



# COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

More To The Story / Week 4

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

## BOTTOM LINE

**Jesus wants more for your story.**

## GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

For students to begin imagining God's design for their life stories, and make daily decisions (even in their relationships) that reflect God's character and heart for them.

## SCRIPTURE

*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10 NIV).*

*"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27 NIV).*

## TEACHING OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

- *Note: The Interactive happens here. See your Teaching Script for details.*
- The past few weeks we've been talking about sex, and how there's a lot more to the story than we may have originally thought.

### TENSION

- When it comes to conversations about sex, one of the biggest problems is all of the opinions come with *expectations*.
- First, there is the expectation to do more, say more, and be more.
- At the same time, there are other voices talking about consent and respecting other people's bodies and boundaries, which is super important.
- There's almost pressure to do less.
  - There's pressure to not go too far.
  - There's pressure to not even THINK too far.
  - There's pressure to "honor God" by honoring other people's bodies.
  - There's pressure to not have sex until marriage.
- When you have a topic where different voices are saying different things and have different expectations for you and your life, that can feel like you can't win.
- So how do you make decisions for your life and your life story when everybody seems to disagree on what that should be?

### TRUTH

- The New Testament is all the documents written after Jesus came and walked on the Earth, and it begins with four documents written about the life of Jesus from four different people who knew Him (or who interviewed those who knew Him). We call these four historical documents the Gospels.
- One of them was written by a guy named John, who was one of Jesus' 12 disciples.
- John writes that Jesus is talking to a group of Pharisees, who were NOT His biggest fans.
- He uses a few illustrations about sheep and robbers and gates that they struggle to understand, and finally Jesus spells it out for them (*John 10:10 NIV*).
- Did you catch that last word? He says *full*.
- John says Jesus wants us to have life...but not just any life. He wants us to have MORE life, a better life. It's His goal for us in everything—in life, relationships, and even sex.
- What's wild is so many of us think this is the opposite of what Jesus wants for us. It's tempting to think. It's tempting to think God's goal for us is life MINUS all the good stuff.
- Jesus is telling this crowd of followers, and us, that we couldn't be farther from the truth.
- There is no better decision you can make than to trust Jesus and follow His lead.
- Everybody else around you will have an idea, an opinion, or an expectation of what you SHOULD do or what you COULD do, but Jesus knows you.
- Jesus wants more for your story.
- The truth is, Jesus doesn't just want more for your story LATER in life. He wants more for you NOW.
- While we may feel pressured by friends or culture to think a certain way about sex, or behave a certain way when it comes to sex, you don't have to wonder about who has your best interest in mind, or who's looking out for you. Jesus is inviting you to a full life.

#### APPLICATION

- When you're getting messages from all sides and feeling pressure from every person in your life, you can believe Jesus.
- To begin living a full life that Jesus promises means paying attention to the messages you're hearing and believing—including messages about sex.
- So, pay attention to what you're hearing.
- And pay attention to what Jesus is saying to you (*John 10:27 NIV*).
- The people who belong to Jesus listen to His voice. They follow Him because He knows them better than anybody, and He can be trusted.
- The best decision you can make for yourself is to listen to His voice and follow Him. That's true for every part of your life, including the decisions you make about sex.

#### LANDING

- I realize figuring out exactly what "following Jesus" looks like for your specific dating life and your specific decisions can be tricky.
- When you aren't sure what it looks like to follow Jesus in this area (or any other) you have people in your Small Group, and Small Group Leader, you can go to who will help you figure it out.
- When it comes to sex, part of what makes it so complicated is that we often only hear part of the story.
- I want you to know you can trust what Jesus says more than all of them because Jesus wants more for your story.

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## INTERACTIVE

This Interactive happens in the Intro section; please see that section for more details. For this Interactive you'll need...

- A list of questions that require the opinions of students.



# TEACHING SCRIPT

More To The Story / Week 4

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**Jesus wants more for your story.**

## INTRODUCTION

2 MINUTES



## INTERACTIVE

Choose a few different topics like the ones below, and ask students what comes to mind when you say those phrases. Depending on your group size, you can have students shout out their answers, text them in (or put them in the chat if you're meeting online), or answer on their social media channels.

The goal is to show how different people can have really different ideas about the same topic. You can frame it as "I say" and "you say".

**Example:**

Leader: "I say 'best french fries'. You say\_\_\_\_\_."

Students: "McDonalds!" "Wendy's!" "Ranch dipping sauce!" "Nacho cheese!"

Other topics: I say...

Best sneaker brand

Tastiest dipping sauce

Netflix show to binge

Superior ice cream flavor

Youtuber to follow

Taco Bell item

Must-have app

**Wrap up by saying:** "The point is on any topic, no matter how important or unimportant, different people are going to have a bunch of ideas about it."

The same could be said about sex. Whoa, weren't expecting that, right? But the past few weeks we've been talking about sex, and how there's a lot more to the story than we may have originally thought. We hear and see a bunch about sex from different people like friends, celebrities,

parents, or pastors. We also hear about it in a lot of different places—music, movies, anime, TV, pornography, TikTok, Snapchat, health class, and even church. And obviously, with all of those voices in the mix, there are going to be some different opinions about what's good, what's not, and what's best for you.

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## TENSION

2.5 MINUTES

But here's the thing. When it comes to conversations about sex, one of the biggest problems is all of those opinions come with *expectations*. Here's what I mean:

First, **there is the expectation to do more, say more, and be more**. This complicates the story. Think about it...

- **There's pressure to feel more casual about hook-ups.**
- **There's pressure to send pictures and texts.**
- **There's pressure to pass along pictures sent to you.**
- **There's pressure to experiment.**
- **There's pressure to do what your partner wants.**
- **There's pressure to keep up and participate in conversations about sex.**
- **There's pressure to have more sex.**
- **There's pressure to KNOW everything possible about sex whether or not you're sexually active.**

At the same time, there are other voices talking about consent and respecting other people's bodies and boundaries, which is super important. And then, if you have hung out around church or around Christians, there are even MORE voices with MORE opinions and MORE expectations. It may even feel like there's added pressure to do less.

- **There's pressure to not go too far.**
- **There's pressure to not even THINK too far.**
- **There's pressure to "honor God" by honoring other people's bodies.**
- **There's pressure to not have sex until marriage.**

*(Communicator Note: In conversations like these, tone is crucial. The goal is not to sound like sexual boundaries are wrong, but rather, acknowledge that even if they're true and helpful, a student may still experience it as pressure.)*

Now hear me out, I'm not saying those things I just listed are bad or wrong. What I'm saying is when you have a topic where different voices are saying different things and have different expectations for you and your life, that can feel like you can't win. No matter whether you decide to do more or do less sexually, somebody is going to think it's weird. Somebody is going to think it's wrong. Somebody is going to act like somebody ELSE is convincing you to make a choice that's bad for you. So **how do you make decisions for your life and your life story when everybody seems to disagree on what that should be?**

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## TRUTH

## 6.5 MINUTES

It's a good question and one humans have been asking for a long time. So, before we answer the question—a little history lesson:

The Bible is a collection of documents that are divided into two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Some of these documents record history, others are poetry, and some are letters to different people. The New Testament is all the documents written after Jesus came and walked on the Earth, and it begins with four documents written about the life of Jesus from four different people who knew Him (or who interviewed those who knew Him). We call these four historical documents the Gospels. One of them was written by a guy named John, who was one of Jesus' 12 disciples. He knew Jesus because they literally hung out together for YEARS. It's actually one of the reasons so many people believe events recorded in the Gospels are true. John wasn't some random fan-fiction author. He was an eyewitness writing what he saw, and in chapter ten, John records a moment where Jesus says something so amazing, that I think it has the potential to change how you and I see every decision about our lives.

John writes that Jesus is talking to a group of Pharisees, who were NOT His biggest fans. As He spoke, He used stories of everyday things like sheep and farming to describe why He was there, and what He was really like. (Okay, I get sheep and farming may not be "everyday" for you, but these were ancient times where most people saw sheep or shepherds on an everyday basis.) He uses a few illustrations about sheep, robbers, and gates that they struggle to understand, and finally Jesus spells it out for them:

He said this...

***"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10 NIV).***

If this sounds confusing, I get it, and you aren't alone. In fact, a few verses earlier, John tells us that the religious leaders were confused, too. BUT did you catch that last word? He says *full*. In the original language, that word gets used to talk about things that are superior, better than expected, beyond, over-the-top. In other words, John says Jesus wants us to have life...but not just any life. He wants us to have MORE life, a better life. It's His goal for us in everything—in life, relationships, and even sex. Jesus wants us to experience life!

What's wild, is so many of us think this is the opposite of what Jesus wants for us. It's tempting to think. It's tempting to think God's goal for us is life MINUS all the good stuff.

Life—but only the boring kind.

Life—but without anything exciting or enjoyable.

And Jesus is telling this crowd of followers, and us, that we couldn't be farther from the truth. He is basically saying, "I'm not a thief. I didn't come to steal, kill or destroy your life. That's not me. I came to make your life better and fuller than you have imagined."

The word Jesus uses for "thief" can be understood to mean a trickster. Think about a con-artist—someone who makes you think that they care about your best interest, but they actually have a different motive. Basically, Jesus is saying that there are people who will make you think they are for you, but they aren't. But as for Him? He is actually FOR YOU!! He is looking out FOR you so you can have the full, amazing, life He wants for you.

Honestly, that's why I think when it comes to your life, the people you date, the decisions you make in your private life, **there is no better decision you can make than to trust Jesus and follow His lead.** Everybody else around you will have an idea, an opinion, or an expectation of what you SHOULD do or what you COULD do, but Jesus knows you. He doesn't just care about this one moment or one decision

or one relationship, He cares about your WHOLE life being better and fuller than you can imagine right now. Out of all the voices, His is the one that will lead you toward that life because...

### Jesus wants more for your story.

But here's the thing. This isn't something that just happens. We can't just say, "Yeah, I want a full life. Okay, Jesus, please help me get to that life around the time I turn 25." The truth is, Jesus doesn't just want more for your story LATER in life. He wants more for you NOW. And living that kind of life means trusting Him and following Him and listening to Him now—no matter what everyone else is saying.

So while we may feel pressured by friends or culture to think a certain way about sex, or behave a certain way when it comes to sex, you don't have to wonder about who has your best interest in mind or who's looking out for you. Jesus is inviting you to a full life. And that includes sex. Why? **Because He wants more for your story.**

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## APPLICATION

3 MINUTES

So, what does this mean? It means that when you're getting messages from all sides and feeling pressure from every person in your life, you can believe Jesus. When you aren't sure who to trust, you can trust Jesus because He wants more for your story.

To begin living a full life that Jesus promises, pay attention to the messages you're hearing and believing—including messages about sex. Because even though people send you messages about sex, it doesn't mean those people are FOR you. So pay attention to what you're hearing...

- **Pay attention to what you think, feel, and say when it comes to sex, and where those ideas come from.**
- **Pay attention to what you do and say around different people and why.**
- **Be aware of who is pressuring you, and why you feel pressure from them.**
- **Be aware of how you may be pressuring others, and what makes you want to pressure them.**

And, pay attention to what Jesus is saying to you. A few verses after Jesus says He wants us to have life to the full, He refers to Himself as the Good Shepherd. Then, He says this,

***"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27 NIV).***

Remember, sheep and shepherds were a common thing back then, but you get the idea. It's a metaphor. The people who belong to Jesus listen to His voice. They follow Him because He knows them better than anybody, and He can be trusted. They don't follow because they're afraid of Him. They follow because being close to Him is the safest place to be. And the same is true for you.

Ultimately, the best decision you can make for yourself is to listen to His voice and follow Him. That's true for every part of your life, including the decisions you make about sex. Maybe for you that means it's time to start reading His word for yourself, or spending time talking to Him by yourself. Maybe it means when a lot of voices say different things are best for you, you make sure His is the one you're listening to because He wants more for your story than internet sites, your dating partners, your friends, or maybe even than you do.

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## LANDING

1 MINUTE

Listen, I realize figuring out exactly what “following Jesus” looks like for your specific dating life, and your specific decisions can be tricky. That’s actually one of the reasons we have Small Groups and Small Group Leaders. We want you to know you have a place to talk about what’s going on in your life, and your situations. When you aren’t sure what it looks like to follow Jesus in this area (or any other), you have people you can go to who will help you figure it out.

The truth is: sex is complicated. And like we’ve been talking about the past several weeks, when it comes to sex, part of what makes it so complicated is that we often only hear part of the story. We only hear one side. We only hear certain conversations, and there is always more to the story. That’s why, whether the voices around you say you should be doing more or less, I want you to know you can trust what Jesus says more than all of them because **Jesus wants more for your story.**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS

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