into debt?

### C. Debt is not part of God's economy. **[Slide 11]**

> Read Deuteronomy 28:12. **[Slide 12]**

- > God's economy is the method God uses to manage and to distribute from His abundance to us. God has never needed to borrow anything from anyone. This is His preference for you, too.
- > How is it possible in our American economy to never borrow any money? Could your family have a house if your parents didn't borrow money? Is there a difference between house debt and credit card debt?
- > God's economy also involves the way we manage the resources He has given to us. **[Slide 13]**
- > Is it possible to pay cash for everything? Should you pay cash for everything?
- > Is all debt bad? Can you give an example of what you might consider to be good debt? What do you believe is God's desire for you as it pertains to debt?

#### **D. Debt hinders your witness/ministry. [Slide 14]**

- > Is there someone right now who owes you money? How do you feel when this person spends money around you?
- > As a Christian, can the way you handle your money set a good or bad example for others? Explain your answer.
- > Read Luke 16:10-13. **[Slide 15]**
- > Jesus talked more about money than He did heaven or hell.
- > Why do you think Jesus addressed the issue of money so frequently? What do you think is the point Jesus wanted to make about money? How does this relate to the issue of debt?
- > How could debt hinder your witness?
- > How could debt hinder your ministry and your ability to give to others?
- > Discuss reactions to this statement: Money has the power to take God's place in our lives—it can become our master.
- > How can money become a master in our lives?
- > You may need to ask yourself a few questions to see if money is beginning to take control of your life: **[Slide 16]**
  - Do you think and worry about money frequently?
  - Do you give up doing what you should do or would like to in order to make more money?
  - Is it hard for you to give your money away?
- > Are you in any kind of debt today? If so, how much debt do you currently have? What is the source of your debt?

#### **WRAP IT UP**

- > Lead students to share various ways they believe they wisely manage their money.
- > As a result of this session and the Life Principles, discuss the meaning of The Point for this session. **[Slide 17]**
- > Can a student of your age really becoming indebted? Can you make choices now that could possibly put you in a position to have or to not have debt later?
- > What are some practical steps you can take now to ensure you won't have to go into debt later? (For example: Work hard to make good grades in school so I can get a scholarship to college and won't have to incur as much student loan debt.)
- > What is one thing you want to do differently today so you can avoid debt in the future?

**Option:** One of the best ways to stay out of debt is to plan a budget—no matter how large or small the amount of money you have to work with. If you don't make yourself more aware of where your money is going, you'll end up wondering where it went. A good guideline on money is to begin by budgeting 10% to give to God through your church and 10% to savings. The remaining 80% (which still belongs to God) can then be divided out first to things you need and then to things you want.

- > How could following a budget help you better manage your money?
- > How could following a budget help you stay out of debt now and later?
- > Challenge students to take some time this week to prepare a personal budget and then to commit to live by it.

**Option:** Show the clip from *58: The Film* highlighting the terrible cycle of debt that many families in India suffer. The clip is available on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/58-the-film/cycle-of->

debt. Discuss reactions to the clip. How does this video clip resemble the ball and chain imagery from the beginning of the session?

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# KNOWN

## Media Mania Session 1—Grow Up

### The Question

How can I be more discerning about media?

### The Point

Spiritual growth equips you to discern the truth.

Scripture: Hebrews 5:11-14; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16

### OPENING

> **TV Trivia:** Divide the entire group into two teams for a game of word association where students will identify television shows they watched as children. As you call out hints, or show pictures on the screen, award points to the first team to correctly identify each show.

- PBS; super-dee-duper; purple dinosaur; Baby Bop (Barney and Friends)
- Tickety Tock; Steve; slippery soap; “mail time, mail’s here”; Joe, Magenta; Salt and Pepper; Thinking Chair (Blues Clues)
- Australia; colorful shirts; 4 guys; Captain Feathersword; Dorothy; Henry; Wags; dancing and singing (The Wiggles)
- 6-year-old turtle; afraid of thunder and lightning; likes math; pet goldfish; little sister Harriet; Badger; Mr. Mole’s Hardware Store; Bear; Nick Jr. (Franklin)
- Young cub; Grizzly; Mother and Father; Owl; Mitzi; “Hmmm....interesting;” Nick Jr. (Little Bear)
- Treelo, Tutter, Otter, Pip and Pop, Ojo, Shadow, Luna, The Goodbye Song, 6-foot tall singing, dancing mammal, Playhouse Disney (Bear in the Big Blue House)
- Sandy Cheeks; Eugene Krabs; pet snail; Patrick Star; Sheldon Plankton; Bikini Bottom; “Who lives in a pineapple under the sea...” (SpongeBob SquarePants)
- 7-year-old girl; map; loves baseball and soccer; backpack; Boots the monkey; “Swiper, no swiping!” (Dora the Explorer)
- Tiebreaker: Mr. Ron; Miss Natalie; Binyah Binyah Polliwog; “Come and let’s play together in the bright sunny weather, let’s all go to...” (Gullah Gullah Island)

Congratulate the winning team, then ask: Would it be weird if you had a friend who still liked to watch these shows regularly? Why? What we watch on TV usually changes as we grow up. Should there also be a parallel between a person’s spiritual growth and the things they watch or listen to? Explain.

**Option:** Identify a popular television show (or multiple shows) and have an open debate on whether or not it’s okay for a Christian teenager to watch it. Allow all responses for several minutes. Then identify a popular song with an unbiblical worldview or message and invite the same debate.

**Option:** Show the clip from *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (Universal Studios, 2003) where Cindy asks the Grinch, “What is Christmas really about?” You can find the clip on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/how-the-grinch-stole-christmas/what-is-christmas-really-about>. Discuss how, if we are not careful and do not know the truth, we can easily be led astray by attractive-sounding deception from media.

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*My Savior Lives* by Desperation Band (Everyone Overcome, Sony Records, 2007)

*Search My Heart* by Hillsong United (Aftermath, Hillsong, 2011)

*Closer* by Shawn McDonald (Closer, Sparrow, 2011)

*I Am New* by Jason Gray (Everything Sad Is Coming Untrue, Centricity, 2010)

*Slow Fade* by Casting Crowns (The Altar and the Door, Reunion Records, 2007)  
*Give Me Your Eyes* by Brandon Heath (What If We, Reunion Records, 2008)

### PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))  
*American Dream* by Dominic Balli (American Dream, CSD, 2011)  
*Monster* by Skillet (Awake, Atlantic Records, 2009)  
*Hold Me* by Jamie Grace (One Song At a Time, Gotee Records, 2011)  
*O This God* by Matt Redman (10,000 Reasons, Sparrow Records, 2011)  
*Killa* by Lecrae (Rehab, Reach Records, 2010)

### VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))  
Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.  
> "Slice of Life: Money for Movies" BlueFish TV  
Use this video clip to introduce the session after asking The Question for this session.

### REVIEW

The first session Bible study identifies the danger in media. The world is full of deceptive messages. This midweek study will challenge students to combat media's dangers with the discernment that comes from spiritual growth.

### DISCUSS THESE POINTS

- > **Illustration:** Share a personal story about a time you felt awkward or embarrassed watching a movie, television show, or listening to a song on the radio because it contained inappropriate material. Include details to help students understand why you were embarrassed, who you were with, and what that experience taught you. Allow volunteers to share similar experiences.
- > We are not helpless when it comes to media. We can and should make choices that honor God, but in order to do that well, we need to grow up in our faith.
- > Point out The Question for this session. Discuss what it means to be discerning.
- > Discerning: Exhibiting keen insight and good judgment; perceptive. ([thefreedictionary.com](http://thefreedictionary.com)) **[Slide 4]**

#### A. Grow spiritually. **[Slide 5]**

- > Read Hebrews 5:11-14. **[Slide 6]**
- > Discuss the writer's tone. Why was he annoyed with the Hebrew believers? From the passage, what's the difference between an immature Christian and one who is growing in maturity? From the passage, how can we grow spiritually? **[Slide 7]**
- > **Point:** The Hebrew Christians should have been ready to teach others, but they were still struggling to apply even the basics of their faith. They lacked discernment, or being able to distinguish "between good and evil," which is a necessary part of spiritual growth.
- > **Illustration:** Display jars of baby food and a meal from Subway or another fast food restaurant. Lead students to discuss why babies must eat baby food. A baby wouldn't know what to do with the Subway meal and it could be dangerous if put in his or her mouth. Take a bite of the sandwich and explain that teenagers, however, are ready for solid food. What God wants you to know about media is like the sandwich. Media can be dangerous, and you need to know what to do with it. That's only possible if you choose to move beyond the basics and pursue spiritual growth.
- > When it comes to media, how can a person know if he or she is a spiritual infant or growing toward maturity?
- > How can spiritual growth help you become more discerning about your media choices?

#### B. Be transformed. **[Slide 8]**

- > Share the following quote by MTV founder and chairman Robert Pittman: "At MTV we don't shoot for the 14 year olds, we own them." **[Slide 9]**

- > The world will never ever invite you to stand out from the crowd. The world wants you to be just like everyone else.
- > Read Romans 12:1-2. **[Slide 10]**
- > What do these verses mean to you? What are you instructed to do in these verses?
- > Animal sacrifices were a big part of Old Testament worship. But in God's mercy, He sent His Son, Jesus, as the perfect sacrifice, and He died once for all. Worship is so much more than what we do on Sunday mornings or Wednesday nights. God wants us to offer our lives, daily setting aside our own desires and agenda to follow Him.
- > How does Paul define worship? In regard to your media choices, what do you think that means?
- > From verse 2, what are you going to have to do to really worship God? How do you "renew your mind"? **[Slide 11]**
- > What are some ways you can renew your mind? Why do you need to renew your mind?
- > To follow Christ, you're going to have to be different from other people in your school. The only one who should "own" you is Jesus Christ.
- > Paul talks about being "transformed" in these verses? What does it mean to be transformed?
- > Share this definition and discuss the meaning. Transformed: to change markedly the appearance or form of; to change the nature, function, or condition of. (*thefreedictionary.com*) **[Slide 12]**
- > What does it take for someone to be transformed?
- > Note that being transformed begins the moment you place your trust in Jesus and decide to follow Him. Use these verses as a springboard to present the plan of salvation to students who do not know Christ as Savior and Lord. Use the KNOWN plan of salvation from the inside-back cover of the KNOWN Leader Guide. **[Slide 13]**

### **C. Listen to the Spirit. [Slide 14]**

- > Who helps you make decisions about media? A parent? Your friends? When do you think it should become your responsibility to make those decisions on your own? How will you do it?
- > Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-16. **[Slides 15-17]**
- > Why has God given His Spirit to believers? As you become more discerning about media, how will unbelievers likely respond?
- > It is impossible for anyone to fully understand God (Rom. 11:34), but believers have insight into God's thoughts and plans that unbelievers do not. They will think your decision to honor Christ by avoiding certain media is unnecessary and foolish.
- > What does it mean to have the mind of Christ? How can the mind of Christ help you make wise media choices?
- > How does it make you feel to know that, as a believer, you have "the mind of Christ"? Do you feel like that's true about you? If not, what do you need to do?

**Option:** Show the scene "Whisper" from *Smallville*, Season 3, Episode 10 (Warner Home Video, 2004). This clip is available for \$1.99 on amazon.com instant video. In the scene, Clark has lost his sight but has developed super hearing. He turns on the barn equipment in order to practice focusing on his newfound ability to hear. Relate the noises of the farm equipment to all the media that we are bombarded with daily. Relate Clark's dad's whisper to the Spirit of God, revealing to us how God wants us to respond to those worldly "noises."

**Option:** Show the clip from *Fireproof* (Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2009) where Caleb smashes his computer. The clip is available on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/fireproof/no-more-addictions>. Comment that Caleb felt very strongly about smashing his computer because it was the outlet of his pornographic addictions. (You might want to suggest that this is not an all-out endorsement to smash our computers or televisions.) Discuss reactions to the clip. Why is it important to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in your media choices?

### **WRAP IT UP**

- > Review the three main points of today's session. **[Slide 18]**
- > Direct students in small groups to discuss the following questions: **[Slide 19]**
  - Some teenagers think that spiritual growth is something they can put off until they are adults.

- What's wrong with that way of thinking?
- What media choices do you struggle with the most, and why: television, movies, video games, music, Internet, or books and magazines?
  - What are some practical things you can do right now to be more discerning about media?
- > Direct small groups to pray together and to commit to pray for one another throughout this unit of study.

**Option:** Show websites such as Focus On the Family's [www.pluggedin.com](http://www.pluggedin.com) and [www.cpyu.org](http://www.cpyu.org). Navigate around the sites to show students how to use the movie, television, music, and video game reviews, as well as other media information that will equip them to discern the truth.

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# KNOWN

## Media Mania Session 2—Watch Out

### The Question

How can media negatively affect me?

### The Point

Media can undermine the truth of God.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 11:3; Hebrews 3:12-13; 1 Corinthians 8:7-13

### OPENING

> **Continuum Choices:** Use a piece of string, masking tape, or rope to mark a continuum from wall to wall across the room, either on the floor or at a waist-high level. On one wall, attach a sign marked “Bad for Me.” On the opposite wall and at the other end of the continuum, attach a sign marked “Good for Me.” In the middle of the line, attach a sign marked “Depends.” Call out the following media sources and direct students to move and stand somewhere along the continuum to indicate how they feel about each media choice: Disney Channel; Eminem lyrics; Nick Jr.; Christian rap; Glee; R-rated movies; PG-13 movies; Facebook; YouTube; Internet porn; Seventeen Magazine; MTV. Add other examples based on the choices your students typically make. As students indicate their choices, call for volunteers to share why they made their decisions, without adding any commentary of your own. After all the choices have been made, ask: Why do you think we have different ideas about the positive and negative effects of media?

**Option:** Make the statement “Most people spend more than half their day consuming media” and show the graphic “The Evolution of Media Consumption” [<http://www.frankwbaker.com/mediause.htm>]. Then lead students to calculate their own daily amount of media consumption based on the number of hours they spend daily engaged in the same activities listed on the graphic. What’s good about this fact? What’s potentially bad?

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Slow Fade* by Casting Crowns (The Altar and the Door, Reunion, 2007)

*With Everything* by Hillsong United (This Is Our God, Hillsong, 2010)

*I Refuse* by Josh Wilson (See You, Chordant, 2011)

*My Savior Lives* by Desperation Band (Everyone Overcome, Sony Records, 2007)

*I Am New* by Jason Gray (Everything Sad Is Coming Untrue, Centricity, 2010)

*Give Me Your Eyes* by Brandon Heath (What If We, Reunion Records, 2008)

### PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

*American Dream* by Dominic Balli (American Dream, CSD, 2011)

*Monster* by Skillet (Awake, Atlantic Records, 2009)

*Hold Me* by Jamie Grace (One Song At a Time, Gotee Records, 2011)

*O This God* by Matt Redman (10,000 Reasons, Sparrow Records, 2011)

*Killa* by Lecrae (Rehab, Reach Records, 2010)

### VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.

> “Truth vs. Deception” Bluefish TV

Use this video clip to introduce the session then read aloud The Question and The Point.

## REVIEW

The second session Bible study explores ways that media can be used for good and to tell God's story. This midweek study notes the negative effects of media and will help students understand that Satan's desire is to use media to deceive.

## DISCUSS THESE POINTS

> **Illustration:** When did you stop believing in Santa Claus? How did you learn the truth? Tell about a lie your parents told you when you were a child or invite students to share some of their own (Easter bunny, tooth fairy, eating onions will grow hair on your chest, bread crust will give you curly hair). Those "lies" are mostly just for fun, and we grow out of those beliefs as we get older. Media's lies, however, are dangerous and can affect our relationship with God.

### A. We believe the lies. [Slide 4]

> Remind students that God wants to use media to tell His story. Satan, however, wants to use media to accomplish his purposes in the world.

> Read 2 Corinthians 11:3. [Slide 5]

> In this verse, what was Paul's fear? Why would he be concerned about that?

> Paul was addressing Christians in Corinth about false teaching. They had embraced the gospel message, but then other teachers had come after him to tell them things that were unbiblical. He was afraid that they would abandon the truth of the gospel for the lies of worldly philosophies. [Slide 6]

> We can compare the messages of media and culture to the false teachings that the Corinthians were bombarded with. Imagine that Paul is writing these words to this youth group about media. Do you think he would be overreacting? Why or why not? Would he see evidence of a pure devotion for Christ in our group? What about in your personal life?

> Eve was in the garden of Eden, a place of perfect communion with God, when her mind was seduced from a complete and pure devotion to Christ. How hard is it for you, then, to stay close to God if you are constantly bombarded by media that is against the truth in His Word?

> Lead students to identify some of the lies that are prevalent in media today. Walk along the continuum from the introductory activity. According to this verse, where should I stand on the continuum for any song, movie, television show, magazine, website, or video game that is contrary to biblical teaching? Why?

**Option:** To replace the illustration before hitting this point, invite students to agree or disagree whether the following statements are found in Scripture:

- If you love someone, set them free. If they come back, they're yours; if they don't, they never were.
- Be true to yourself.
- God helps those who help themselves.
- Cleanliness is next to godliness.
- Money is the root of all evil.

These statements are not found in the Bible, though very similar ideas are. For example, the Bible states that the love of money is the root of all evil—not money itself. Why do you think so many people are prone to believe whatever they hear, especially if it sounds biblical? Are you prone to believe what you hear?

### B. We become desensitized to sin. [Slide 7]

> What's wrong with this statement: What I watch and listen to doesn't bother me or affect me.

> If we think it's no big deal, that we can watch and listen to whatever we want and not be in any danger, then we've already been deceived. [Slide 8]

> Your nose will pick up a strong scent, but after awhile you just get used to it and you don't notice it anymore. That's because you're still picking up the scent, but eventually your brain stops sending you the message that something stinks. Sin works the same way when we allow ourselves to be exposed to it

over and over again.

> Read Hebrews 3:12-13. **[Slide 9]**

> What warning do these verses give? What instruction?

> The sense of smell is also the strongest sense for memory recall. Sometimes you walk into a room and smell an odor and automatically know what it is. In a similar way, we can train ourselves to pick up on the lies that media throws at us. If we encourage each other and hold one another accountable, we can avoid becoming desensitized to sin.

> What does “desensitized to sin” mean to you? In your opinion, how does that happen?

> In what ways do you think you may have become desensitized to sin already? What can you do about it?

**Option:** Before students enter the room, place a smelly bag of garbage in the corner (or use a very strong scent of a plug-in air freshener). When you get to this point, use the smelly garbage to help illustrate being sensitive or insensitive to sin.

### **C. We cause others to stumble. [Slide 10]**

> What would you think of me if you saw me at the movie \_\_\_\_\_ (name a current film that is rated R)? Would it surprise you if you got in my car and \_\_\_\_\_ (name a current song that students listen to that has profane or otherwise objectionable lyrics) was in the CD player? Why? What else would surprise you if you came to my house and flipped through my TV channels or movies?

> Read 1 Corinthians 8:7-13. **[Slides 11-12]**

> Some of the believers in Corinth didn't think it was a big deal to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols. They knew the idols were useless, fake, pagan rituals that meant nothing. Other believers were very offended by meat that had been sacrificed to idols and would not eat it.

> Relate this passage to media. In your own words, what is Paul saying to us?

> What responsibility do you have to other Christians in regard to your media choices? Why? Do you think that's fair? Explain. **[Slide 13]**

### **WRAP IT UP**

> Remove the signs on the continuum and attach new ones with these labels: “No Danger,” “Medium Danger,” and “Great Danger.” Based on your current media choices, how much danger is your relationship with God in based on your media choices? Direct students to stand along the continuum to mark their personal responses. (Or, to privately consider where they would stand.)

> Direct students to privately identify at least one thing they listen to, watch, read, or do on the Internet that they know displeases God. As students continue standing in the spots they have chosen, pray over the entire group. Thank God for His forgiveness and grace, and invite Him to continue speaking to students about those issues. Ask God to give students the courage and strength they need to confront the dangers of media in their lives and move closer to Him.

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# KNOWN

## Media Mania Session 3—Playlist Analysis

### The Question

Why should I be careful about the music I listen to?

### The Point

Music can be a powerful influence in your life.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:17-23; Colossians 3:16-17

### OPENING

> **Don't Forget the Lyrics:** Play short segments of popular songs with which students would be familiar (check the current Billboard Top 40 list) stopping the song mid-lyric or mid-chorus. Instruct students to work together in small groups to identify and list the next five words of each song you play. Award points for each correct answer. Play several rounds using different songs. Award the winning team a small prize. After the game, point out that the music has had influence on students because the words are embedded in their minds and were easily retrieved from their brains. Play brief clips from several worship songs or contemporary Christian songs at the top of the current charts and do the same thing. Discuss any difference between the two different sets of music.

**Option:** To illustrate the power of lyrics being embedded in our minds, show the YouTube viral "Single Ladies Devastation" [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sb9eL3ejXmE>].

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Say, Say* by Kristian Stanfill (Mountains Move, Sixstepsrecords, 2011)  
*Reaching for You* by Lincoln Brewster (Reaching for You, Integrity, 2010)  
*Rise and Sing* by Fee (Hope Rising, Sony, 2009)  
*Sing Sing Sing* by Chris Tomlin (Hello Love, Six Steps Records, 2008)  
*My Savior Lives* by Desperation Band (Everyone Overcome, Sony Records, 2007)  
*How Can I Keep from Singing* by Chris Tomlin (See the Morning, Six Steps Records, 2006)

### PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))  
*American Dream* by Dominic Balli (American Dream, CSD, 2011)  
*Monster* by Skillet (Awake, Atlantic Records, 2009)  
*Hold Me* by Jamie Grace (One Song At a Time, Gotee Records, 2011)  
*O This God* by Matt Redman (10,000 Reasons, Sparrow Records, 2011)  
*Killa* by Lecrae (Rehab, Reach Records, 2010)

### VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))  
Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.

> "Toby Mac: Being Authentic" Bluefish TV

Use this video clip during Life Principle B to challenge students to evaluate every area of their lives, including their music, to determine if they are honoring God with their choices.

### REVIEW

The third session Bible study examines students' attitudes and behaviors in regard to social media and their reflection of Christ online. This midweek study will explore the importance of careful music choices.

### **DISCUSS THESE POINTS**

- > **Illustration:** The day Lady Gaga's single "Born This Way" was released, one fan echoed what millions of others were talking about when she wrote on a message board: *OH MY GAGA. THIS SONG IS ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE! SHE IS FEARLESS. THIS IS THE ANTHEM OF A GENERATION. WE WERE BORN THIS WAY BABY!!!!!!* Scottish politician Andrew Fletcher understood this phenomenon centuries ago when he said, "Let me write the songs of a nation. I don't care who writes its laws."
- > Do you agree or disagree that music can be even more influential than politics? Explain.
- > How much time would you say you spend each day listening to music? What is your primary choice when it comes to a style of music (country, Christian, hip-hop, rock, pop, and so on)?
- > If Christian music is not your primary style of music, why not? What are your feelings about Christian music in general?
- > Write The Question for this session on the board.

### **A. Realize music has influence. [Slide 4]**

- > Read 1 Samuel 16:17-23. [Slides 5-6]
- > What was the main reason David was given his new position serving in the king's court?
- > God had already chosen David to replace Saul as king (1 Sam. 16:12). Saul did not know this when he chose David to enter his service. He only knew that he liked to listen to David's music. God used David's musical talents to give David a position of influence over the most powerful man in the land.
- > What happened whenever Saul was in a bad mood? How did music help Saul? Can you relate? Explain.
- > What song do you like to listen to when you are down? sad? anxious? happy? trying to get pumped up? What does this tell you about the power of music to influence your life?
- > Besides having the power to change a mood, how do you think music influences people? [Slide 7]
- > Remind students about the good and bad effects of media from the previous two sessions. Lead students to relate what they learned in those sessions (review The Question, The Point, and the Life Principles for both sessions) to the power that music has in their lives. Point out that, as with David, God wants to use music to tell His story and to draw people to Himself.
- > What, then, do you think Satan wants to do with the musical talents God has given to the people He has created?
- > If it were only up to the songs that play through your speakers, whom are you allowing to influence you?

**Option:** Prior to this session, message students to bring their iPods and other music players to the session. Direct students to scroll through all the songs they have. Based on the music you have chosen for yourself, what would you name the "soundtrack of your life"? List answers on a large sheet of paper as they are named. If this is the soundtrack of your life, then what sort of influence do you have on the world?

**Option:** Show the clip from *Glory* (Sony Pictures, 1998) where the soldiers are preparing for a big battle the following day. As they sit around the campfire, they break into song. The song was a gospel song. The clip can be found on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/glory/oh-my-lord>. Why, on the eve of battle, would they sing a song of praise to God? From the clip, how did this song provide a sense of strength and peace for the soldiers? How did this music have influence on the men? Was this a song they just made up that night?

### **B. Your music should honor God. [Slide 8]**

- > Invite a volunteer to let you use his or her iPod or music player as an illustration. Only use a student with whom you have built a good relationship for this activity. Let this person know in advance that you will be reading aloud the songs he or she has downloaded. Read aloud the song titles found on the music player, pausing after each for the volunteer to express whether or not he or she would be embarrassed for us to listen to that song right now. For each yes, he or she should explain why. Or, using the current

Billboard Top 40 list, ask if students would be embarrassed if you played the music video for each song right now during this Bible study. Call for explanations of responses.

> Read Colossians 3:16-17. **[Slide 9]**

> Invite students to read verse 16 aloud in several different translations and paraphrases, including *The Message*. Then let them put the verse in their own words. **[Slide 10]**

> The early Christians did not have the New Testament or other Christian books to read and study. Instead, they memorized Old Testament passages and teachings and passed them from person to person. One of the ways they memorized and used these teachings from God was to put them into song. In fact, most of the psalms were actually songs used to worship and praise God.

> Refer back to the opening game, “Don’t Forget the Lyrics,” and the ease with which we remember song lyrics. Is it easier for you to memorize a song or a written paragraph? What does this tell you about the value of Christian music in your life?

> According to verse 17, what part of your life is supposed to represent Christ? How does this relate to your choices in music?

> Does that mean that anyone who listens to any kind of music that isn’t played on a Christian radio station or sold in Christian stores is sinning? If not, what does it mean?

> When it comes to the music you listen to, how are you doing at “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father”? Would God be honored with the lyrics of the songs you listen to the most? Why or why not?

> How can a foundation of listening to music that honors God impact the rest of your day? **[Slide 11]**

**Option:** Prior to today’s session, message students to bring their iPods and music players to the midweek event. In small groups, students should tally the number of songs they have on their music players that honor God against the number of songs they have downloaded that do not. Then, compile the numbers from each group and generate a group total for each category. Based on this, how are we doing at the command to “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father”?

**Option:** Show the clip from *I Can Do Bad All by Myself* (Lion’s Gate, 2010) where Wilma attempts to share her testimony through music in a club. The clip can be found on Wing Clips at:

<http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/i-can-do-bad-all-by-myself/sing-a-little-song>. Discuss how the emcee at the club drew a distinction between club music and church music. How can our music serve as a testimony for God and honor Him? How can the music you play in your car with your friends honor God and be a witness of your relationship with Him?

## WRAP IT UP

> Print the lyrics of some of the songs you used in the opening game of “Don’t Forget the Lyrics.” Invite students to apply the lessons they learned about being more discerning about media in the first midweek session to this lesson on music. In small groups, students should review the lyrics you have provided, according to the following questions: In what ways is this song trying to influence me? Does this music honor God? If my desire is to “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,” then should I listen to this song? Why or why not?

> Challenge students to evaluate the music they listen to in light Colossians 3:16-17.

> Are there songs you need to delete from your collection in order to honor Christ? Challenge students who brought their music players to do so now. Encourage students who did not to take time tonight at home to do the same, and then text you after they do.

> Thank God for the gift of music. Acknowledge the ways music touches our lives and influences us in positive ways. Invite God to continue to speak to students about being more discerning with the music they choose to pour into their hearts and minds.

> Play a song from “Playlist Ideas” as students dismiss.

**Option:** Encourage students to replace the songs they delete with songs that honor God. Share the comparison chart from Group [<http://www.ministryandmedia.com/CCMchart/default.htm>] (you might also consider printing the web site address on a small slip of paper so students can bookmark it on their home computers) or another website to help equip students in finding Christian music in the genres they enjoy. Suggest also Christian music stations such as [www.air1.com](http://www.air1.com), [www.ngenradio.com](http://www.ngenradio.com), [www.pandora.com](http://www.pandora.com),

and [www.rapfestradio.com](http://www.rapfestradio.com).

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LifeWay | Students

# KNOWN

## Media Mania Session 4—Gaming Guidelines

### The Question

What cautions should I have about video games?

### The Point

Don't let gaming consume you.

Scripture: Proverbs 18:1; 20:4; 12:11; 14:2

### OPENING

> **Top 10 List:** In small groups, students should create lists: "Top 10 Ways You Can Tell Someone Is Too Into Video Games." Encourage groups to have fun with the activity. Invite volunteers to share their lists when they are complete.

**Option:** Begin the session with a Public Service Announcement type of feel. Show the YouTube "Repetitive Stress Injuries in Children and Teenagers" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00AsptwoqZw>). Discuss reactions to the clip. Besides some of the things identified in this video, what are some other dangers related to excessive video game playing? Do you think all the concern about video game playing is overblown? Why or why not?

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Letting Go* by Matt Maher (Alive Again, Essential/BMG, 2009)

*My Savior Lives* by Desperation Band (Everyone Overcome, Sony Records, 2007)

*Search My Heart* by Hillsong United (Aftermath, Hillsong, 2011)

*Closer* by Shawn McDonald (Closer, Sparrow, 2011)

*I Am New* by Jason Gray (Everything Sad Is Coming Untrue, Centricity, 2010)

*Give Me Your Eyes* by Brandon Heath (What If We, Reunion Records, 2008)

### PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

*American Dream* by Dominic Balli (American Dream, CSD, 2011)

*Monster* by Skillet (Awake, Atlantic Records, 2009)

*Hold Me* by Jamie Grace (One Song At a Time, Gotee Records, 2011)

*O This God* by Matt Redman (10,000 Reasons, Sparrow Records, 2011)

*Killa* by Lecrae (Rehab, Reach Records, 2010)

### VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.

> "Video Game Priority" Bluefish TV

Use this video clip to introduce this session on guidelines to practice in regard to gaming.

### REVIEW

The fourth session Bible study explores biblical standards to guide the things we watch. This midweek study provides biblical guidelines that can apply to video gaming.

### DISCUSS THESE POINTS

- > **Illustration:** Guys and girls tend to view video games differently. You don't have to look farther than Facebook to see it. These are some real groups: Girls say PS3 has taken over our lives...we say "who cares?"; Dear Girls, if a guy pauses a video game just to text u back, marry him; Girls think giving birth is hard, try playing COD with a laggy connection; Girls who have no idea what guys are saying when they talk video game.
- > Guys complete a level of a video game like it's a life accomplishment. The reality, though, is that girls are just as prone to be consumed by gaming as guys. Raise your hand if you play video games (keep them raised). Raise your hand if you play games on your phone or music player. Raise your hand if you play games on Facebook. Raise your hand if you play other online games. Look around. All of us need some cautions when it comes to gaming.
- > Poll students to determine how much time they spend playing games on their phones? on a game system or computer?

#### **A. Don't become isolated. [Slide 4]**

- > Have you ever skipped a Bible study session or worship service (or come but not paid attention) because you were playing a video game? Have you ever told friends you couldn't do something so that you could stay home and finish a level on a game? Why do we get so involved in video games that we ignore real people? **[Slide 5]**
- > Read Proverbs 18:1. **[Slide 6]**
- > The Book of Proverbs is full of wise sayings for godly living. Most of those sayings were written by Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived. Much of Solomon's advice was directed at the young people of his day, like a father giving advice to his child. Obviously, Solomon did not have a PS3 or Xbox 360 to spend hours playing each day. Here, he wasn't talking about being isolated like when you're grounded, but about choosing to isolate yourself, like when you sit in front of a screen for hours.
- > How does the proverb describe the person who isolates himself or herself? **[Slide 7]**
- > What are some of your favorite games to play? Why do you like each game?
- > When can playing games such Angry Birds, Call of Duty, Farmville, and World of Warcraft be selfish and rebellion against good judgment?

#### **B. Don't be a slacker. [Slide 8]**

- > Direct students to calculate the time they have spent this week gaming, including any of the forms you have discussed in the previous illustration. Add the hours and find a cumulative total. Then compare this to the amount of time students studied.
- > Read Proverbs 20:4. **[Slide 9]**
- > Laziness is confronted in Proverbs numerous times. See also 19:15 (it brings one to ruin) and 19:24 (it is laughably absurd).
- > Slacker: a person who evades work or duty (*thefreedictionary.com*). **[Slide 10]**
- > When you spend excessive time playing video games, what work or duty are you evading? Have you ever had a parent ground you from playing video games because you were playing too long and not doing chores, homework, or other duties? Explain.
- > What arguments might a teenager have in response to the instruction to not be lazy by wasting time playing video games? (Example: What am I supposed to plant? I have nothing to do. I spend all day at school. I deserve it.)
- > What good things could you accomplish this week in the time you normally spend playing games?

**Option:** In groups, create and perform skits to illustrate this proverb in a contemporary setting.

#### **C. Don't lose sight of reality. [Slide 11]**

- > Have you ever known anyone who couldn't seem to talk about anything else besides their favorite video game? Have your thoughts ever been consumed by a game? If not, do you think it could ever happen to you? Why or why not? Have you ever known someone who lived life as if a part of a game?
- > Read Proverbs 12:11. **[Slide 12]**
- > What's the big deal about getting "lost" in a video game?
- > The proverb contrasts practical living with fantasy. You probably don't have to work the land and it's not likely that you're responsible for filling your refrigerator and pantry, but your reality can be affected in other important ways.

- > How have you seen video gaming cause a person to lose touch? **[Slide 13]**
- > In your opinion, how can video game playing lead someone to lose sight of reality?

**D. Don't compromise your integrity. [Slide 14]**

- > What are some rules your parents have set for you about gaming? Have you ever broken those rules?
- > What are some rules God might have related to gaming? Have you ever broken those? Explain.
- > Read Proverbs 14:2. **[Slide 15]**
- > What does the word "integrity" mean? What does it have to do with video games? **[Slide 16]**
- > Integrity means to be incorruptible, or to be a person who sticks to a firm standard of living, whether in public or in private. If you have to hide something or would be embarrassed about your gaming activities, it's likely that you've compromised your integrity.
- > What are some guidelines you could set in regard to gaming so that you don't compromise your integrity?

**Option:** Create a list of gaming guidelines in small groups that would keep you from compromising your integrity. Point out again, as with being discerning about all types of media, that spiritual growth and commitment to honoring God are necessary. As you get older, the more personal responsibility you must take over your gaming choices.

**WRAP IT UP**

- > Play a game of PacMan on the screen while you invite students to name some of their favorite all time games. The evolution of video games has brought with it some challenges that we didn't face back in the days of PacMan. Many of today's games glorify sin because of their content and purpose.
- > Write on a piece of paper any games you play that do not reflect a growing relationship with Christ. Remind the group of Colossians 3:17 from the previous session. Challenge students to get rid of all games that do not help them live out that verse.
- > Pray that students would continue to seek God in regard to media daily and to follow Him in obedience in whatever way He speaks to them.

**Option:** Groups create a PSA on video using the four points from today's session. Show the videos and give awards for creativity, biblical accuracy, and best and worst overall videos.

**Option:** Show the clip from *Soul Surfer* (Sony Pictures Entertainment, 2011) related to perspective. The clip can be found on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/soul-surfer/youth-group-lesson>. Discuss how this video clip can relate to the way we view video game playing. Challenge students to take a step back and evaluate the influence gaming may be having in their lives.

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# KNOWN

## Purity Matters Session 1—Pure and Simple

### The Question

How can I live a pure life?

### The Point

Choose to live a life that honors God.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:17-32

### OPENING

> **Label Check/Taste Test:** Purchase a variety of grocery items and conduct a product comparison taste test. Here are a few options:

Pure orange juice vs. orange flavored juice

Generic vanilla ice cream vs. Breyers or Blue Bell

You can do this as an upfront game with a few willing volunteers or as a group game if you are able to purchase enough. Before students arrive, set up tables with sample cups of the items you're comparing. Label one side Option A and the other Option B. Instruct students to taste the samples and then vote for which option they consider to be the purest. Display a prepared list of ingredients from both options (don't use the brand names or titles). Call for a couple of volunteers to read aloud the list of ingredients and allow students to vote on which list belongs with which product, Option A or Option B. Reveal the results. Explain that the purest products typically are the ones with the simplest list of ingredients. Often they contain the fewest number of actual ingredients and they are even the easiest to pronounce.

> **Point:** Purity is simple. It's impurity that complicates life. You may be diving into this series on the micro level, evaluating all the areas of your life that contain impurities (thoughts, media, relationships, ideas, vocabulary), wondering how in the world you're ever going to stop doing all the things you need to stop doing in order to be pure in every area of your life. Let's take a step back and look at this on the macro level. Valuing purity and living it out is really very simple. It's not about 116 choices of do's and don'ts. It's not about having or not having sex, using or not using profanity, watching or not watching movies with R ratings, or anything else like that. It's about choosing to live a life that honors God. When honoring God is your aim, you'll always know and be prepared to make the right choice.

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*One Pure and Holy Passion* by Candi Pearson (Passion: One Day Live, Sparrow, 2000)

*Holiness* by Sonicflood (Sonicflood, GoTee Records, 1999)

*From the Inside Out* by Hillsong United (United We Stand, Sony, 2006)

*Draw Me Close* by Vineyard (25 Top Vineyard Worship, Chordant, 2002)

*Marvelous Light* by Charlie Hall (Flying Into Darkenss, Sixstepsrecords, 2006)

*I Will Follow* by Chris Tomlin (And If Our God Is For Us, Sixstepsrecords, 2010)

### PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

*Strong Enough* by Matthew West (The Story of Your Life, Sparrow Records, 2010)

*Come As You Are* by Pocket Full of Rocks (Let It Rain, Word Music, 2011)

*Grace Found Me* by Rush of Fools (Grace Found Me, EOne, 2011)

*Daughter of Destiny* by Ginny Owens (Get In I'm Driving, EMI Gospel, 2011)

*Beautiful Things* by Gungor (Beautiful Things, Brash Music, 2010)

*Awakening* by Danen Kane (Love is Waiting, Danen Kane Music, 2011)

## VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.

> "SLAP" Bluefish TV

Use this humorous video clip to introduce the session after asking The Question for this session.

## REVIEW

The first session Bible study outlines the call to live a holy life of purity and the witness that is to others. This midweek session provides guidelines for living a pure life.

## DISCUSS THESE POINTS

> **Illustration:** Play a quick game to invite a student to the stage. Ask for the student whose birthday is the closest to today's date to join you up front. Tell them that you have a special (pre or post) birthday surprise for them. Reveal a large brownie or piece of chocolate cake and tell them that it's theirs to enjoy. Explain how good the recipe is. Tell the student that it was your grandmother's recipe and that you always loved her brownies/cake. Begin to explain that there is a secret ingredient that's really underutilized in cooking today. Begin reading the following list of ingredients:

- 3 Cups of Flour
- 3 Eggs
- 1 Cup of Cocoa
- 1 Cup of Sugar
- 2 Tablespoons of Vanilla
- 1 Teaspoon of Dog Poo
- ½ Cup of Butter
- 1 Tablespoon of Baking powder
- 1 Teaspoon of Baking soda
- ½ Teaspoon of Salt

> The students in the room will obviously react to the sixth ingredient. Play it up as if you don't understand their concern. Explain that there is only a teaspoon of the dog poo in the brownie mix and that it's cooked at 375 degrees for 35 minutes. There is no cause for concern, right? Ask the student on stage how he or she feels about the secret ingredient. After you've milked the illustration for all it's worth, assure the student that there is definitely no animal waste in the brownie mix. Give them the remainder of their birthday treat before they return to their seat.

> Can one tiny amount of something gross like dog poo really mess up an entire pan of yummy dessert? Of course. This is why we have to be concerned with purity. Just one awful ingredient can really mess up a great dessert—even if you think it is only a small amount.

> There is no room for any impurity in the recipe for the Christ follower.

> Display The Question for this session. **[Slide 4]**

> What can we do in order to live a pure life?

### **A. Don't live like the world. [Slide 5]**

> Read Ephesians 4:17-19. **[Slide 6]**

> What does the world expect from you? According to Trevor in *Pay It Forward* (Warner Home Video, 2000), the world doesn't expect anything from us. It certainly doesn't expect anything good from us. It does, however, expect us to live life our own way. It expects us to depart from God's Word and His will and live life any way we choose.

> How do you see the world steering your generation toward worldliness? **[Slide 7]**

> According to this passage, are promiscuity and the practice of impurity the reasons people are excluded from the life of God or the result of it?

> How can our understanding be darkened? What "understanding" do you think Paul means here?

> Sometimes the best examples in life are not the good ones we should follow but the bad ones we

should avoid. Here Paul spelled out for the believers in Ephesus the ways they should not continue living. That is the way of the world and it leads nowhere.

> **Point:** This passage contains a few words that mean more than what they appear. When Paul wrote “walk” he wasn’t talking about putting one foot in front of the other. He meant how you live your life. When we wrote “Gentiles” he wasn’t just referring to a people outside of Jewish racial heritage. Today we can interpret that as all people who are unbelievers. When he wrote “excluded from the life of God” he meant that they are separated spiritually from God and ignorant of His Word and His plan of salvation for them. They are “darkened” which means unaware or mistaken about God but willing to remain that way.

> In what ways do you see the world (especially media) promoting the things of verse 19?

**Option:** Read Romans 1:18-25. Have you ever learned something the wrong way? Maybe it was a word you learned to pronounce incorrectly or a game you learned to play by alternate rules. Give students a few moments to think about things they learned incorrectly and then allow for a few to share their ideas.

> Did you find that even after someone corrected your mistake, you still wanted to do it your way? This is the futility of the Gentiles (unbelievers in Christ) who, according to Romans 1:18-25, had truth revealed to them but rejected it.

**Option:** Show the clip from *Courageous* (Sony Home Entertainment, 2011) where Nathan and David talk about the dangers of falling into the practices of the world. You can find the clip on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/courageous/gun-range>. Discuss reactions to the clip. How does this clip fit with what we have read in Ephesians 4:17-19?

### **B. Live in your new life. [Slide 8]**

> You have probably heard someone describe having a new life in Christ. What does that mean to you? How does someone get a new life? If you have a new life, why would someone want to live their old life?

> Read Ephesians 4:20-24. **[Slide 9]**

> What metaphor was Paul alluding to when he said we took off our former way of life and put on the new self?

> How is changing our clothes like changing our lives in Christ?

> When you get dressed in the morning, what kinds of thought processes/choices do you go through? Is there a deliberate nature to getting dressed or do you just throw on the first thing you find or the same clothes you have worn every day for a week?

> The truth about Jesus leads to a life constantly renewed into Christ's likeness.

> Putting on Christ and the new life He offers is a daily, conscious choice to live for Christ.

> **Point:** This verse provides a great description of repentance. Repentance literally means to change your mind and, in the case of Christianity it means to change your mind about your sin. Repentance is turning from our sin toward Christ's forgiveness. There is no greater state of mind change than that of sin to salvation. **[Slide 10]**

**Option:** Create a list of things that have to be changed regularly. Here are a few to get you started and help steer ideas in this direction.

- Every day you change your clothes.
- Every 3000 miles you change your oil.
- Every few months you change your toothbrush.
- Twice a year you change the batteries in your smoke alarms.
- Every few minutes you change your mind about something.

> After you change the batteries in your alarms, do you go back and use those old batteries again? How about the toothbrush? Do you save the old one and use it to clean your teeth the next time? No. You might use that toothbrush to clean the tile grout in your bathroom, but you wouldn't ever put it in your mouth again. It's old and past its usefulness. Now you have a new toothbrush to use. Paul was explaining to the church that once they received new life in Christ they shouldn't go back to the old way of living.

### **C. Live to honor God. [Slide 11]**

> Read Ephesians 4:25-32. **[Slides 12-13]**

> In these verses Paul explained even further about the things that characterize the old way of life as well as a list of characteristics we are to take on instead. These are the characteristics that honor God. These

are the ways we should strive to live. It isn't enough to not steal. We should work hard so we'll have enough to share with others. It isn't enough not to use foul language. We should speak encouraging, beneficial words to others.

> Why isn't it enough for believers to just eliminate impurity from our lives? Why do we also have to focus on adding radical righteousness in its place?

> Create an on-stage chart to reveal the correlation between the old and new ways Paul developed in these verses. Invite students to volunteer for a turn to come up front and complete the clauses from these verses in their own words. Allow them also to offer an exchange for the sins that Paul doesn't provide a counter. What is the opposite of bitterness or malice? Give them a chance to use critical thinking.

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Quit lying.              | 1. Example: A student might write, "Instead tell the truth"                                 |
| 2. It's okay to be angry.   | 2. Example: A student might write, "As long as you don't sin" or "but don't go to bed mad." |
| 3. Don't steal.             | 3. ---  |
| 4. Don't use foul language. | 4. ---  |
| 5. Don't grieve the spirit. | 5. ---  |
| 6. Don't be bitter.         | 6. ---  |
| 7. Don't slander others.    | 7. ---  |
| 8. Don't be malicious.      | 8. ---  |

### WRAP IT UP

> The way to live a pure life is to choose the things that honor God. Fortunately for us, those things are fairly simple. They don't require an advanced degree in rocket science or even Christian theology. The recipe for a pure life is simply choosing to honor God.

> Honor means: To hold in respect; esteem. To show respect for. (*thefreedictionary.com*) **[Slide 14]**

> Based on this definition, what does The Point for this session mean to you? How can living a pure life honor God?

> Invite students to position themselves in a posture for prayer. Allow them to move around the room to distance themselves from friends and distractions. Perhaps they can find a place to kneel. Lead them through a prayer of repentance. Allow them an opportunity to express to God the old clothes of sin they desire to take off. Next, lead them through a prayer of commitment to put on new clothes of righteousness instead.

> If you have students who do not know Christ as Savior, explain that it is impossible to live a life that honors God if you do not have a personal relationship with Christ. Use the KNOWN plan of salvation from the inside-back cover of the KNOWN Leader Guide. **[Slide 15]**

**Option:** Print enough small post cards for each student to have one. Provide pens. On one side of the card print the word "impurity" and on the reverse side print the word "purity." Invite students to consider an area of their life where they remain consistently impure. Perhaps it's one of the struggles Paul mentioned (language, anger, lying, bitterness) or perhaps it's another area of their life. Instruct students to write that struggle on the "impurity" side of the card. On the reverse, ask them to write the act of righteousness they desire to live in its place. Finally, instruct them to draw an "X" through the impure living side and a circle around the purity side. Instruct them to place this card in their Bibles or somewhere they'll see it regularly this week. Ask them every time they see it to pray for the will to choose to honor God rather than succumb to the struggle.

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# KNOWN

## Purity Matters Session 2—Don't Give In

### The Question

How can I stay sexually pure?

### The Point

Guard your purity.

Scripture: Genesis 39:6b-12

### OPENING

> **On Guard:** This opening game requires a great deal of space. Divide students into four teams and place each team in a different corner of your room. Give each team an item to protect. Be as simple with the items or as creative as you want to be. Instruct students that their goal is to protect their item no matter what. Instruct them to all mix and mingle and move around the room. There are no boundaries. The only rule is no wrestling. Don't tell them that their objective is to take the items from the other groups. Only instruct them to protect their special item. Instinctively, students will decide on the objective of taking the other group's items and work diligently to devise a plan to do it. Set the time for two minutes and watch what happens. After two minutes, ask: What were your instructions for this game? What were the rules? Did I tell you that your objective was to take the other teams' items?

> The likelihood is that each group tried to protect their item while attempting to take the other groups' items. It's the nature of competition. In such a short amount of time, most groups will have been successful at keeping their items protected. Explain that the evil one has not assigned the world the task of taking your purity. Popular culture and popular media do not understand their jobs as being "purity snatchers." Movie makers and song writers don't set out to steal your virginity. But that is what is happening. You weren't told to try and take the items from the other groups, but you did. You were only instructed to protect your group's item. It only became difficult to protect when someone tried to take it away, so you worked hard to keep it safe. The reason sexual purity is difficult to maintain is not because the world is warring to take it. The reason it's difficult to maintain is because we neglect to protect it. You were able to keep your group's item in its place because you worked hard to protect it. If you had checked out and decided to sit down and chat, any one of the other groups could have walked up and taken what was yours to protect.

> **Point:** We don't lose our sexual purity because the world wants to take it. We lose it because we neglect to protect it. The way to stay sexually pure is to guard your purity.

**Option:** Begin the session by showing the clip from *Hidden Secrets* (Genesis Products, 2006) where Jeremy and Rachel are forced to sleep in the same bed in the same room. The clip can be found on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/hidden-secrets/wrong>. Discuss reactions to the clip. Why would most people in the world (those who are not Christians) not see anything wrong with this scenario? Why did Jeremy say it was wrong?

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Consuming Fire* by Tim Hughes (When Silence Falls, Worship Together, 2004)

*You Never Let Go* by Matt Redmond (Beautiful News, Sparrow, 2006)

*I Give You My Heart* (God Is in the House, Hillsong Music Australia, 1996)

*One Pure and Holy Passion* by Candi Pearson (Passion: One Day Live, Sparrow, 2000)

*Holiness* by Sonicflood (Sonicflood, GoTee Records, 1999)

*From the Inside Out* by Hillsong United (United We Stand, Sony, 2006)

*Marvelous Light* by Charlie Hall (Flying Into Darkenss, Sixstepsrecords, 2006)

*I Will Follow* by Chris Tomlin (And If Our God Is For Us, Sixstepsrecords, 2010)

## PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

*Strong Enough* by Matthew West (The Story of Your Life, Sparrow Records, 2010)

*Come As You Are* by Pocket Full of Rocks (Let It Rain, Word Music, 2011)

*Grace Found Me* by Rush of Fools (Grace Found Me, EOne, 2011)

*Daughter of Destiny* by Ginny Owens (Get In I'm Driving, EMI Gospel, 2011)

*Beautiful Things* by Gungor (Beautiful Things, Brash Music, 2010)

*Awakening* by Danen Kane (Love is Waiting, Danen Kane Music, 2011)

## VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.

> "Superchic[k]: Teaching Purity" Bluefish TV

Use this video clip during Life Principle B to lead into a discussion of making a commitment to purity.

## REVIEW

The second session Bible study challenges students to follow the biblical guideline to live a life of purity apart from sexual immorality. This midweek study provides practical guidelines to help students guard their sexual purity.

## DISCUSS THESE POINTS

> **Fast Forward:** Invite several volunteers to come to the front of the class. Write the following words or phrases on individual slips of paper and place them in a container. Students will each draw one slip from the container and read it aloud.

- Married without kids
- Engaged
- Married with kids
- Dating

Have a little fun with the exercise. Try to get students to identify who that significant other might be.

> **Point:** Each one of these scenarios represents where you might be in life 10 years from now. Each one of these also involves another person, your spouse/fiancé/girlfriend or boyfriend. Think for just a moment about being in that stage of life. Now jump back to reality. You're here. But guess what? The scenario may be imaginary but the person isn't. Who you will date next is out there somewhere. Who you will one day be engaged to is already born, probably close to your age, going through the same challenging teenage years that you are. Who you will one day marry and have a family with is alive, living somewhere, attending school, following or not following Christ, living a pure life, or making poor choices.

> Let's imagine that your future spouse is in a serious dating relationship right now. How pure do you pray he or she is remaining? That is the same level of purity he or she probably hopes for you.

> Post The Question for this session on the board. **[Slide 4]**

> As we talk about your purity, understand that your choices affect other people too. Not just people in your life right now, but people who will be in your life in the future.

### A. Understand the situation. **[Slide 5]**

> The Bible is full of stories of real people struggling with real issues—the same type of issues that you struggle with, including sexual temptation.

> Read Genesis 39:6b-7. **[Slide 6]**

> The Bible gives us a physical description of Joseph in these verses. God created us to be visually stimulated. While this story is about Joseph resisting the temptation of Potiphar's wife, it's also about her not being able to resist a similar temptation. She was visually stimulated by Joseph and could not resist the temptation to have him.

> This is the continuing story of Joseph from Genesis. You probably remember the story of the coat of many colors, being thrown into a pit, sold into slavery, and interpreting Pharaoh's dreams. This story in

Genesis 39 takes place several years later. **[Slide 7]**

> How does this episode relate to the way you see sexual temptation played out in popular media (books, movies, TV shows, music) today?

> In the news recently, there have been a number of high school teachers having sex with students—adults being attracted to students and vice-versa. This is similar to the situation in Genesis 39.

> How does it compare to real life social settings you're in today? Do you experience the pressure to pursue the object of your affection like Potiphar's wife or give in to the pressure of sexual attention like Joseph?

> **Point:** Potiphar was a wealthy man. He was a prominent court official in Egypt serving as the captain of Pharaoh's guard. He would have owned a large home with a great deal of land that needed a great many servants. His responsibility to Pharaoh would have made him a very busy man who most likely had to travel. He trusted Joseph to manage his home and very likely his family while he was away. Joseph was probably in the presence of Potiphar's wife regularly, if not daily and even multiple times each day. He was most likely in charge of the servants who attended to her. With Potiphar away, Joseph would have had access and opportunity to engage in the affair.

**Option:** Compose several scenarios dealing with sexual temptation. Ask students to read each scenario and explain the sexual temptation present in each situation. The goal is to help them better understand the situations where temptation might be present. Here is a possible scenario to discuss:

> **Scenario:** You and your girlfriend have been dating for a few months. Now every time you are alone, the physical side of your relationship seems to escalate. Every afternoon, you have the option to go to your house [where no one is home] to hang out and do homework, or you can go to the local coffee house where your friends hang out after school.

> Be as specific or as general with content or context as you feel necessary depending on the nature of your group. Incorporate the dynamics of ministering with exclusively middle school or exclusively high school students if this is your ministry environment.

### **B. Stay committed to purity. [Slide 8]**

> Joseph was faced with a huge choice and a huge temptation.

> Read Genesis 39:8-10. **[Slide 9]**

> What reason does Joseph state for refusing Potiphar's wife's advances? How often did Joseph face this temptation?

> Joseph had a big picture perspective when it came to giving in to temptation. He knew that the sin would hurt Potiphar (who had richly blessed Joseph) and that it would also be a sin against God. Often, in the heat of temptation, perspective is the first thing to go. But it's one of our greatest weapons.

> Presented with a similar opportunity, who would your sexual sin hurt?

> What were Joseph's choices? Could Joseph have had sex with her with nobody knowing?

> Verse 10 says that she continued to pursue him. Just because Joseph made the right choice initially didn't mean that the temptation went away. It isn't enough to do the right thing once. We must continue to walk wisely. **[Slide 10]**

> **Point:** Joseph's perspective was a focus on God. His proclamation to Potiphar's wife revealed his desire to honor his earthly master and his heavenly Father. Not only would adultery have been a sinful act against his master, Joseph also knew that disrespecting Potiphar would have been a sin against God.

> What makes it difficult for students to maintain a commitment to purity today? What can help a student maintain a commitment to purity?

**Option:** Direct students to form small groups of same gender students with an adult leader. Instruct them to identify how popular media (music, TV, movies) continuously present us with temptation. Allow each group to offer up an example. Sometimes the tempting messages don't come from other people. We get constant messages from the media around us that can be equally as tempting. How might you tell the media a strong, consistent "no" just as Joseph resisted Potiphar's wife?

### **C. Run from temptation. [Slide 11]**

> Sometimes, we all feel like there is no way out or that a temptation is just too much to resist. That is where Joseph found himself.

> Read Genesis 39:11-12. **[Slide 12]**

- > Have you ever heard the expression “They just won’t take no for an answer”?
- > Potipher’s wife persisted even though Joseph repeatedly refused to have sex with her. Sometimes saying no to temptation isn’t quite enough. We have to run—literally run away. We must physically remove ourselves from every opportunity. **[Slide 13]**
- > Joseph physically ran from this temptation. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Temptation came. He had opportunity to give in. It would have been a whole lot easier to just give in and say there was nothing he could have done. After all, she had a hold of his garment. He might have even gotten away with the sin. But he maintained his resolve and fled the temptation.
- > Are there areas of constant temptation in your life where just saying “no” is no longer sufficient? Are there people, situations, environments that you need to run from?

**Option:** Post Matthew 6:13 on the board or display it on screen. It’s the verse from the Lord’s Prayer about temptation. Lead students to read it aloud together.

- > Read James 1:13. God does not tempt us. But He does allow us to be tempted. According to the prayer Jesus prayed, we can go to God and asked to be delivered from evil and the temptation that accompanies it.
- > Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. God will always provide a way of escape from temptation—it may be that you literally have to get up and run away.
- > Spend several minutes in silent prayer allowing students to ask God to deliver them from temptations with which they struggle.

### WRAP IT UP

- > There is a strong likelihood that students in your group have been sexually tempted. The equal likelihood is that they were unable to stand up against it in the manner that Joseph did.
- > You may have always been able to be a Joseph in the face of temptation or you may have given in. What you need to know right now is that our God is a God of restoration and forgiveness. Don’t leave here today with guilt over past mistakes. Leave here confident of your forgiveness with the resolve to no longer let past sins define you or trap you into a pattern of behavior unbecoming of a Christ-follower. Know that you are dearly loved, completely forgiven, and given the promise of hope in the Holy Spirit to turn from sin and temptation with the same resolution of Joseph.

**Option:** Allow students to journal for a moment about their issues with temptation. Ask them to write about the sexual temptations they have faced as well as their responses to it. Conclude by allowing them the chance to script a prayer of confession that ends by thanking God for forgiveness.

- > Lead students in a prayer of commitment toward sexual purity from this point forward. Reveal a wall of purity and ask those who would like to come and sign it, signifying their resolve to live a sexually pure life for God, themselves, and their future families.

**Option:** Show the clip from *Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 2011) where Coriakin warns the children about the evil of Dark Island and the temptations they will encounter. The clip can be found on Wing Clips at: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/narnia-the-voyage-of-the-dawn-treader/dark-island>. Discuss reactions to the clip and discuss how the clip supports the Life Principles in this session.

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# KNOWN

## Purity Matters Session 3—Watch Your Mouth

### The Question

How can I keep my speech pure?

### The Point

Be intentional about what you say.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:29; Ephesians 5:3-4; Psalm 19:14

### OPENING

> **Stick it to Me:** Provide each student with a 4-6 inch piece of masking tape (or duct tape for a bit more excitement). Instruct each student to create a tape roll and stick it to their forehead so that the remainder of the sticky side is facing out. Instruct each student to find a partner. The two students are to hold their foreheads together for a 10-count and then pull them apart. One partner will lose their tape to the other and is now eliminated. The person with both pieces of tape on his or her forehead is now the winner and can choose another partner. Play the game until you're down to two players. Bring them to the front of the room and provide each with a new piece of tape. Play best out of three until you have one winner.

Interview the winner: Did you develop a strategy for winning so many times? If so, what was the strategy? In the middle of the 10 count, did you know that you had it won or were you surprised each time?

> **Point:** We have interactions with people every day. You have conversations with people and guess what? They stick—our words are sticky. Sometimes we go through life just throwing words out there and waiting to see what happens. That's not very careful and sometimes we hurt someone unintentionally or stick our foot directly in the mouth. Sometimes we pull back quickly or say the wrong things and cause the other person pain. Sometimes we develop a strategy for how we use words, like to get what we want or even to hurt someone intentionally or sometimes to help someone in need. Language is important and we need to know that the words we use have the power to stick with someone. The words we use also have the power to represent or misrepresent Christ. So we need to be intentional about what we say and how we say it.

**Option:** Sticks and Stones—Place four large poster boards or four long pieces of paper around the room. Instruct students to go to each area and write what they're prompted to write on each one. Play a song from this week's playlist and give them a few minutes to make it to each area. Encourage students to take the exercise seriously being honest and even a bit vulnerable. Instruct them to do the task individually and to remain silent as they move and write—making no comments about what others have written. Suggestion: Enlist an adult volunteer to stay at each station. Their presence alone will help students avoid silly behavior during the exercise. You might also consider turning down the lights a bit to create a sense of semi-privateness. Use the following four prompts or some your own on each sheet.

1. What's your favorite word?
2. What's your least favorite word?
3. Why are words powerful?
4. What word said to you will you never forget?

> If your set-up allows, move to each area and read a few words from each sheet of paper. If set up doesn't allow you to move freely around the room, call for the adult volunteers to bring each completed poster to you. If students wrote obscene or profane words, don't read them aloud but share with students that you know these words are real and that they are both powerful and painful. Perhaps there is even a student honest enough to admit that their favorite word is something rude or profane. Express how much it hurts you to see that word or phrase be a part of someone's life. Explain that words are powerful. They have the power to hurt and to heal; they have the power to represent or misrepresent Jesus; they have the power to draw someone to God or push them far away. Impurity has no place in the speech of the

Christ follower. How can we keep our speech pure? By being intentional with what we say and how we say it.

### **WORSHIP IDEAS**

*May the Words of My Mouth* by Tim Hughes (Here I Am to Worship, Worship Together, 2001)  
*Rooftops* by Desperation Band (From the Rooftops, Vertical Music, 2004)  
*One Pure and Holy Passion* by Candi Pearson (Passion: One Day Live, Sparrow, 2000)  
*From the Inside Out* by Hillsong United (United We Stand, Sony, 2006)  
*Draw Me Close* by Vineyard (25 Top Vineyard Worship, Chordant, 2002)  
*I Will Follow* by Chris Tomlin (And If Our God Is For Us, Sixstepsrecords, 2010)

### **PLAYLIST IDEAS**

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))  
*Strong Enough* by Matthew West (The Story of Your Life, Sparrow Records, 2010)  
*Come As You Are* by Pocket Full of Rocks (Let It Rain, Word Music, 2011)  
*Grace Found Me* by Rush of Fools (Grace Found Me, EOne, 2011)  
*Daughter of Destiny* by Ginny Owens (Get In I'm Driving, EMI Gospel, 2011)  
*Beautiful Things* by Gungor (Beautiful Things, Brash Music, 2010)  
*Awakening* by Danen Kane (Love is Waiting, Danen Kane Music, 2011)

### **VIDEO IDEA**

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))  
Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.  
> "Gossip" Bluefish TV  
Use this video clip to introduce The Point for this session. Discuss how gossip, as well as other careless words, can be harmful.

### **REVIEW**

The third session Bible study examines the influence and the power that our words have—both positively and negatively. This midweek study provides biblical guidelines for students to keep their speech pure.

### **DISCUSS THESE POINTS**

> **Illustration:** You certainly can't believe everything you read on the Internet, but here is a fun story you might hope is true. It definitely sounds feasible. The members of the band Building 429 got their starts leading worship in various other bands in North Carolina before linking arms in 2001. In 2005, their breakout hit "Glory Defined" helped win them a Best New Artist Award. The band's name is significant. They heard about a youth group who lived out a principle called the 429 Challenge. Anytime anyone in the youth group talked negatively to or about someone, another group member could remind them about "429" taken directly from Ephesians 4:29. The offender would then say something positive to build up the person they had previously spoken bad about. Building each other up according to that reference became condensed into Building 429 and the band was formed for that purpose.  
(<http://www.sing365.com/music/lyric.nsf/building-429-biography/79dedf970e7f43c248256e9b000a36cd>)  
> Post The Question for this session on the board. **[Slide 4]**

#### **A. Choose to encourage rather than cut down. [Slide 5]**

> What does it mean to cut down someone? How often do you hear others cut down? How often are you the one being cut down? How often are you the one doing the cutting down?  
> Read Ephesians 4:29. **[Slide 6]**  
> What does Ephesians 4:29 say our speech should NOT include?  
> What does Ephesians 4:29 say that our speech should include in its place?  
> Which is easier to do? Why? When was the last time you built someone else up with your words?  
> What are some examples of words that cut down? What are some examples of words that build up?  
**[Slide 7]**  
> It's much easier to tear down rather than build up. It's much easier to bring down your GPA than to

improve your average. It's much easier to lose something than to find it.

> Part of the difficulty lies in the fact that negativity comes so much easier than positive speech. We have to make an effort to encourage. Things that are right and worth it often do require a great deal of effort.

> How might you make a concerted effort to be more encouraging to others?

> **Point:** Paul was providing the Ephesian church with a detailed description of what it means to live a new life in Christ. He offered them a list that included both the old ways that they lived in before Christ and the antitheses of them. In place of lying, we are to speak truth. In place of stealing, we are to live generously. And in place of slanderous speech, we are to be encouraging. The rotten (some translations read "corrupt" or "unwholesome" speech) Paul referred to is just that, rotten. In Greek, it's the same word used to refer to spoiled food. Unholy speech is like rotten food, of no use, needing to be disposed of.

**[Slide 8]**

**Option:** Secure pictures of spoiled food. If you are feeling particularly adventurous (and have enough lead time) spoil some food and bring in live visual aids. Otherwise, photos will probably be enough. Show these photos and make the connection between discouraging, trashy talk. The things we say to tear down others are like old food that can literally and figuratively make one sick.

**Option:** Invite students to say the letters of the alphabet together. Next, ask for a volunteer who would be willing to recite it backwards. We're so accustomed to saying the alphabet correctly; it's difficult to say it backwards. It takes intentionality. You have to try. It's the same with encouraging speech. It takes effort.

### **B. Choose discretion. [Slide 9]**

> When you were a kid, who did you want to be like when you grew up?

> It's been said that imitation is the greatest form of flattery. You likely wanted at some point in your childhood to grow up and be just like your mom or dad, grandma, uncle or another special adult in your life. You identified that person because of who they were or what they did, but also because of how they treated you and made you feel loved.

> In Ephesians 5:1-2, Paul instructed the church to be imitators of God just like children who are loved. As such, our speech should identify us as children of God.

> In addition to cutting remarks, however, there are a lot of other impure words that make up our speech.

> Read Ephesians 5:3-4. **[Slide 10]**

> What other specific impure speech did Paul identify in these verses? When people hear these types of things spoken, what do they generally think of the person speaking that way? **[Slide 11]**

> Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ." When we follow Christ, we are leading those who follow us to do the same. As we become more Christlike, so do they. When we live as dearly loved children imitating God our Father, those people who look to us for direction will eventually do the same.

> Knowing that there are others who look to you to see God, how important is it that you heed these words from Ephesians 5? What do these verses say that our lives should look like or not look like?

> **Point:** These verses outline distinct but interrelated types of speech that the world should never hear from the mouth of a Christian. Coarse talk, foolish talk, and crude joking are to be avoided and instead replaced with thanksgiving. When our attitude is one consumed with gratitude, this type of talk will weed itself out of our lives.

> In your opinion, how would you describe coarse talking, foolish talking, and crude joking? Why would Paul say these types of speech are not suitable for a Christian?

> What if you don't tell a crude (dirty) joke but you laugh at one, is that the same thing? Why or why not?

**Option:** Allow students to spend some time in thanksgiving before God. Invite your worship team to lead another song. During an instrumental break, invite students to enter into a concert of praise by speaking out the things for which they are most thankful to God. Use this additional time of worship as an illustration of the kinds of speech that should be on our lips rather than anger, malice, harsh words, foul language, and so on.

### **C. Pray about your speech. [Slide 12]**

> Do you think God is concerned about your speech? If so, why would He be concerned? Have you ever prayed about your speech? Why or why not? How can praying for your speech help?

- > Read Psalm 19:14. **[Slide 13]**
- > This song of David praised God for His creation and His Word. It concludes with a plea for God to be pleased with the offerings of praise we bring Him.
- > Sometimes we call it “putting your foot in your mouth.” What does that phrase mean to you? Have you ever spoke before thinking? **[Slide 14]**
- > What must our words be in order to be pleasing and acceptable to the Lord? On a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (really good), how pleasing are your words, overall, to the Lord?

#### **WRAP IT UP**

- > Our speech is often an area that trips us up as believers more than anything else. Sinful speech can become a nasty habit that is hard to shake. It takes effort and intentionality to rid ourselves of sinful speech and replace it with that which is honorable. Successful effort requires commitment and accountability.
- > Close by extending an Ephesians 4:29 Challenge to your group. Invite them to commit to pure speech together and to the accountability of one another when negative speech creeps in. Invite them to adopt the number “429” as a secret reminder that whenever we say something negative we should immediately follow it up with something positive and encouraging. Pretty soon, the number will fade and be used less and less; not because students abandon their commitment but because their speech has changed to such a distinct degree that they no longer need it.

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# KNOWN

## Purity Matters Session 4—Freedom from Filth

### The Question

How do I deal with a pornography problem?

### The Point

Admit the problem and seek help.

Scripture: Proverbs 5:22; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 John 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 5:6

### OPENING

> **What's under there?** Divide the group into two equal sized teams. Each team must select five different volunteers who will all get a chance to take a look under a blanket and report their findings to the rest of the group. The blanket should cover a large area on the floor and contain a minimum of 30 random items underneath. The goal is for each team to be the team that recalls the highest number of items in the greatest amount of detail in the time allotted. Allow one volunteer from each team to come up to the blanket. Hold it up revealing the items underneath for a total of 10 seconds. They must then return and report their findings to the rest of their teammates who act as recorders remembering what they hear—without writing it down, recording a voice memo, or any other way of recording the information other than to remember it. Allow each of the five volunteers from both teams the same 10 second peeks. Once each of the volunteer lookers has had their 10 second look, pass a piece of paper to the group and give them one minute to recall everything they can as a team. Compare results and congratulate the winner.

> **Point:** We are a sight-stimulated people. Things we see have a tendency to become etched into our memories. That is good when we want to remember the good things that we have seen. But it is bad when the negative images we have seen keep popping back up.

> Print the following paragraph or compose one of your own and call for a volunteer to read it aloud.

Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttar in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

> Apparently our minds are so powerful they can fill in and correct even what we don't see. The power to see is really remarkable. We see an image or an object, a series of words or letters and they all send signals to our brains to interpret everything about them. We can look at something and interpret what color it is and what properties it has and even what it's made of. We can look at a gadget and figure out how it works; see a piece of food and know if we'll enjoy it; see a person and recognize them even after many years apart and drastic changes in features. We are a visual people and our vision is a spectacular gift.

**Option:** Because of the nature of this subject matter, consider splitting your group during teaching time and coming back together at the end for worship. Consider dividing girls and guys and middle school from high school. Make sure that the leaders of each group are the same gender as the group they lead. You may also want to let parents know the topic of discussion for this session.

### WORSHIP IDEAS

*Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)* by Chris Tomlin (See the Morning, sixstepsrecords, 2006)

*I Am Free* by Desperation (From the Rooftops, Integrity Music, 2004)

*Give Us Clean Hands* (Worship Together: Be Glorified, Time/Life Music, 2003)

*One Pure and Holy Passion* by Candi Pearson (Passion: One Day Live, Sparrow, 2000)

*Holiness* by Sonicflood (Sonicflood, GoTee Records, 1999)  
*From the Inside Out* by Hillsong United (United We Stand, Sony, 2006)  
*I Will Follow* by Chris Tomlin (And If Our God Is For Us, Sixstepsrecords, 2010)

## PLAYLIST IDEAS

(Suggested playlist links available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

*Strong Enough* by Matthew West (The Story of Your Life, Sparrow Records, 2010)  
*Come As You Are* by Pocket Full of Rocks (Let It Rain, Word Music, 2011)  
*Grace Found Me* by Rush of Fools (Grace Found Me, EOne, 2011)  
*Daughter of Destiny* by Ginny Owens (Get In I'm Driving, EMI Gospel, 2011)  
*Beautiful Things* by Gungor (Beautiful Things, Brash Music, 2010)  
*Awakening* by Danen Kane (Love is Waiting, Danen Kane Music, 2011)

## VIDEO IDEA

(Bluefish TV video link available at [www.lifeway.com/known](http://www.lifeway.com/known))

Use the suggested video clip(s) during this session. There are multiple ways to use the video in this session. Use it where it best meets the need for your teaching.

> "Pornography and Physical Relationships" Bluefish TV

Use this video clip during Life Principle E to open discussion about the dangers and effects of pornography and why it is important to be able to talk to someone about the problem.

> "Pastor's Kid Struggles with Pornography" Bluefish TV

Use this video clip during Wrap It Up to review the Life Principles and encourage students to seek help for the problem of pornography.

## REVIEW

The fourth session Bible study provides some practical ideas to help students guard their minds and keep their thoughts pure. This midweek study provides guidance in dealing with the problem of pornography.

## DISCUSS THESE POINTS

> **Illustration:** Invite several students to come on stage and draw an 18-inch straight line without the use of a ruler or tape measure. Then have the remainder of your students vote on which of the lines is actually 18 inches or the closest to being 18 inches. Use a yard stick or tape measure and measure each line to determine which line was the closest.

> **Point:** A judge once said that he couldn't define pornography, but that he would know it when he saw it. The law defines pornography as any material that is sexually explicit. But who decides what is sexually explicit? Hasn't what constitutes as sexually explicit changed over time? Haven't the standards and restrictions lessened?

> The problem with measuring what constitutes sin (especially a sin like pornography) is that we're comparing it to the wrong standard. When we compare the level of sexually explicit material in a movie to other movies, it may look worse or it may look better. When we compare the level of sexually explicit content in our lives to other people, we may look worse or we may look better. We're measuring by the wrong standard. God's Word is the ruler. Literally. The world says a little bit won't hurt. It could be worse, right? It's not hurting anyone or is it? His Word says there is no room for pornography in the life of the believer. It's a big problem that must be dealt with.

> Post The Question for this session on the board. **[Slide 4]**

> In this session, we'll talk about the problem of pornography and how we might eliminate it.

### A. Recognize you have a problem. **[Slide 5]**

> Pornography is a problem. Just reviewing statistics and news stories will show you that. The problem, however, is that most people don't see pornography (especially in their own lives) as a problem.

> Read Proverbs 5:22. **[Slide 6]**

> This is a verse about being trapped by sin. It doesn't speak of any specific type of sin but sin in general that can ensnare us. **[Slide 7]**

> How could the truth in this verse speak specifically to the sin of pornography?

> **Point:** This verse is careful to remind us that it isn't the world's consequences or God's judgment that

traps us as a result of our sin. Our slavery isn't being grounded or sitting in time out because we sin. Our sin is its own form of slavery. Sin itself traps us because once we're in a pattern of sin, it's difficult to break free. In fact, we couldn't free ourselves. Christ came to do that.

> How can pornography trap someone? How can a problem with pornography become an entanglement that bind us?

**Option:** If possible, borrow a pair of shackles from your local police department or invite a local officer from your church to be your guest and bring a set from work. Allow students to pass them around and touch them. If possible, invite a student to try them on. (Make sure the police officer with the key is present.)

### **B. Realize it is sin. [Slide 8]**

> Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3. [Slide 9]

> The word pornography comes from the Greek word *porneia*. In Scripture we see it translated as fornication and sexual sin. *Graphēin* describes things that are written; *grapho* would be visual depictions. In Greek literature, this is often described as any work of art or literature depicting activity with a prostitute.

> How do you define pornography? Why types exist beyond pornographic film today?

> God's will for us is that we abstain from sexual immorality. That doesn't always mean a physical act. Often it means the activities that promote unhealthy sexual relationships. Remember that in the previous session when we talked about crude speech? Even language that glorifies sexual immorality is sin. We have to realize what sin is and call it that.

> What evidence can you see in your life of God sanctifying you? How can pornography cause problems in the process of sanctification?

> Sanctification: the process of being made holy resulting in a changed lifestyle for the believer. The English word "sanctification" comes from the Latin *sanctificatio*, meaning the act or process of making holy, consecrated. (*Holman Bible Dictionary*) [Slide 10]

> **Point:** Sanctification is one of those theological terms that we use often but not always in its proper context. To be sanctified means to literally be set apart from sin to holiness. It means that God is refining us into who we need to be in Christ. That is the process of sanctification. Sometimes it's very difficult and other times, easy. Regardless of the process, the end result is always living more like Christ and being holy, set apart for special use.

**Option:** Display several bottles of maple syrup. Place the bottles on tables around the room. Make sure to have boxes of wet wipes at each table. Invite students to move to one of the tables for an illustration. Instruct them to hold out their hands and then direct a volunteer to pour syrup in their hands to rub around. The sticky mess will create quite a stir among students. Allow them to clean their hands with a wet wipe before returning to their seats.

> Sin is sticky. It looks and smells good. It's enticing. But it gets all over you and is hard to get off. Understanding what sin is means also knowing what effect it has on us. It's hard to break free from. It is impossible to shake the stickiness of sin without the power of God and help from other believers.

### **C. Confess it to God. [Slide 11]**

> So what do we do once we recognize that we have a sin problem? John gives us some direction.

> Read 1 John 1:9. [Slide 12]

> What does it mean to confess your sin to God?

> How do you confess your sin?

> Our job is to confess our sin. Once we realize that our attitudes or behaviors are sinful, our only recourse is to confess it to God. We must pronounce the behavior as sinful and ask God to forgive us of our trespass. [Slide 13]

> Confession is admitting that what you did is indeed sin. It is owning your sin then telling God that you are sorry for your sin and that you want to change.

> Confession is much more than just saying "I'm sorry" with no real intent or meaning behind it. What is an example of saying "I'm sorry" but you are not really sorry?

> When we do our part and confess our sin, God does His part. He forgives us.

**Option:** Forgiveness is not the result of confession but the result of Christ's sacrifice. Instruct students to get in pairs and face their partner. Instruct them to engage in a few different types of normal greetings. Instruct one partner to extend his or her hand for a handshake and allow the partner to respond. Encourage one partner to hold a hand up for a high five and allow their partner to respond. Direct one partner to hold up a fist and allow the other partner to respond with a fist bump. Direct one partner to extend their arms and lean in for a hug and have the other partner respond. Finally, instruct them to create their own handshake, high five, fist bump combination.

> You have just engaged in normal greetings. If you extend a hand to a friend, he or she knows what to do in response. It's almost a guarantee. If you extend yourself to God in a spirit of confession, He knows how to respond and you can always be certain He will respond in the same way, with total forgiveness.

#### **D. Stay away from it. [Slide 14]**

> Read 2 Timothy 2:22. **[Slide 15]**

> Once we identify sin, we must stay far away from it. This was Joseph's downfall. Because of his job and his status as a slave, staying away from Potiphar's wife completely may have been difficult or even impossible. For you, remaining far from pornography must be absolute. It's a deadly poison.

> In order to stay away from those sins we identify as sparking lust or youthful desire, what boundaries do you need to set up?

> Where are you likely to be exposed to pornography? What are some ways you can protect yourself from viewing pornography—either accidentally or on purpose?

> Paul told Timothy to flee. That is an active, I-choose-not-to-look-at-this type of mindset.

> Instead of youthful passions, what does Paul instruct us to pursue? How do you do that?

**Option:** Invite two volunteers on stage for a competition. You'll begin reading a list of clues and ask them to guess the safeguard. The first to shout out the answer gets the point. The safeguards are listed below as headers for the clues. You may not get to read each clue if students are able to guess the correct safeguard with only few of the clues present.

#### Fence

- Yard
- Pet safety
- Picket
- Chain link
- Gate

#### Parental controls

- TV
- Ratings
- Remote control
- Adult programs
- Protection

#### Storm cellar

- Underground
- Tornado
- Canned food
- Lantern
- Cement walls

#### Accountability

- Partner
- Friend
- Trust
- Confidentiality
- Honesty

> **Point:** When it comes to staying away from sin, setting boundaries that serve as safeguards is important. What safeguards or boundaries can you set when it comes to the following struggles?

- Movies with sexual content
- TV Shows with sexual content
- Sexting
- Books with sexual content
- Explicit humor and conversations
- Suggestive clothing
- Explicit music

#### **E. Talk with someone who can help. [Slide 16]**

> Read James 5:16. **[Slide 17]**

> Why is it important that we confess sin to someone else?

> Who qualifies as “someone who can help”?

> According to James 5:16, what help is provided? (prayer)

> **Point:** James 5:16 finds itself nestled in a whole section about the power of prayer. It’s one thing to pray alone and commune with God by yourself. It’s another thing to involve the body of believers. Following verse 15 where James instructs those who are sick to present themselves before the elders for prayer, verse 16 instructs us to confess our sins to each other. It doesn’t read that those of us who are sinful should confess our sins to those who aren’t. Those without sin don’t exist. Confession is a mutual honesty and vulnerability about our sin. When someone knows first-hand what it’s like to struggle, they’re in the best position to help you be honest about your weakness and be earnest with you in prayer. And according to 5:16, the earnest prayers of the righteous get results. Remember, we’re not righteous because we get it right on our own, but because we trust in Christ to be our righteousness. **[Slide 18]**

**Option:** Because students are in age/gender specific groups with a caring adult leader, have them close by sharing with the group struggles they have with youthful lusts and have the leader pray a prayer of blessing over them asking God for strength on their behalf.

#### **WRAP IT UP**

> The world’s standard of what is pornography will continue to waffle and move, but we don’t measure ourselves by the world’s standard—our standard is God and His Word. His Word doesn’t just define for us what is right and wrong; it provides us with the wisdom tools necessary to make right choices and walk in His ways. Pornography can be a particularly sticky habit, but not an impossible habit to break. It starts by recognizing what’s wrong, confessing your sin, and then doing whatever it takes to stay away from it.

> Offer a time of worship and prayer, allowing students personal time to pray and confess sin to God. Make sure there are trusted adults available to talk with students and to pray with them.

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