

STUDY GUIDE
**MAMA
BEAR**
Apologetics[®]



GUIDE
to
SEXUALITY &
GENDER
IDENTITY

HILLARY MORGAN FERRER
with TEASI CANNON



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MAMA BEAR APOLOGETICS GUIDE TO SEXUALITY AND GENDER IDENTITY STUDY GUIDE

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Welcome, and How to Use This Study Guide

Welcome! We at Mama Bear Apologetics are so excited to share this study guide with you. Our sincere desire is that as you work through it, you will be gently challenged but not at all overwhelmed.

We love our study guides. They help us better sift through the material and digest it so we can integrate it into our everyday lives. And in *Mama Bear Apologetics Guide to Sexuality and Gender Identity*, we give a lot of practical tips for addressing these ideas with your kids. But what if we could offer you even *more* practical tips? More is better, right? (Unless you have something like scabies, and then less is generally better.)

As you read through this guide, you'll notice this icon, , which symbolizes a discipleship opportunity. With each discipleship opportunity comes an activity or conversation that will translate abstract ideas into a more concrete form so that little minds can better understand the concepts. We don't have specific ages attached to each opportunity, though we sometimes specify if the activity is for your older cubs.

Something we want everyone to keep in mind: The questions at the end

of each chapter in your main book and the questions in this study guide are all applicable for dinnertime discussions! Don't assume that since you are going through these questions as an adult (or in a group of adults) that they can't be used for kids. Children from middle school on up should be able to track with the ideas presented here. So if at some point you want to grab another study guide and go through the process again with your middle schooler or high schooler, you can. And we encourage you to do so! A book doesn't have to be labeled "teen guide" to still be applicable for teens.

Challenges to identity—both through gender and sexuality—are confusing, and we cannot underestimate the impact they are having on our children. It's time to take back some ground, Mama Bears! And as we do so, remember: We don't stand before God accountable for our successes. We stand before Him accountable for our *faithfulness*. So let's be faithful in stewarding these precious boys and girls under our care.

With that in mind, here's how to make the most of your reading and this guide.

Before you read a chapter in *Mama Bear Apologetics Guide to Sexuality and Gender Identity*:

- We would love for you to have a four-color retractable click pen (flashback to high school!) on hand, but if you don't, grab four different colored pencils, pens, or highlighters and use a system similar to the one we recommend below.
- Have a dictionary or dictionary app ready for reference.
- Skim through the chapter's title and bold-print subheads to get an idea of what you're going to read. (This pre-reading strategy helps you get excited to dig in.)
- Think of a question or two you hope will be answered in the chapter.
- Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth.

Lord God, our world is so broken. There is so much sexual confusion everywhere. Who am I? What can one person do? Open my eyes like the servant of Elisha, Lord. Let me see Your angels who are with me in the battle. I pray You would remove any fear I have regarding this topic and plant my feet firm in Your truth. I pray that as You shepherd me into a biblical understanding of sex and gender, that I would understand Your commandments for sex and Your design for gender. And as I understand Your commandments, Lord, help me lead my children to understand the beauty of Your magnificent design.

While you read the chapter: I have used this multicolor note-taking system for almost a decade. It has helped me to actively read and organize material so that, even years later, I can go back and glance through a book for its main points and my favorite quotes. I find that color-coding is helpful for future reference purposes. The strategy suggested here is a simplified version of my system, so you can tweak it to what works best for you.

- Black ink: Draw a box around unfamiliar words and draw a squiggly line under the definition *if* it appears within the text. (Squiggly lines will help you distinguish definitions from general notes.) If the word is not defined, record definitions in the margins or at the back of the book. We recommend looking up the definitions right away!
- Blue ink: Underline helpful passages for easy skimming. This will help you when you search through the book later for the main ideas.
- Green ink: Use this color to mark content you have questions about. (I also draw a question mark in the margin.)
- Red ink or highlight: Save this for the true “Aha!” moments or ideas you want to remember.

After you read the chapter:

- Quickly skim through the chapter to review all the words you’ve underlined, highlighted, and written in the margins. (Look at all those colors. This is your pat on the back for being an active reader!)
- Jump into the study guide material for that chapter.

In each chapter of the study guide, you will find an introductory thought followed by seven major sections. Because we want you to set your own pace, we haven’t divided the lessons or sections into specific days; but you could choose to work through one section in a day. Here are the types of sections:

Active Reading Notes: Use this section to record a few pre-, mid-, and post-reading thoughts, including vocabulary. Here’s an example.

READING FOCUS	MY RESPONSE
BEFORE YOU READ:	
After skimming the chapter title and subheads, what is one question you would like to have answered in the chapter?	<p>My question: Why does sex matter?</p>
WHILE YOU READ:	
List three words you discovered in the chapter, and we will add a few more words we hope you will find and look up in a dictionary.	<p>My words: Write down words that are unfamiliar to you. Then look them up and make your best attempt at recording a brief definition.</p> <p>Book words: Here, you’ll find words that are defined in the book. Page numbers are given so you can record the definitions in this space.</p>

READING FOCUS	MY RESPONSE
AFTER YOU READ:	
Did you find an answer to your pre-reading question? (We hope so.) If yes, write it down.	My answer: Sex matters because it helps us see and know God accurately.
List three things you highlighted or underlined in the chapter. This can be new information you learned, encouraging reinforcements of things you already knew, or just plain anything that popped out at you.	My “Aha!” moments: 1. 2. 3.

Pick a Question: As you use this study guide, don’t forget about the study questions already in the main book. Use this space as a spot to review the questions and respond to the one you find most thought-provoking.

Empowering Words: Supplemental and significant vocabulary will be given here.

Empowering Thoughts: Supplemental or reinforcing thoughts will be included here.

Digging Deeper: Here we will ask some guiding questions to help you process what you’ve learned and further equip you to “ROAR Like a Mother.” Be aware that not all questions are asking you to simply regurgitate what the book said. Many are intended to make you *think* through the material, draw connections, and wrestle through real-life scenarios. But don’t worry! If you get stuck on a question, just move on until you feel more comfortable digging in. Better yet, grab some girlfriends for coffee and discuss it! Whether or not you answer every single question, you *will* come away from this study guide with a much stronger grasp of the subject.


Key Scriptures: Here we'll offer a few related verses to help you reflect on what God says regarding the ideas presented in each chapter. We recommend journaling through each scripture, evaluating *how* the passages reinforce or address the biblical perspective of the topic at hand.

PAWS for Prayer: Here you will be guided in a sweet time of prayer—a moment to take what you're learning to God and intentionally involve the Holy Spirit in your journey. The PAWS section has four steps:

- **PRAISE**—Identify the *attributes* of God that you have seen manifested lately. You may be thankful for a recent bonus, but you will want to *praise* God for being Jehovah Rapha, the God who provides. Or maybe you didn't get the bonus and you don't know why. *Praise* God for His omniscience and how He knows what you need when you need it, even if you don't understand. Praising God for *who* He is rather than *what* He does will help orient your heart toward Him no matter what is going on in your life, good or bad. If you need a little help with this section, I recommend Googling “attributes of God” or “names of God.”
- **ADMIT**—Acknowledge the areas where you have blown it. Maybe you didn't trust God, or you acted in anger with your kids or husband. Whatever your dirty laundry, bring it to God here. He already knows your heart and wants to be with you as you learn to navigate this thing called the Christian life.
- **WORSHIP through thanksgiving**—Here is where you can thank God for specific things He has *done*. When you remember that all good things come from Him, you realize you have much to be thankful for.
- **SUPPLICATION (or SUBMIT your requests)**—After you have praised God for who He is, admitted where you are struggling, and worshipped through thanksgiving, then present your requests to Him. Sometimes God doesn't give us what we ask

for because we ask with wrong motives (James 4:3). Or sometimes what we want would thwart something that He—in His goodness and knowledge—is doing in our lives that couldn't be accomplished if He answered our specific wish. But He still wants us to ask, and we can know that however He chooses to answer, it is for our good.



Don't forget! Unlike other study guides, this one has bonus discipleship content. Every time you see a , we have provided you with extra activities or conversations to have with your kids.



PART 1

Things I Probably Already Knew...But Kinda Forgot

In part 1, we learn how God defines sex and what He desires to communicate through human sexuality. We learn about the power of sex and how destructive it is when misused. We also define and explain the wonderful aspects of a biblical worldview, including how it affects the way we view sexuality. We see that an incorrect view of sex can lead to an incorrect view of God and His heart—including His good designs and His love for all humanity.

We hope the following pages will shed light on the cultural confusion you're likely experiencing related to all things sex. We also hope to empower you to have God-honoring convictions and conversations with your friends, neighbors, and children, and to find hope and peace in God's good design for His creation. Our goal is to equip you to share that hope with a hurting world in need of truth and love.



LESSON 1

Sexually Set Apart

*How Sexual Holiness Is a Nonnegotiable
for Disciples of Jesus*

God's commands regarding sex are not just a side issue. They are a prominent theme spanning the Old and New Testaments, especially in terms of holiness. The word *holy* literally means "set apart for a special purpose." As Christians, our sexual ethic is a major way in which we are called to be set apart from the world because sexual holiness is, in essence, a sign of our knowledge of and commitment to God. It has always been this way.

—*Mama Bear Apologetics Guide to Sexuality
and Gender Identity*, pages 25–26

ACTIVE READING NOTES

READING FOCUS	MY RESPONSE
BEFORE YOU READ:	
<p>After skimming the chapter title and subheads, what is one question you would like to have answered in the chapter?</p> <p>List three words you discovered in the chapter in addition to the words we have provided.</p>	<p>My question:</p> <p>My words:</p> <p>Book words: <i>postmodernism</i> (page 24)—</p> <p><i>holy</i> (page 26)—</p> <p><i>the argument from silence</i> (page 28)—</p> <p><i>covenant</i> (page 32)—</p>

READING FOCUS	MY RESPONSE
AFTER YOU READ:	
<p>Did you find an answer to your pre-reading question? (We hope so.) If yes, write it down.</p>	<p>My answer:</p>
<p>List three things you highlighted or underlined in the chapter. This can be new information you learned, encouraging reinforcements of things you already knew, or just plain anything that popped out at you.</p>	<p>My “Aha!” moments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3.

PICK A QUESTION

Use this space to review the study questions at the end of the chapter and respond to the one you find most thought-provoking or convicting.

EMPOWERING WORDS

- *Argument from silence*—Drawing a conclusion based on what isn't said, rather than what is said. Example: One kid telling another, "Well, nobody ever said we couldn't [insert whatever wild thing they want to do that it never occurred to you to prohibit]."
- *Sufficiency of Scripture*—Scripture contains all the words God intended His people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and it now contains what we need to know for salvation and trusting and obeying God perfectly (Deuteronomy 29:29).
- *Perspicuity (clarity) of Scripture*—According to this doctrine, you don't need a seminary degree to understand what God has said to you and what He wants for your life. The Bible's teachings can be understood by all who read it to seek God's help (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).
- *Sin*—Any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature.
- *Sanctification*—The maturation process of a Christian whereby they progressively become more like Christ in heart, words, and action. Unlike the gift of salvation, the sanctifying process involves hard work, obedience, and our active and mindful participation.

EMPOWERING THOUGHTS

In this chapter we learn that *holiness* literally means "set apart for a special purpose." On page 26, we read that one of the defining characteristics of Christ's followers is sexual holiness. While sexual holiness is a significant defining characteristic of Christ-followers and reflects essential truths to those around us, we must remember it's not the primary purpose of the gospel or the ultimate goal of the Christian life.

Read the following verses and record what they say about our primary goal as followers of Christ.

Philippians 3:10-12:

Hebrews 13:21:



What Does It Mean to Be Set Apart?

What items do you have lying around your home or office that are set apart for special use? A LEGO set? A special dress? Video game controllers? What about things that have a particular use and would be ruined were you to misuse them? (Like contacts. You can't really use contacts for anything other than seeing. And if you do...well, you probably shouldn't put them back in your eyes!) Start creating this category in your child's mind so they have examples to draw from when you discuss that they as a Christian are to be holy—set apart for a special use.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Read the paragraph that starts by describing the Asherah poles on page 27. What can we learn about the character and motives of the pagan gods from the type of worship they required?

How is that different from the God of the Bible?

2. In the first paragraph of the section called “The New Testament: Pointing Back to God’s Design” on page 28, we are introduced to a common misinterpretation regarding Jesus’s views on sexuality, especially homosexuality. This view asserts that because Jesus doesn’t explicitly condemn homosexuality, it must be condoned—at least in some measure. How is the argument from silence logically fallacious and theologically dangerous? What other kinds of things could we theoretically consider permissible if our only criteria for what’s impermissible is something that’s explicitly forbidden by Jesus?

3. Read the verses listed on pages 29-30. How would you respond to a self-identified Christian who claims that Christians who reject other sexual expressions or orientations are misrepresenting God’s heart, or promoting harmful doctrines that hurt and marginalize people whom God has called us to love? (Pay special attention to the Thessalonians passage.)

4. A covenant is a promise that is ratified and remembered by something external. Use pages 32–33 to help you fill in the chart below highlighting several covenants in the Bible.

COVENANT/ WITH WHOM	PROMISE	PHYSICAL/ EXTERNAL SIGN
Noahic		
Abrahamic		
Marriage		

5. How might understanding sex as an act of repeating marital vows in bodily form change the way people view sex, even within a marriage? How might it change the way husbands approach or respond to their wives during intimate moments? What about wives to their husbands?
6. How is fire a useful analogy for explaining the boundaries regarding sex (pages 34–35)?

Name some other teaching examples you could use with your kids:

- Things so powerful they need boundaries

- Things so valuable they need protection

7. How does the Christian view of sex reflect a heightened value on human beings and their bodies?



Keeping It Simple

This is where you can have some fun. Pick something random in your house—such as orange juice or a spatula—and then remind your kids constantly throughout the week everything it’s *not* to be used for (such as washing the dog, waxing the car, or cleaning up vomit). Have them join in; I bet they’ll be even more creative than you! When they’ve had about all they can take, ask them, “We had some fun with that, but do you think our extra instructions regarding [fill in the blank] were helpful? Stupid? Necessary? Unnecessary?”

Bring it back to God’s Word and sexuality. The Bible doesn’t claim to be an exhaustive book, detailing everything *not* to do. Instead, it provides us with a clear original design (Genesis 5:2), the original purpose of sex (Genesis 1:28; 2:23-25), and a few examples of people misusing His good gift of sexuality (Leviticus 18; 20). If your kids ever ask if an alternate sexuality

or gender is a sin, simply respond with: “What was God’s original design?” Keep it simple.

KEY SCRIPTURES

We encourage you to read the following verses in context (meaning, read at least the entire chapter). Reflect on how they relate to what you’re learning, and thank God for the hope and guidance found in His Word.

- 2 Timothy 2:21: “If anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.”
- Hebrews 10:26 (NIV): “If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left.” (This whole chapter is amazing.)
- Romans 12:2: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

PAWS FOR PRAYER

In closing this chapter, reflect on what you learned in lesson 1 and journal your prayer to God here:

Praise:

Admit:

Worship with thanksgiving:

Supplication (submit your requests):