



theme: Sexuality #1 – Intimacy Is Not A Dirty Word

materials: Bibles, paper, pens

welcome

How well do you know each other? Have everyone write down on a piece of paper two truths and one lie about themselves (in no particular order). Ask everyone to read out their lists, without letting anyone else know which are the truths and which is the lie. See if the cell can guess which is which.

Alternatively, have everyone write down one thing on a piece of paper that they think no one else in the group knows about. Then make up your mind as a cell. Do you want to share those things with each other? Why or why not?

interact

Have someone read out Psalm 46 while everyone else closes their eyes and listens. Then ask everyone to spend some time meditating on the line “Be still and know that I am God.” They can repeat it, chew it over, focus on each of the words individually. Basically, have everyone ask the question to themselves, What does it mean to be still and know God? Ask God that question as well. What does it mean to know God, and to be known fully by God? What does it mean to be intimate with God?

Come back and share with the cell, if you wish.

read

Read Isaiah 62:1-5, Revelation 19:6-8, and Revelation 21:1-11.

What are some words and images you associate with brides on their wedding days?

What are some of the requirements of a marriage that make it legit?

Why do we have marriage covenants (declared and signed promises)? What are they supposed to do? Why get married at all?

What do covenants, or promises, have to do with love?

Who is the bride in these passages? Who is the groom?

What does it mean for God to “marry” his people?

Why would he want to? Isn't his bride unfaithful and impure?

How does God as “groom” fit with your image of God? How about you as bride?

What promises does God covenant with us? What promises do we make back to God?

think

Promises really do matter. Marriage covenants are not taken seriously, and so marriage is undermined in the eyes of many. How seriously do we take our covenant with God? How seriously do we take our promises to other people?

Without trust (which comes from kept promises) intimacy is impossible. Discuss to what degree your covenant-making with God and others affects your witness.



live & pray

1. Allow for the possibility of intimacy with God this week. Treat your pray times like intimate conversations, your Bible reading like love letters, and your worship like love songs.
2. What area is God purifying in you, or wanting to purify in you, right now? Is there anything you need to let go of to allow for more intimacy?

useful resources

CD: "Dark Yet Lovely" – Heather Clark, Praying Songs of Solomon
Book: *The Divine Romance*, by Gene Edwards
Website: www.relevantmagazine.com Lots of discussions here on intimate worship.

leader's guide

Brides are usually described as beautiful, pure, and blushing. A wedding day is full of hope and promise, joy and fulfilment. Marriages usually require witnesses, official sanction, a marriage covenant, and consummation to be legit. The marriage covenant is meant to bind two people to the promises they made to one another, really to unite two people into one. It is meant to provide the basis for longevity, security, responsibility and fidelity. All of those things help provide an environment for safe intimacy. The Bride in these passages is the people of God (represented by Jerusalem, or the New Jerusalem). The Groom is God. God marrying his people implies an eternal covenant of intimacy, love, and protection. He is binding himself to his people, his creation, which is an incredible thing. Part of Rev. 21 says that He is making all things new, so He is making His bride beautiful and holy. The Bride of Christ is only one worthy to be so because of His righteousness and sacrifice. What can we promise back except for everything that we are and have?