

Transcript 190

Shea Houdmann

Welcome to the Got Questions podcast. Rejoining me today is Doctor Christopher Yuan. He's been on the podcast a couple other times and really enjoy him and he's got a unique perspective and a very biblical perspective on issues that we at Got Questions that are receive a ton of questions about. So today, we're going to be going to be throwing a couple of questions at him, but also talking about this new project that he has recently launched. So Christopher, welcome back.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Thanks Shea for having me on again.

Shea Houdmann

So question number one, what is the Holy Sexuality project?

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Well, the holy sexuality project actually is an adaptation from my book Holy Sexuality and the Gospel, which I I actually wrote that for adults, young adults, parents, grandparents and college students. Maybe some, you know, some kind of maybe senior kids in high school. But I've adapted that, those 20 chapters into a video series. You know, I've bemoaned the fact that maybe kids aren't reading enough, but we can't change that. Kids are really consuming videos. And I thought, what a great way to maybe use that medium to communicate biblical sexuality and to keep kids engaged. So it's 12 lessons, 36 videos, 270 minutes of content. We also use animation, really high quality animation from animators and illustrators and sound engineers that did stuff for the Bible project. So we're talking really high quality custom animation. And there's also a great parent guide and it's it's geared for parents and grandparents to do at home.

Shea Houdmann

What besides, I totally understand what you're saying about about video, I mean, I'm I'm a reader, I still love to read. It's definitely transitioned for me to want to absorb content via video

as well, but I'm I'm getting there. And definitely recognize, especially among younger generations, that video is is huge. I mean YouTube is the #2 search engine in the world after Google. We're trying to get more and more videos at Got Questions that are content out there. But for video based content for, what are you finding is the primary use like for the Holy Sexuality Project. Is it, is it parents with their kids? Is it youth pastors and churches? Is it? Yeah, all the above.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Great question. Well, you know, initially I think I was, our our team, we were creating this for youth groups and for maybe Christian schools in the classroom. And I think a lot of the other resources are geared that way. And and let's be honest, we're kind of especially when we do church, everything is program based. Well, my struggle that our ministry have, we've been kind of preaching for the past several several years over a decade, is that we find one of the biggest problems, it's not just helping our kids to understand the sexuality, but who should take the lead. Generally when it comes to sexuality, it's the schools or it's youth group, youth pastors. Now I think youth pastors, they have a a high calling and it's very important to disciple our kids. Christian schools, they it's a great call to help shape our kids to see how God influences our thinking in education.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

However, the Christian school and the youth pastor, they never replaced the parent. And especially on issues of sexuality, parents must take the lead. Well, all the resources out there are the primary most of the resources are focused on youth group. Or on the Christian School. So our goal is to bring the conversation you know, not so much from the the classroom, which would be kind of secondary, but in the living room and in the dining room and in the family room where this, these conversations, this is where it needs to be primarily had as opposed to having the world educate our kids or others educate our kids. So there's a little bit of a paradigm shift that that we made ourselves to make that the main focus. That this is made for parents and

grandparents to do at home with their grandchildren and and teenagers and preteens to have this conversation so we can help to stem the tide.

Shea Houdmann

Absolutely. I mean, and just so our listeners know will include some links to where you can learn more about the Holy Sexuality Project and also Christopher's personal testimony. Sexuality is an issue that he can speak to from the heart. As someone who, prior to coming to faith in Christ, was a practicing homosexual, God saved him and transformed his life, and now he lives a life of seeking to follow Jesus with all of his heart. So we'll also include more of his testimony in the a previous episode where we interviewed you about your book, Holy Sexuality. So happy to continue this, but Christopher's testimony plays a large role in the ministry that God has call him too so I don't want you to miss out on that.

Shea Houdmann

But identity, we get so many questions about, for parents who are struggling with knowing how do I minister to my child who's getting this message in school that their gender identity is fluid? They can self declare as whatever they want to or it's almost like homosexuality is passe, like no one, even it's not extreme enough. It's not interesting enough. Now it's the whole transgenderism. I feel that I am not the biological gender that I was born as a biological sex that I was born with. The parents are like, blown away that their kids, extremely young ages are having to deal with the stuff that they've never even heard of until very recently in their entire adult life. So how can parents help their kids understand gender identity or just identity as a whole? That we are to find our identity and that we're created the image and likeness of God. And if we've trusted in Jesus Christ our Savior, that it adds a whole new level to identity. But so a hard question in that we've you've got unsaved parents who are trying to minister to their kids who are dealing with this, but also Christian parents who are trying to help their children navigate this new world. So I know it's extremely broad question, but to speak to parents in the sense of how in the world do parents know how to minister to their kids knowing what they're

struggling with, know what they've been exposed to, know what they're being taught, know what their peer group is going through? All of that.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Yeah. You know, Shea, I think if there is one thing that we miss generally, especially not only just as Christians, but as the the older generation of adults and parents, I believe the one issue that we don't understand as a man who had lived has lived as a gay man, if I wanted to help others to understand this well, the one thing that is missed is that we don't fully comprehend how this younger generation and now the world no longer views sexuality as attractions or as desires. You know what, what you know or as behavior. It has fully become a person. In other words, a person when they say I am gay, it's not well, I'm a person who has these attractions. It is this is who I am. So is it what I feel? Or is it who I am? And it has shifted completely today where our kids, I don't think they grew up in a time where the culture viewed sexuality as what I desire or what I do. Our kids today fully comprehend not only sexuality, but also this concept of gender dysphoria to be who a person is. And this is why people take so much offense to when we talk about this as sinful behavior, because a person cannot separate their behavior from who they are.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Here, here's a good example. Before I knew Christ, when I identified as a gay man and I was not a Christian, I could not hate my sin without hating myself. Now that I know Jesus, I can hate my sin without hating myself. And our kids are conflating these two things with sexuality and personhood. So when they see their friends like, well, I, I I wanna help my friend. I wanna so I love my friend. I support my friend. They cannot separate their sexuality from who they are or their gender dysphoria. Like, you know their their perception, their self perception of who they are that's that's gender or sexuality, the desires that they have. They can't separate that it is fully become who they are. So I think we have to start there.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

In my book, *Homosexuality in the Gospel*, I begin there. The 1st is Chapter 2, Chapter 3, is on, and Chapter 4 is on identity. Who we are. And I knew that I had to start there, especially since this is geared for our kids, geared for our teenagers. There's so much confusion where if a person says, well, I'm having these desires, well, this is who I am. That's why they say, you know I am gay. Not I have same sex attractions or I have these desires or I am in this relationship. These has become who they are. So we need to start there. Because if we don't start there, the trajectory of where we're going to land is going to be off from Christ. And I'll, I'll be honest, I think this is going to, this is the litmus test for approaches today. Even many that say that they're Christian views of sexuality that where it's off where they don't start right. Where they think, well, this is we're just quibbling over words. We're not quibbling over words. Words matter. It's almost like saying well like when it comes to theological doctrinal issues we're we're just quibbling over words. There are meanings and doctrine and theology and philosophy and worldview behind every single word. So by simply not understanding that gay means way more than just having attractions, that gay today means it is a complete person. That distorts then their their a person is not able to hate their sin without hating themselves.

Shea Houdmann

That that's powerful. And I that's the observation that even when I grow, I was growing up, homosexuality was viewed as a oh, you're attracted to people of the same sex. I mean, it was a it was a attraction, something you felt something you did. It's still today that's that's what my brain defaults to. But it's understanding that no, for people, especially younger people today, it is identity. It is a part of they view it as a part of who they are and or it views them as the entirety. This is my identity. This is who I am.

Shea Houdmann

So how does a proper understanding of identity provide the solution for this and not just for transgenderism, not just for homosexuality, but also all the aberrant forms of heterosexuality? How does a proper understanding of who we are both in Christ and who we are, created in the

image of likeness of God? How is that the solution for all of these things that diverge from what the Bible says.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Yeah, I think and and when and when we're talking about identity, it's it's more than just simply a label you know where people say well, I, you know, people will say I'm American or I'm a lawyer, et cetera. If we really tease that, you know, through and and actually look deeper and impress people, is this your essence? I think most people say that's not my essence. I am American, especially as a Christian we know that's not who we are. That's our temporary citizenship. As the Bible even says, that's not our permanent resident. It's as an American. Or even a person will say I'm a I'm a lawyer. Well, it. That's what you do. That's your job. That's not your essence. So what we're talking about is not just the label, not just how you identify, but what is your identity. And so almost to kind of maybe cause less confusion. We're talking about essence, personhood. This is who we are.

Dr Christopher Yuan

And when we look to Scripture, scripture is actually pretty clear. The Bible, we can't even get through the first two chapters of Genesis where Genesis helped us to understand who we are, our personhood. We're going to get it to, you know, I'm going to use a big word ontology. That's our essence. And when we look at this Genesis one, we see Genesis one, verse 27, the image of God passage. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God, he created him male and female. He created them. So right there in that in that verse we see that we are created in the image of God. There is no other being created in God's. Angels aren't even created in God's image. All the animals that were created not created in God's image. But the pinnacle of creation, humanity, male and female, are created in his image. That's amazing. That's wonderful.

Dr Christopher Yuan

But that's not the end of the story unfortunately, we have then Genesis 3. And then we have the

fall. Now the and and because of the fall, Adam and Eve, their sin that has affected the whole human race. That's the generational after generation, every, every human being after Adam and Eve, including it that we're all fallen. Because of their sin we all now have a sin nature. And there's consequences of that that brought death, that brought distortion in the ways that that we think, that we view things that we even understand, our desires, our feelings, our thoughts are all now tainted by the fall. So having those, but it's important also to say that's not our essence. Why? Because in eternity as we are redeemed because of Christ that's you know that that is distorted. So our our human nature is distorted, but not that the image of God can never be distorted. So understanding who we are, that's important to understand that we're creating God's image. But as human beings, there is a distortion because of the fall. So it's very important as we understand not only who we are, but also understand human sexuality and gender that we begin with this, that we're created in God's image. But we're also all fallen.

Shea Houdmann

That's that's huge. So many things. Because the questions that we receive or whether it's about someone that is something that an individual is dealing with or whether it's a question about someone trying to know how to Minister. But just knowing the the biblical story of God created us this way. Sin introduced corruption into every aspect of our beings. And how that we see that playing out today, whether it's fornication, adultery on the heterosexual side, whether it's homosexuality, whether it's the desires, whether it's the actions. And then even the confusion over gender, all of this comes as a result of how sin is corrupting every fiber of our being. And it can't not help but impact how we think of things. So the solution according to your book, which is excellent and also to your holy sexuality project videos is holy sexuality. So let me give you the perfect opportunity here. So what is holy sexuality and how is, do you view that as the solution?

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Yeah. And I would say it's the pattern. I mean, ultimately the the solution is Jesus Christ. And and I wanted to make that very, very clear in my in the book and in the project. As a matter of fact, I I end every lesson with now go and follow Jesus. I think there is a tendency, especially in our programming of churches, is that we end up giving a message and and it can be inadvertent. So I'm not saying it's intentional, but it could be unintended that that what's being communicated is behavior management. You got to do this, you got. Take, for example, our spiritual disciplines, you know, read the Bible, pray, fast, these things. There is a tendency, especially even in books on spiritual disciplines, that it's about, do, do, do and that that then and it's pointing to God. But it is so much about, well, I gotta do this. I gotta do that. In the same way some of these the approaches and resources books some, you know audio resources I think are helpful, but there is this tendency to say, well, you just don't have sex, you just gotta do this. Don't do that. Don't do this. Don't do this. And yet we know that you can't build a Christian life just on God's no. We need to know God's yes, but also the power behind what enables us to say yes and no to God. It's Jesus. So I wanted so much to make that very, very clear to our kids, it's about following Jesus. But what does that mean? And Jesus tells us in Matthew, Mark and Luke, those three, the three synoptic gospels, deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

As a matter of fact in these are 12 lessons. Everyone of these lessons, and you'll like this, Shea, there's a question and an answer. So this is it fits right in. Every lesson has a question and an answer. Actually, some might have two questions and two answers. Kind of going after what the churches used for thousands of years, you know, a couple 1000 years from very early on. How do we train up kids? We have these catechisms and and we've kind of kind of lost sort of that. Catechisms were used to train up children And these catechisms always began with a question and an answer, a question, and an answer. So I kind of wanted to sort of bring that back using, you know, modern technology. But have these questions and answer.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

And so for lesson 1, the question was if I can remember, what is the ultimate goal when it comes to sexuality? And the answer is the ultimate goal when it comes to sexuality is to glorify God by denying yourself taking the cross and following Jesus. I wanted to make that the forefront. So like beginning the whole thing, we are starting with the glory of God and following Jesus. I think some of you that might you know, know that you know what, what's the ultimate end of man? That you know to glorify God. You know, and and enjoy him forever. So I kind of wanted to shape that a little bit and make this apply to sexuality. But definitely there's a question and answer.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

But the pattern of what that would look like applied to sexuality is holy sexuality. And where that came the the concept came from from my book. And I mentioned that in my testimony that I wrote with my mom, my memoir out of our country. I introduced this concept of holy sexuality. That that came out of my frustration as what I saw as the only two options, heterosexuality, homosexuality. And obviously there can be bisexuality, but that's still a framework, so maybe not. Yeah, I felt like all the options were just on this framework. That's very Freudian. That's very Kinsey in Alfred Kinsey a very. It's a very secular Freudian framework. Heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality as if those are only options. And the reason why I was frustrated was as I was growing in the Lord and reading the Bible and and some people need to, you know, as you say, watch my testimony. God saved me out of not only homosexuality, but I was doing drugs and partying, and I ended up in prison. So I was in prison reading the Bible and it was there that I was challenged with these passages that were condemning same-sex sexual behavior. So God, in his ultimate wisdom and, you know, convicted me of this sin. And I thought, OK, homosexuality is not God's will. It's sin. Well, what is God's will is, is it then homosexuality is bad, heterosexuality is good. But I was reading Scripture cause I had so much time on my hands in prison. And I realized that that the the Bible was also condemning heterosexual sin. So

heterosexuality is too broad. We can't just say that is God's standard, heterosexuality. Yes, but the Bible blesses marriage between one man and one woman. That is undoubtedly, you know, we get that from Genesis all the way to Revelation, a man and a woman, male and female, husband and wife that is blessed by God. It is good. And yet, marriage between a man and a woman is not equivalent to the bigger, broader category secular humanist category, Freudian category of heterosexuality. So I was like, God is not a God of confusion. He is always precise and clear. So what is the most clear, most precise understanding of what is biblical sexuality. Heterosexuality is too broad and include, as you mentioned earlier, Shea, adultery, fornication, etcetera. All these. Anything outside of man and woman in marriage that is still man and woman, that's every every case is is sin. So what's much more precise and includes how Paul lived, how Jesus lived, how our kids live. All the kids that are watching this video series, teenagers, preteens. They're not married. So how are, how are they going to live? Should they just start lusting after women or the or the opposite sex? Should they just have desires? Is that what people who are not yet married are called to do? So that was my frustration. And as I read Scripture, I realize, you know, God is calling us to holiness. He's calling everyone to holiness in our sexuality in the way that we live, and not only to our desires, but also our behaviors. It depends on our relationship status. If you're not yet married, that's all our kids and like my mother, she's now a widow. She's no longer married. How are these people who are who are not married, how are they called to live, be sexually abstinent. But if and if and when you do marry and marriage is just defined as being a male and a female, husband and wife. And how are you going to live? You're going to be faithful to your spouse of the opposite sex. So I thought, well, actually what God calls us to is either chastity in singleness or faithfulness in marriage, and there was not one term for that. So I came up with the term called it holy sexuality. The term is new, but the concept definitely is not. It just comes right out of the pages of Scripture. So holy sexuality is just chastity and singleness or faithfulness in marriage. I think

that helps sets up our kids for life. In whatever situation they find themselves in, whether it is being single for whatever time that is, or when they are married.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah. No, that's that's tremendous. And I love how home, how holy sexuality encapsulates both the chastity before marriage, faithfulness within marriage. So easy for us to get distracted, whether so many questions we receive or a faulty understanding of this where some people get the idea well, it's ok for me to lust for another person as long as it's the opposite sex. Or it's ok for me to engage these things uh, as long as it's not homosexuality. And that's the Bible spends 1000 times more condemning sexual immorality in a heterosexual sense than it does in homosexual sense. So viewing one sin is so much greater than the other, that's not what the message of the Bible is at all. The Bible calls us to purity, which is abstinence before marriage, faithfulness within marriage.

Shea Houdmann

I love the the heart of the Holy Sexuality Project and the book as well, how it focuses on yes, we are sexual beings and it is a part of our design and in marriage is a part of what God is called a marriage to be not just for procreation, but also for the pleasure of it. God did not have to design it that way. But the way the different the desires, the attractions, everything just gets twisted beyond God's desire. It makes us think that that's who we are. That if I can't, we get questions from people who are like, well, I never get married and never have sex, well, then I'm not a complete human being. Like, that's not what the Bible teaches either. Yes. God calls some to singleness. God calls some to a lifetime of abstinence for for various reasons. That doesn't make you less of a human being. So getting our sexuality so wrapped up into who we are leads to all sorts of aberrations from what the Bible teaches. But someone who's happily married for 26 years and got married a fairly young age, I haven't had to struggle with what it's like to be a single man. So my heart truly does go out to those who really desire to be married and can't. And how do I fulfill these feelings, desires that I have? But that doesn't change the message of

the Bible, which is abstinence before marriage, faithfulness in marriage. It's it's simple, doesn't mean it's easy.

Shea Houdmann

So with the little time we have left mean truly, I think the book Holy Sexuality in the Bible and then also the Holy Sexuality Project. It's fantastic. It's approaches it from a it's easy to understand. It really hits home. It answers the questions that we get at Got Questions on these issues again and again and again. And I've I've heard you speak in person before and love hearing how you respond to the questions asked and yeah we've been asked that one and that one and that one and that one and that one. And generally speaking, we're answering the questions the same way. So I'm very appreciative of that. Who? Who would you say the Holy Sexuality Project is for? For those who are listening to this episode or watch this episode and they're interested in them? Who exactly is it for?

Dr. Christopher Yuan

You know, we wrote this specifically for parents with teens and preteens. We also wrote it for grandparents with grandchildren who are teenagers and preteens. And in the most obvious group would be parents and their teenagers and preteens, because a lot of teenagers don't want to talk about sex with their parents. A lot of parents are afraid to talk about sex with their kids, and and so there's this wall that, unfortunately, is there that we hope to kind of tear down and and break down. Because our our teenagers, they feel comfortable talking with their peers, they feel comfortable talking with their teachers. They feel comfortable sometimes, are sometimes comfortable talking about it with their youth pastor, youth leaders, but they don't want to talk about what their parents. Well, these teachers and peers and and youth pastors, they're not gonna be with their with their teens after high school, into college and into the adult years. It has to be parents.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Here's a wonderful story about a a father. He's actually a pastor. He's a New Testament scholar,

and he went over. He emailed us and he said he heard about the holy sexuality project come out. He got it right away in July of last year. And he went through it immediately because he wanted his freshman in high school son and his junior in high school daughter to do it before they started school. So they did it in 12 days, in two weeks. And Lesson 1, which was but basically my testimony and laid out kind of the vision for the whole whole lesson, whole video series. The Son told his parents because it's this is for most both parents, which I think is important because sometimes there's a tendency just just to think that only the father can talk to the son and only the daughter can, mother can talk to the daughter. We want a a daughter to feel comfortable to talk with her mother and and father. And same thing with the son. Talk to both the father. But the the son said to the dad and the mom. You know when when the whole family goes together and they just finished lesson one day, he said. He said, dad, this is so awkward. I'm talking to my parents about sex. I get it. It's going to be awkward. You know I think all all parents realize that kids are going to think that. Well, after they finished the whole video series of lesson 12, the dad asked the son, so do you still feel awkward? And the son said no, dad, not at all. That's a win for us.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

We want that to happen even for grandparents. Grandparents now have all this extra time on their hands instead of just having fun with your kids, instead of just taking them out to, you know, play sports, etcetera. Let's add this most important thing. Having fun is not going to save our kids. Having fun is not going to help educate them from the most, the biggest issue that's pulling our kids away from Christ. So this is really for parents and grandparents. But to be honest, we've also heard from other people that I know some young adults that are going through this. Even some groups that are going through this together because they're thinking I want to be prepared myself for when I become a parent or if I'm, you know, I have a nephew or a niece that I want to go through this. So. And I know some young parents that just had babies. And they're also going through this together.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

So in we we want to encourage, it seems like it's it's really for all people who want to have a better understanding so that they're equipped to be able to engage not only with their kids that they know they're a teenager and preteens, but also for themselves to know how to engage well with the world and with this younger generation on this.

Dr. Christopher Yuan

And we're super excited because, I mean, this was a \$1.2 million project that really should have cost about \$300, \$400 per license two year license. What's what's such a cool blessing is my parents and some other few donors have basically kind of covered the cost. So it's just \$20. We thought we want people to have a little bit of skin in the game so that there's a little bit of kind of feel that they're buying into this. And it's only \$20.00 for a two year license, and actually that \$20 is going to our next several projects. We want to do the holy sexuality project not for teens, which is what this is, but do the holy sexuality project for for for kids in grade school. We wanna do one from from maybe 4 to 6 year old, four to 6th graders and 1st to 3rd graders. So we're super excited about this. And and we're hoping people will kind of join this this vision and kind of this, this new, I don't know, just turning the tide kind of of revolution in a sense to to help to communicate biblical sexuality to this world.

Shea Houdmann

Absolutely. And I love the idea. I hadn't heard that you were working towards a program for younger kids, so look forward to hearing more about that sometime. Obviously, we'll include links to where people can learn more about the Holy Sexuality project and hopefully order. I know you can get in duties or you can watch online, multiple choices, but what is the best way for someone to find out more about the Holy Sexuality Project?

Dr. Christopher Yuan

Yeah, sure. It's just go to our the website holysexuality.com and there this is just a, this is a streaming source. So you would go and you would kind of create an account. You can actually

create a free account just to kind of get a sample lesson to get an idea of what it's like. And then again, it's just \$20 to get a two year license. That then that allows you to kind of watch it again, maybe do it at different times, with different kids. And also and then if you want to find more about my speaking ministry, that's just christopheryuan.com.

Shea Houdmann

Fantastic. So Christopher, thank you for joining me. Thank you for doing what you do. I love you speak the truth in love, the Ephesians 4:15 on these issues. And that your heart is throughout the books, throughout the the videos. I think this is so important, so please hear me give the strongest endorsement possible for the Holy Sexuality project. That's based on the questions that we receive at gotquestions.org and over the past, over 20 years again and again and again. There are so many people who need both solid biblical answers, but then ultimately need to be pointed to what the true solution is and that is in holy sexuality and in finding our identity and who we are in Christ created in the image likeness of God. Rather than basing our identity based on our sexuality and or our confusion about sexuality. So Christopher, thank you for joining me again today. And again, it's the Holy Sexuality Project. And we'll include links in the the show notes at the description when this video goes live on YouTube and also at podcast.gotquestions.org. So got questions. The Bible has answers and we'll help you find them..