

Milestone Four:

Purity for Life

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Ministry Department: Student Ministry

Target Audience: Junior High Parents (8th Grade)

Class Description: The Goal of this class is to take a holistic approach to purity in all of life according to Scripture and to prepare families to celebrate the Purity for Life Milestone together. We want to encourage parents to continue the conversation with their kids about purity and sex and to be equipped to hold a *Purity for Life Ceremony* tailored to their family. We will provide some talking points, goals, and a few resources to get you started.

Time Requirement: 2 Hours

Training Support Required: Classroom with screen and white board

Handouts:

Purity for Life Milestone Four Handout for Parents

Resources:

Parenting by Paul David Tripp

You Have What it Takes by John Eldredge

Lies Young Women Believe by Nancy DeMoss & Dannah Gresh

10 Ultimate Truths Girls Should Know by Kari Kampakis

Raising a Modern-Day Knight by Robert Lewis

The Ultimate Guy's Body Book by Walt Larimore

Practical, Internet resource handouts

Stronghold Cycle Handout

Milestone Four is divided into 3 major sections.

Introduction

Main Topics

We will walk through the *Purity for Life Milestone Four Handout for Parents*, referencing it throughout the seminar and touching on a number of topics. However, much of the discussion will be outlined below, allowing parents to talk and discuss with one another. Please tailor this to your context and audience!

Conclusion

What's happening in the next hour with your 8th grader?

What does a *Purity for Life Celebration* look like?

Introduction

Introduce yourself and pray for the class.

Welcome to Milestone Four – Purity for Life!

Overview:

- The Goal of this class is to take a holistic approach to purity in all of life according to Scripture and to prepare families to celebrate the Purity for Life Milestone together. We want to encourage parents to continue the conversation with their kids about purity and sex and to be equipped to hold a *Purity for Life Ceremony* tailored to their family. We will provide some talking points, goals and a few resources to get you started.
- We have practical resources and Internet resources available, but we will NOT talk about statistics or how to lock the Internet down.
- Our aim is to inspire our kids to live a life of purity as they follow Jesus, NOT to simply keep them from messing up or stumbling. Let's remember Romans 12:1-2!
- Our main focus is on HOW to have the conversation, NOT what the conversation is. We have a handout for you to review and equip you, but information only goes so far if there is no communication!
- Finally, we will discuss what will happen in the next hour with you and your 8th grader as well as what a *Purity for Life Milestone Celebration* can look like for your family.

Disclaimer: (If you do not have kids or do not have teenagers) I work under the philosophy that I'm not the expert when it comes to the *teenage parenting experience*. In my student ministry experience, I feel equipped to share best practices and God's design for purity as I've studied and as I've spoken with other parents. The real experts are sitting right next to you! Be ready to discuss and share with one another this morning!

PARENTING IS HARD!

*Let parents know they should all have the *Purity for Life Milestone Four Handout for Parents* and that you will make reference to this throughout the seminar. Encourage them to take notes.

The Adolescent Pressures of Life (Page 2 of Handout)

To Discuss at your Tables:

How have the conversations been going in your home regarding sex and purity? What questions do you bring this morning regarding these topics?

- Begin with parents having discussion at their tables with these two questions (You'll notice throughout the seminar that parents feel encouraged and supported when they get to share and discuss together at tables.)
 - After about 5 minutes, ask some parents to share the answers to these questions. This allows dialogue to begin and for you, the presenter, to know where parents are in case you want to highlight or stress later topics more or less.
 - Touch on a couple of points from the *Purity for Life Milestone Four Handout for Parents*.
 - If applicable, share a personal story of how you've struggled through or navigated these topics with your own kids.
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What is Biblical Purity? (Page 2 of Handout)

Purity for the Christian is keeping our hearts, minds and bodies holy, without moral blemish or stain, for the purposes of God.

- Expand upon this definition if needed
 - Highlight a few passages from the *Purity for Life Milestone Four Handout for Parents*
 - Ask rhetorically: What does purity look like in your own life? What do you want it to look like in your teenager's life?
 - Challenge parents that if their desire for purity in their teenagers life is different from their own, that is going to hinder their ability to lead their teenager to a life of purity.
 - Encourage parents to make the Purity for Life Celebration for their 8th grader an entire family commitment and celebration. (More on the Purity for Life Celebration later).
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What is Biblical Sex? (Page 3 of Handout)

Biblical Sex is one man and one woman joining together to become one physically in a covenant marriage relationship, forsaking all others, for the remainder of their lives.
(Mark 10:6-9)

- Highlight a few points from the *Purity for Life Milestone Four Handout for Parents*
- God invented and encourages sex to be enjoyed within the boundaries He has provided to bring maximum enjoyment to the marriage relationship.
- Highlight the Fireplace Analogy (Proverbs 5:15-19)

To Discuss at your Tables:

There are many cultural lies about sex that our teens are exposed to. What have you found has been the most helpful in helping your teen understand the Biblical truth about sex? When have you found to be the best times to 'talk?' What breaks down the walls of awkwardness with these subjects?

- After about 5 minutes, ask some parents to share the answers to these questions.
- Create conversation with the group. This is a great time for parents to hear "best practices" from other parents

How Do I Guide Them to Purity? (Page 5 of Handout)

*Spend a good amount of time in this section. This is where this milestone can really help parents grow and become better equipped as the primary faith trainers in their homes. Without communication, there is no transfer of Gospel principles. Parents MUST create an environment for dialogue with their kids, especially over difficult subjects like purity.

- This is key! Lines of communication need to be open and constantly cultivated!
- Encourage parents to read through the handout when they get home for additional tips. Highlight a few you feel are applicable based on the opening question and discussion.
- You'll see Kingsland utilizes Faith Talks/Faith Talk Cards and God-Moments. If your church has something specific, highlight those!

Top Four Tips for Creating Conversation: (Not in Handout)

1. Pray!

- As you talk to your son or daughter, pray "Lord, how are you discipling my son or daughter?" God is at work in our kids, too! We want to partner with God's work in them!
- Listen to the Holy Spirit's leading on whether to listen, ask a question, encourage or guide. The goal is NOT to parent out of your flesh, but out of the Spirit's leading.

2. Create an environment for dialogue

- "Mom/Dad, can I talk to you about something?" Our first response should be, ALWAYS! (If your teenager asks something like this, drop what you're doing and make eye contact with a smile!)

- The days of “prescribing” are going away. You’re in the season of reasoning and guiding. This takes careful listening and question asking.
- Chances are very good that our kids are already exposed to stuff (We must be honest with ourselves, parents. They know more than we think!)
- Fight to not make these conversations harder or more awkward. It will be awkward enough as it is, but if you take the approach that purity and sex are good (in the Biblical context), our kids are better able to see and understand what the flawed and counterfeit ideas of sex and purity are. (i.e. Counterfeit Money Example)
- A student’s advice: “Allow your kids to open up and talk to you about anything without you freaking out right away. Make sure they feel safe coming to you about anything.”
- The First 10 Second Principle! This principle says the first 10 seconds of our reaction when our kids tell us something is going to indicate to them whether we are a safe person to talk to or if they’ll never want to tell us anything again! Don’t freak out!

3. Be a “safe place” for them to run to

- If your kids mess up, who do you want them to go to for help?
- This is the beauty of confession! Things brought to light can be redeemed! God can heal and grace and forgiveness can be experienced. Let’s model this for our kids!
- Be your kid’s BIGGEST advocate on earth! (Show it) (Use examples here if you have of parents who have successfully partnered with their kids through trials)

4. Ask Questions, Listen and Guide Them

- Say things like, “We just want you to be honest and open. We’re not going to get upset. We’re on your team!”
- What do you know about sex? What have you heard about sex from friends or classmates?
- What questions about sex have you wondered about? Use a journal! (Next hour!)
- Listen, keep praying to the Holy Spirit for guidance and guide them!

Healthy Friendships & Dating Relationships (Pages 6-8 of Handout)

Peers will influence our kids immensely during this time in their lives. Developing healthy friendships and being a healthy friend can smooth out the path through these potentially rocky years.

Our sons and daughters noticing the opposite sex is inevitable. The questions around dating will soon arise and parents need to have a good answer and stance on what is appropriate and when. Many parents will leave their children to make their own decisions regarding relationships. Doing so in your child’s life will almost ensure mistakes and regrets – possibly life-altering mistakes and regrets.

- Encourage parents to read through the handout when they get home for additional tips. Highlight a few you feel are applicable to the opening questions.
 - If your church has a stance on dating that you want to share here, please do.
 - Dating is a very gray area for many families.
 - Usually, we make the statement, "The reason we do not take a hard and fast stance on dating is because all of your kids are different. As parents, you need to have conversations now and set the guidelines for dating.
 - Of course, consistency and sticking to these guidelines is key!
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Identity in Christ (Page 9 of Handout)

Your son or daughter's foundation in life is built on his or her identity, perceived or otherwise. Building truth into their lives and reinforcing their true identity in Christ can create a solid foundation to endure the pressures and storms of life.

- Highlight a few passages from the *Purity for Life Milestone Four Handout for Parents*
 - Teenagers will search for their identity often throughout the middle school and high school years. It is crucial to help them understand and ask the question, "Whose am I?" instead of just, "Who am I?" Remind them often they are loved as a child of God and they are loved as your child.
 - Help parents see they have the greatest opportunity and impact on helping their child be confident in their identity in Christ! Whatever resources you can bring to this conversation, bring them!
 - A great book on this subject is Tim Keller's *The Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness*
 - A great audio resource on this subject: <http://www.somatacoma.org/teaching-audio/?category=Legacy+2013>
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Purity for Life Ceremony (Pages 10-14 of Handout)

The family celebration for Milestone 4 includes you presenting your son or daughter with a symbol of their commitment to purity (a ring, necklace, etc.). This symbol will signify the importance of purity in your son or daughter's life and is to be worn as a reminder until they marry. It is meant to be a constant reminder of the strength and grace God gives to walk in purity in obedience to Him. A special family meal presents a perfect opportunity for the Purity Celebration.

- Encourage parents to read through the handout when they get home for additional tips. Highlight a few and share some stories of how you may have heard others holding these ceremonies.
 - There are some really great tips in the handout for parents. There is even a sample “contract” or commitment for parents to sign with their kids. This is a good time for you to stress this should be a family commitment to purity and NOT just their 8th grader!
 - The last page of this handout is examples of blessings parents can pray and even speak over their kids.
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For the Next Hour...

The next hour is devoted to parents and their 8th grade students meeting together to start the discussion and connect over what they’ve learned today. Prepare parents for this time by letting them know the aim of this next hour is to keep it fun, encouraging and for them to convey to their 8th grader that they are a safe place to talk about purity and sex.

- We introduce the “journals” tool to parents here. We let them know we are going to have their kids start a journal with them. A journal is a great tool to use when trying to discuss difficult topics. Sometimes it’s easier to ask the “awkward” question in a journal as opposed to face to face. The key is for parents to write back and stay consistent!
 - We also let parents know their sons and/or daughters may confess some things in the next hour and we need to remember the 10-second principle! Receive them with grace, love and model what Jesus would do!
 - Finally, we prepare parents to pray over and bless their sons and daughters. Some great examples are found on page 14 of the handout!
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Q & A Closing

- Of course, time permitting, ask if there are any other questions regarding the Purity for Life Milestone.
- End your time with encouragement and reminding them we do NOT parent alone, but with the Holy Spirit’s ever-present guidance and help!
- Close your time in prayer.

Milestone Four Second Hour with 8th Graders

The goal of this hour and seminar is to review what parents and students have learned this morning and to encourage families to begin the conversation and work towards celebrating the Milestone, Purity for Life, together. Usually, as parents are being equipped and taught in their class during the first hour of Milestone Four, 8th grade girls and 8th grade boys are being taught on purity and sex as well (See other lesson guides for details).

There is some flexibility on how this hour can look for your church and families, but in general, we have found having these key elements during this hour most fruitful:

- A quick overview and review of what has been taught this morning (from both parents and 8th graders)
- A reminder to 8th graders that no one loves them more on earth than their parents!
- A reminder to 8th graders that even if they mess up, their parents will receive them with grace and ALWAYS want to talk with them!
- Opportunities for students to journal answers to fun and more serious questions
- A time of prayer and blessing from parents over their kids

With all of this being said, here is a rough outline for what Kingsland has currently been using. (We usually have an accompanying PowerPoint Presentation to view):

I. Introduction:

- Welcome and Introduce Leaders
- Students, we want to review a few things from today, give you a resource to use when communicating with your parents and your parents want to bless and pray for you today!
- Discussion and Journal Exercise
 - Parents and students! Share one thing you learned from your session this morning!
 - Students! Open up your journals and finish this sentence, "*The funniest thing I've ever seen my parent(s) do is...*"

II. Your Questions:

We asked students to write down some of the questions they were having regarding Purity and Sex and here were some of them...Here are a few examples we've had in the past:

- If God makes us pure when we are saved, but then mess up, does that make us impure?
- The world tells us that we should dress a certain way; how do we respond to that?
- How do you get out of pornography addiction?
- How do I explain walking in purity to friends who struggle with it?

Here's why I share these questions. I want you to understand something:

1. Your parents love you more than anyone else on earth!
2. Your parents want to support you and help you!

Any questions you have, you can ask your parents. They may or may not know the answers right away, but they really want to help you find those answers!

Students! Open up your journals and finish this sentence, "*My parent(s) love me because...*"

II. Let's Recap:

- We have whoever led and taught 8th grade girls share a quick recap of their session
- We have whoever led and taught 8th grade boys share a quick recap of their session
- This allows parents to hear a little more about what their 8th graders learned

We then recap a few bigger concepts regarding Biblical Purity and Biblical Sex. It's important that what parents were learning about these concepts are the same as what 8th graders were learning:

III. What is Biblical Purity?

Purity for the Christian is keeping our hearts, minds and bodies holy, without moral blemish or stain for the purposes of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

IV. What is Biblical Sex?

Biblical Sex is one man and one woman joining together to become one physically in a covenant marriage relationship, forsaking all others, for the remainder of their lives. (Mark 10:6-9)

- It's good! (We usually pull some thoughts from the handout here)
- We try to break the "awkwardness" here. We usually say something like, "*Guess what students! You're here because your parents did this!*"
- We get a lot of laughs, sighs and "ewwwwws," but parents and students are laughing together and having a light, fun moment (which we've found is extremely helpful for breaking down the barriers to communication!)

V. What if I've already messed up?

- We usually highlight a few passages for students and parents to see together:
- *But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9)*

- *"For sin will not rule over you, because you are not under the law, but under grace."* (Romans 6:14)
- *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!"* (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- We share the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11) and highlight that Jesus did not condemn a seemingly and obviously guilty woman, but He says to her: "Go and sin no more!"
- THIS IS KEY! We really want to emphasize for students that their parents want to receive them with the same love, grace and forgiveness that Jesus gave the woman. They also want to help them out of any trouble or struggles they may be facing. Confession is a good thing and today is the day to be honest with your parents if you need help!
- We've actually had students confess addictions to porn during these milestones and parents have been in much better places to really receive them with grace and support!

VI. Hey Students...

- Choose an accountability partner and seek direction and advice.
- Choose wise friends that have the same values as you.
- Decide how you will respond to pressure before you face it.
- Never cross a boundary you have drawn to please someone or save a relationship.
- Talk to your parents about dating and listen to their wisdom!
- Talk to your parents; have the uncomfortable conversations!
- Talk to your parents if you need help! They are for you!
- On last point: We usually again share with 8th graders that we've talked to a number of students over the years who have struggled with addiction, porn or been in a bad situation that they needed help getting out of, and didn't know how to talk to their parents about it! (Again, we're trying to connect parents – who love their kids the most – and students together)
- Again, we use the journals for help.
- Students! Open up your journals and finish these sentences:
 1. *My biggest question regarding purity and sex right now is...*
 2. *Something I've been hesitant to discuss with my parent(s) is...*
 3. *The # 1 thing I need from my parent(s) is...*
- We let students know their parent(s) will be writing them back this week!

VIII. Closing, Prayer and Blessing:

We want to thank everyone for coming today! We hope and pray this was a blessing to all of you and we ALL commit to walking in Purity with Jesus! Parents, take some time now to pray a prayer of blessing over your 8th grader.

- Consider reading one of these passages:

Numbers 6:24-26

Psalm 121:7-8

2 Corinthians 3:18

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

Matthew 10:29-31

2 Corinthians 9:8

- Close your time by praying together as a family to walk in Purity together.

We let parents and students time and space to close with this and chat about anything else they may want to discuss.