

7th Grade Boys “Catholic Vision of Love” Study Guide

Video- “Hot Topics”

Session 6 – Christian Dating by Everett Fritz

- Introduction
 - We all know the familiar words: “to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.” They are part of the time-honored traditional vows of marriage, and they form the cornerstone of the Catholic Rite of Matrimony. However, it would seem that the popular view of dating today has nothing to do with preparing for the time-honored traditional vows of marriage. In fact, it is usually a better preparation for divorce than for a lifelong, joy-filled marriage. Popular culture needs to rediscover principles of healthy dating based upon the dignity of the human person and the vocation to love.
- Part 1 (5:40) – Why Dating?
 - Many people don’t get out of the middle school dating mindset which is “I like you, you’re cute, there’s something about you that I like. Let’s date.” And then eventually you’re like “ehh this is kind of boring now. Let’s break up.” They’re simply looking for a good time and fun time, but dating is about so much more than that
 - The other mentality with middle school dating is “Let’s just date each other until it gets boring.”
- Part 2 (5:41) – The Purpose of Dating
 - The purpose of dating is about discerning marriage
 - The mindset you need to have when dating is a journey towards marriage
 - Marriage is more than about the love between two people. Marriage is a sacrament where the couple tries to help lead each other to holiness
 - When am I ready to date?
 - When you know it is God’s plan for holiness in your life
 - If you do dating well. If you do dating following God’s plan for your life it should make you a holier person.
- Part 3 (14:26) – Ten Principles of Christian Dating
 - Every dating relationship ends in one of two ways- marriage or break up
 - Your boyfriend/girlfriend may become someone else’s spouse
 - Pray for and with your boyfriend/girlfriend
 - God’s plan is that you would be given away in love in the priesthood, consecrated life, or marriage
 - God’s plan for your life is better than anything you could ever dream and it will fulfill every desire of your heart. The only way to know that plan is to pray
 - St. Ignatius Loyola said, ‘do not make life decision when in desolation’
 - A boyfriend/girlfriend that does not build you up is not worth your time
 - Maximize time in groups- minimize exclusive time with each other
 - It is OK to be single
 - Talk about and set boundaries for physical affection
 - Know the difference between affection and arousal

- Sexual intimacy communicates a lifelong commitment of love
 - Never engage in pre-marital sex
 - How do I find the person I am called to marry?
 - God has a plan for your life, and as you grow closer and closer to God, He reveals that plan for your life
 - Is God enough for you in your life? Have you gotten to a point of intimacy with God in your prayer life, in your love of God and relationship with God, that if that person never comes into your life you will be totally satisfied because you love God with all of your heart? Are you at a point where God fills every deep desire of your heart?
 - When you get to this point, then this is when God brings forth your vocation and that person into your life. I don't need that person in my life because God is enough
 - The whole point to dating is to draw us closer to Christ and grow in holiness, so pursue Christ with all your heart, soul, and mind. Lord I want to know you deeply and intimately
- Discussion Questions
 - What are your thoughts about this statement: "It is not that sex before marriage goes too far; rather, it does not go far enough!"
 - Everett compared the way some middle-age people date to the way a middle-schooler "dates." What do you think that says about our culture?
 - Let's take a look at one other movie about the greatest love story ever told: The Passion of the Christ. What message does this movie have to offer romantic love?
 - How did Everett and his wife date in a way that proved the chastity speaker right?
- Scripture
 - Matthew 19:4-6
 - Everett compared the way some middle-age people date to the way a middle-schooler "dates." What do you think that says about our culture?

Video- “True Strength: Chastity for Guys”

Session 1: Strength & Discipline, Part 1, by Jason Evert

- Introduction
 - It's time to get counter-cultural. It's time to be rebellious and reject the world's notions about masculinity, love, and sexuality. God calls us to see ourselves as he sees us. But how? Is it possible for a young man to resist the temptations of the world and live out his sexuality the way God intended—in freedom, strength, and love?
- Part 1 (3:23)
 - “A man shall leave his father and his mother, cleave to his wife, and the two of them shall become one flesh.”- Genesis 2:24
 - Chastity isn't a list of prohibitions and a bunch of rules. It's an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ who teaches us how to love
 - Chastity isn't about getting rid of your sexual desires
 - What motivates a man to be chaste is love.
 - It's not following a bunch of rules so you don't go to hell. It's wanting heaven for the woman that you love
 - It's not about waiting to love a girl. It's about loving her right now through sacrifice
 - Chastity- expresses love, trains us in faithfulness, frees us to fall in love for the right reasons, prepares us for our vocation
 - “Only the chaste man and the chaste woman are capable of true love.” - St. Pope JP II
- Part 2 (4:09)
 - We've been told to conquer women for the sake of yourself instead of what God teaches to conquer yourself for the sake of a woman because manhood is not about getting a little bit from a lot of women. It's about loving one woman well.
 - “Men must be taught to love, and to love in a noble way; they must be educated in depth in this truth, that is, in fact that a woman is a person and not simply an object.” - St. Pope John Paul II
 - “The dignity and balance of human life [at all places and everywhere] depend on who man will be for woman and who woman will be for man.” - St. Pope John Paul II
 - We have to love someone more than ourselves to find our manhood
 - Freedom exists for the sake of love. It exists to be given away
 - So want often we want to be like a knight, but we don't want to bleed like one
 - Christ from the cross- “This is how I got my bride to heaven. How else do you think you're going to get yours there?”- through suffering
 - The greater the feeling of responsibility that you have for your beloved. Then the more real love there is
- Discussion Questions
 - Why is chastity the antidote to so many of the ills afflicting the world today?
 - Why is John 12:24-27 the blueprint for authentic manhood?
 - How is the virtue of chastity perceived at your school or in your group of friends?
 - What is your first impression of the term chastity?
 - In what ways is a man who has mastered himself, his passions, and his desires more of a real man than a man who is capable of mastering others?

- How can working on your interior life help you with the practice of mastering yourself? What will be some challenges you'll face, and how can we as a family help?
- Scripture
 - John 12:24-27
 - Ephesians 5:25-30

Session 2: Strength & Discipline, Part 2,

- Introduction
 - Is it possible for a young man to live a chaste life in this day and age? In this session, we'll answer that question honestly and explore the essential elements of chastity, including how to look at women with fresh eyes, avoid the triggers that lead to temptation, show authentic masculinity to others, and learn how to love sacrificially. Sound crazy? It isn't. Here's how. Presented by Jason Evert.
- Part 1 (6:34)
 - The culture is so obsessed with sex and the body and nakedness. To answer the question we have to go back to the beginning
 - Eve's naked body in the beginning was an invitation to Adam to love her in a way that reflected the very love of God. A love that's free, total, faithful, and life-giving
 - In today's world love isn't free but coerced, manipulated, paid for in prostitution, leads to sexual abuse. Not a free-gift of self
 - Not total because love today is hooking-up, friends with benefits
 - Faithful?- No, there's cheating, infidelity, and adultery
 - Fruitful and life-giving?- No, it's contracepted, sterilized, and aborted
 - We have to redeem our desires to be pure again. Have to relearn how to look at women
 - When a beautiful woman comes walking your way we have to 1.) have custody of our eyes which are the window to our soul.
 - Turning away from temptation isn't the goal. It's the beginning.
 - Instead of immediately looking away from a beautiful women, pray Psalm 84:1- 'How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord.'
 - Beauty invites us to a response to come out of ourselves
 - Pray for her. Pray for the women on the ads and magazines, etc. They need your prayers and fasting for her
 - www.e5men.org
 - "God assigns the dignity of every woman as a task to every man...each man must look within himself to see whether she who was entrusted to him as a sister in humanity, as a spouse, has not become in his heart an object of adultery."- St. Pope John Paul II
 - Through your body you can make visible the invisible realities of God and the love of the Trinity through a gift of yourself
 - 'This is my body given up for you'
 - St. Ignatius of Loyola- The human soul is like a fortress and Satan patrols the outside walls of the fortress looking for a weak spot to attack
- Part 2 (4:15)
 - Men need to learn manhood from other men. We need to have men in our lives that we can look too

- If you don't have these examples in your family then look to the Bible
 - Ex. Book of Tobit- young man named Tobiah
 - St. Joseph
 - 40 martyrs of Sebaste
 - Jesus
- Part 3 (8:23)
 - 10-point game plan on how to live a pure life- "Every act of virtue is an act of war"
 - 1. Humility- admit you're weak and wounded, and that you need God's strength
 - 2. Brotherhood- good friends; community
 - 3. Confession
 - 4. The Eucharist- "Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and devotion to the Blessed Virgin are not simply the best way but in fact the only way to keep purity. At the age of 20 nothing but Communion can keep one's heart pure...chastity is not possible without the Eucharist."- St. Phillip Neri
 - Elijah told to get up and eat by the angel or he wouldn't have the strength to finish the journey (1 Kings 19)- This is what the Eucharist is for us in our journey towards purity
 - 5. The Name of Jesus- Say Jesus' name when tempted
 - 6. Devotion to the Virgin Mary- "Men do not fear a powerful hostile army as the powers of hell fear the name and protection of Mary."- St. Bonaventure
 - 7. Guardian Angel
 - 8. Date holy girls- only date a girl if you could see yourself marrying her; true femininity inspires authentic masculinity
 - 9. Avoid the occasion of sin
 - 10. Perseverance
 - The standard for purity is the very purity of God
 - Need to make the invisible love of God visible by the way we love his daughters
- Discussion Questions
 - How does gratitude (being grateful for the beauty of women) and intercession (praying for them) one of the greatest ways to counteract temptations to actually love these girls instead of merely lusting after them?
 - What is your definition of authentic manhood? How is this definition rooted in chastity?
 - In what ways is Jesus Christ a perfect model for authentic manhood?
 - Who is a man in your own life who calls authentic masculinity out of you? Why is that man an inspiration for you?
 - How can we support you as a family to live out a chaste life?
 - How can the Church support you throughout your road to living a pure life?
- Scripture
 - 1 Kings 19
 - 1 John 3:2-3
 - Tobit 8:4-9

Session 3: Every Man's Battle, Part 1, by Matt Fradd

- Introduction
 - Living up to God's standards of purity is a challenge for today's teens. It means holding to values that are contrary to the majority of people around them. In this session we show young men how to become stronger and healthier through the Sacraments, through fasting and prayer, by emulating saintly heroes, and by supporting and being accountable to one another. Presented by Matt Fradd.
- Part 1 (3:01)
 - Why is porn such a trap? What are the consequences looking at porn? How can we break free?
 - 2 things necessary for this study- humility to admit that you might have a problem and sincerity, to be sincere with the Lord, ourselves, and our brothers
- Part 2 (2:55)
 - 2 ends that we were created for in Heaven- ecstasy and communion
 - Pornography offers a warped sense of that. It seems I'm giving myself to her which I'm not. It seems she wants to receive from me but of course she doesn't.
 - Porn seems to offer so much, but it leaves us more empty than we were in the first place
 - We want to experience intimacy but porn leads to further and further isolation
 - There seems to be nothing that affirms the strength of a man more than when a woman desires that strength. We go to porn to validate that sense of masculinity, but we instead become emasculated
 - Sin promises us everything, but leaves us more empty than we were in the first place
- Discussion Questions
 - How has this been true in your life? How has sin promised you so much but delivered you nothing? How has this been true with the sin of pornography?
 - What are some counterfeit messages the culture gives men about sexuality?
 - Why is it important to surround yourself with people who can help protect you from temptation—specifically sexual temptation?
 - Is there something in your life that needs to change, based on what you have learned? What help do you need from me to make those changes?
 - Why do you think so many men are tempted by pornography? In what ways does pornography abuse a woman's beauty?
- Scripture
 - Matthew 5:27-28
 - Genesis 3:1-5

Session 4: Every Man's Battle, Part 2, by Matt Fradd

- Introduction
 - Deep within every young man is a desire to be who God is calling him to be. But stepping up to the challenges of true manhood takes a stout heart and supernatural courage. Lust is a relentless and ruthless foe. But even stronger is the God-instilled desire to be respected for valor and love. In this study, we'll look at the many ways a

young man can fight temptation, claiming one victory at a time and relying on the mercy of God in the midst of defeat. Presented by Matt Fradd.

- Part 1 (3:51)
 - Pornography conditions a man to think certain things in certain ways about women, sex, and intimacy
 - Pornography hurts us spiritually, socially, neurologically
- Part 2 (3:42)
 - Become who you are, embrace your dignity as a child of God
 - God's commands and the Church's teachings don't necessitate the repression of our deepest desires rather they call for their expansion
 - Who you desire to be in your heart of hearts is who God is calling you to be
 - The only thing that can overcome a desire is a stronger one- shame, guilt, embarrassment not enough to overcome pornography
 - What could be stronger than a guy's desire to lust after and use a woman? – His desire to love her properly, his desire to fight for her, his desire to protect her
 - Your desire to love, protect is deeper than your desire to use someone
 - "The ways of the Lord are not easy, but we were not created for an easy life, but for great things, for goodness." – Pope Benedict XVI
 - "The glory of God is man fully alive" - St. Irenaeus
 - "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" - John 10:10
- Part 3 (6:09)
 - 5 steps to help overcome pornography- purity isn't a destination to be reached, but a daily battle, a choice
 - 1. Admit that there's a problem
 - 2. Prayer and Fasting
 - www.e5men.org
 - 3. Accountability and Confession
 - 4. Good peer pressure- friends that can peer pressure us to be saints
 - 5. Patient perseverance
 - The only shame is turning around and leaving the battlefield
- Discussion Questions
 - What kind of man do you want to be?
 - What kind of man do you want to be remembered as?
 - What kind of men do I respect? Who in your life most models the man that you described?
 - Why is it that people get addicted to drugs or pornography?
 - Why is it important to have an accountability partner in this daily battle?
 - Who in your circle of friends can you count on?
- Scripture
 - John 10:10
 - Psalm 51:1-2, 10
 - Mark 2:1-12