

# Sex Education in the Christian Family (Parts 1 & 2)

## A Lifelong Approach To Shaping Your Child's Sexual Character

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Reasons parents struggle to teach their kids about sex: perceived incompetence, lack of practice, lack of knowledge, deference to the “experts,” modesty, privacy, and shame and unresolved guilt. Valid or not? Some parents push ahead anyway, but do so motivated primarily out of fear (of sin and fall from faith? porn addiction? STIs? pregnancy?)

### The First Two Principles of Christian Sex Education in the Family

**Principle 1: Sex education is the shaping of character.**



**MORE ON THESE FIRST TWO PRINCIPLES:**

**Principle 2: Parents are the principle sex educators.**

**What are our Objectives in Sex Education and in Parenting?** Don't focus too narrowly and negatively on only preventing sexual immorality and the ravages that come from illicit sex; this goal is too small, too limited, too narrow.

*Our most important goal in sex education is to equip and empower our children to enter adulthood capable of living godly, wholesome, and fulfilled lives as Christian men and women, Christian wives and husbands.*

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, *so that you, your children and their children after them* may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey *so that it may go well with you* and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you. Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. *Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home* and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

(Deuteronomy 6:1-9, emphasis added; see also 10:12-13)

Four Parenting Styles	Low Acceptance	High Acceptance
Nonexistent Standards	<i>Neglecting Parents</i>	<i>Permissive Parents</i>
High Standards	<i>Authoritarian Parents</i>	<i>Authoritative Parents</i>

**Challenges:** accessible pornography, cyber-predators, sexting and sexual bullying, a culture that normalizes sexual abnormality, breakdown of the male-female “binary,” a culture that places sexuality as the foundation for identity.

**Response?:** We need to take a life-long developmental approach to forming character that only a parent can accomplish.

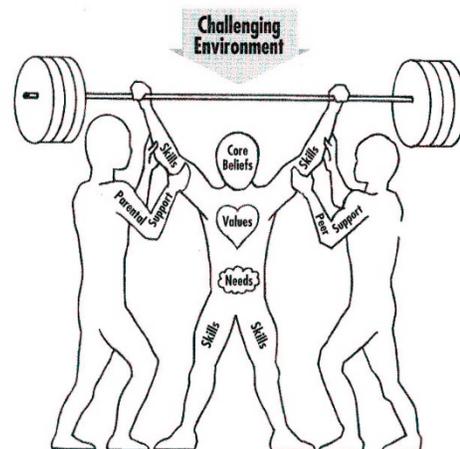
### The Five-Factor Model of Sexual Character:

A. Needs Relatedness and Significance

B. Values

C. Beliefs

Some specifics:



i. **The New Dominant Ideology: Self Defined by Radical Individual Autonomy:**

“For centuries, traditional morality [i.e., Christianity] had us – all of us – in its suffocating grip. Year after year the same old rules, chained to the past, heaped shame on ordinary men and women (and boys and girls) whose only crime was being different. Enemies of the human spirit, these bankrupted ideologies befriended bigots and encouraged the spiteful No more. Change is here. We are breaking free from the shackles of bigotry and removing ourselves from under the dead hand of tradition. Our time has come. *A time to be ourselves. A time to be who we truly are. A time to celebrate love where we find it.* A time for the human spirit to flourish again.” Glynn Harrison, *A Better Story* (London: InterVarsity [UK], 2017); quote p. 51

[Back to the fourth of the five character factors]

D. Skills

E. Supports

**More on Proper Christian Beliefs (A “Biblical Perspective”) About Sexuality**

ii. **The meanings of sex seen from the “bottom up” versus the “top down”:**

1. The Trinitarian God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – is LOVE; “God is love” (1 John 4:8)
2. We are created in the Image of God:
  - a. We are limited, biological representations of the infinite Trinity
  - b. Each individual, male and female, is an image of the unity of the relational, loving persons of God
  - c. Marriage is the great symbol of God’s love for us
  - d. By God’s design and mandate, there are only two ways to reflect God’s image in our sexuality as HE intended: Covenantal faithfulness in chaste, one man-one woman marriage, and covenantal faithfulness in chaste singleness

iii. **The Chronology for understanding sexuality:** Start with Creation, *then* Fall, *then* Redemption, *then* Glory: By God’s Creational intent, we are physical, gendered, sexual beings. We are fallen and morally broken, but Christ can and does redeem us.

iv. **The purposes of Sexual Intercourse**

- Procreation (Genesis 1:28)
- Physical Gratification and Pleasure (1 Corinthians 7:1-9; Proverbs 5; Song of Solomon)
- Unity (Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20)
- Instruction (Romans 1:20; Ephesians 5)

v. **Biblical condemnations**

1. Adultery: condemned in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:14) and other places.
2. Sexual immorality/“fornication” condemned Acts 15:29, 2 Cor. 12:21 and Gal. 5:19.
3. Incest: condemned in Leviticus 18:6-18 and 20:11-22.
4. Rape: condemned in Deuteronomy 22.
5. Homosexual intercourse: condemned in Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Deuteronomy 23:18; Romans 1:26-28; and 1 Corinthians 6:9.
6. Bestiality: sexual intercourse with animals; condemned in Leviticus 20:15-16.
7. Cross-dressing: condemned in Deuteronomy 22:5.
8. Husband and wife sexual intercourse during the woman’s menstrual cycle: condemned as unclean in Leviticus 18:19
9. Lust; condemned in Matthew 5:28

vi. **Biblical Commendations:**

1. Marital sexual intimacy: approved in Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Song of Solomon
2. Celibacy/chastity: commended in 1 Corinthians 6-7; commended by Jesus's words (Matthew 19:12) and by His perfect example of living a celibate

**vii. Purposes of Marriage and Singleness:**

1. Marriage/family is the primary embodied biblical metaphor for: a) God's image in *community*, and b) God's love of His people
2. Chaste singleness is the primary embodied biblical metaphor for: a) God's people's faithful love of and sufficiency in Him, and b) God's image in *unity*.
3. God's Purposes for Chastity Outside and Inside of Marriage: a) demonstrating the love of Christ through our obedience to His commands (John 14:21), and b) honoring the body as the Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)

**viii. The Three-Stranded Cord of Christian Morality:** Consequences, value of obedience, mystery of unity**Part 2: The Remaining 10 Principles of Christian Sex Education in the Family**

**Principle 3: First messages are the most potent.**

**Principle 4: Seize those “teachable moments;” become an “askable” parent.**

**Principle 5: Stories are powerful teaching tools.**

**Principle 6: Accurate and explicit messages are best.**

**Principle 7: Positive messages are powerful.**

**Principle 8: “Inoculate” your children against negative beliefs.**

**Principle 9: Repetition is critical; repetition is really, really important.**

**Principle 10: Close, positive parent-child relationships are crucial.**

**Principle 11: Sexuality is not everything; keep your perspective.**

**Principle 12: Our God can forgive, heal, and redeem anything.**

**Christian Sex Education in the Family in Stages****I. The Very Young Child: Teaching the Goodness of Body, Sexuality, Family**

- Establish that our children are loved beyond measure by you the parent and by God, their heavenly Father.
- Teach them that God intended the family to be the primary arena for the experience of life-devotion, love, and unity.

- Develop their trust in God's Law as reliable and good.
- Convince them that their physical bodies, their sexual natures, and their capacity for sexual pleasure are all good blessings from God.

## VII. The Young Child: What is Sex and Why Do People Do *THAT*?

Giving accurate, direct, loving messages; creating a dialogue by reading

## VIII. The Elementary-Age Child: Being An Askable, Approachable Parent

## IX. The Prepubescent Child: The Principle of Inoculation

## X. The Pubescent Child: Shepherding Them Through

## XI. The Teenage Child: Love and Limits

### The God's Design For Sex Book Series

- How And When To Tell Your Kids About Sex: A Life-Long Approach To Shaping Your Child's Sexual Character (Book 1\*, the guidebook for parents) by Stan and Brenna Jones. (\* numbering in 2019 third revision; forthcoming)
- The Story of Me (Book 2 for ages 3 to 5) by Stan and Brenna Jones
- Before I Was Born (Book 3 for ages 5 to 8) by Carolyn Nystrom
- What's The Big Deal? Why God Cares About Sex (Book 4 for ages 8 to 12) by Stan and Brenna Jones
- Facing The Facts: The Truth About Sex And You (Book 5 for ages 11 to 16) by Stan and Brenna Jones

Other useful broad resources:

- Dennis Hollinger, *The Meaning of Sex: Christian Ethics and the Moral Life* (Baker, 2009).
- Dale Kuehne, *Sex and the iWorld: Rethinking Relationship beyond an Age of Individualism* (Baker, 2009).
- Glynn Harrison, *A Better Story: God, Sex & Human Flourishing* (InterVarsity Press [UK], 2017)
- Beth Felker Jones, *Faithful: A Theology of Sex* (Zondervan, 2015).
- National Association of Evangelicals, *Theology of Sex* (available at <http://www.naegeneration.com/resources>) (Stan served on the board of experts for this document)
- Stan Jones, "How to teach sex: Seven realities Christians in every congregation need to know." *Christianity Today*, 1/2011, 34-39