



## Sex Scandals: How are you responding to our larger culture?

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It's becoming a weekly headline. Scandal. Inappropriate conduct. Sexual harassment. Harvey Weinstein. Kevin Spacey. Roy Moore. Louis C.K. Al Franken. Charlie Rose. Matt Lauer. Garrison Keillor. Those are some of the national names and recent stories. I'm sure in your local area you could add some other names, perhaps names of folks you even know personally, folks whom you had respected and trusted at one time.

How are you responding as a Jesus follower?

Here are some less than helpful ways to respond (and I've seen most of these in recent weeks from friends of all shapes, sizes and beliefs):

**Smugness:** "I could have told you that those 'fill-in-the blank' are real sickos." Many have taken the opportunity to draw lines along political allegiances or culture war fronts to deem the opposing side as the root of the problem. The breakdown here is that the brokenness we're witnessing cuts across all such lines: political, racial, socio-economic, and however else we try to divide ourselves. We have enough of this kind of brokenness within the evangelical church to eliminate any thread of smugness or "I told you so" responses.

**Judgement:** Some have taken the approach of judgement, to deem these individuals as uniquely wicked or warped and beyond help. This response, interestingly enough, can come from both the right and the left of our society. It's not helpful and it denies the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Silence or Indifference:** Some of us just choose to pretend like it's not going on. We don't want to hear about it. We don't want to talk about it. We wish it weren't happening and life would be a lot better if the daily news wasn't fixated on "groping" or inappropriate behavior or other subjects that make us uncomfortable.

### Author

The weekly eNews is provided by CGGC Executive Director Lance Finley



How do we respond as Jesus followers?

On one hand, these kinds of stories and circumstances shouldn't surprise us or shock us because we understand that the world that we live in is terribly broken. Things are not the way the Creator intended them to be. Sin has marred God's glorious creation and with that comes the painful reality that we are broken in every facet of our lives: relationally, physically, mentally, emotionally and even sexually. We are all marked by this brokenness, none of us are exempt. While we can understand and even sympathize with the sense of shock or surprise we see playing out in our society, we who have been swept up into God's story understand that things are broken; horribly broken and fall far short of what God intended for His creation.

We live in a society that's broken and confused. It was just a mere two months ago that our culture was celebrating and honoring Hugh Hefner as a boundary breaking trailblazer and pioneer, ignoring the reality that Hefner's work did much to objectify women and normalize pornography. Today there will be 68 million web searches for porn (about 1/4 of all the searches on the web). There will be 68 million instances where God's beautiful creation, created in His own image, and His wonderful gift of sexuality will be twisted and misused, all easily accessed from a computer or mobile device. We are reaping what's been sown.

So, how do we respond as Jesus followers?

Let's find better ways than smugness, judgement, silence or indifference!

Let's start with some humility. All of us are broken. Many of us have our own stories of sexual brokenness. All of us are susceptible to the same kind of brokenness in our own lives. This isn't a time for pointing fingers or thumping our chests, it's a time to thank God for redeeming us from our own brokenness. It's a time to reflect upon the great mercy God has shown us. It's a time to ask God to continue to deliver us from the evil one and the chaos the enemy would like to see take place in each of our lives. It's a time to remember that every name listed above and every accuser who has come forward is someone who was created in God's image. It's a time to remember that every name listed above and every accuser is someone who Jesus loves and gave His life as a sacrifice for their sins.

We can't remain silent. I'm an old youth pastor. I'll admit, there were times as a youth pastor that I felt as if all of youth ministry focused on three primary subjects: sex, drugs and rock-n-roll. It got old after a while. There's more to life than sex, drugs and rock-n-roll. We tend to do one of two things: we either obsess on pet subjects or we ignore them altogether. While a 52-week series on dealing with sexual brokenness is probably not the best response to this moment, ignoring it or remaining silent isn't helping either.

This Sunday a lot of us will gather with a group of brothers and sisters in Christ. As we gather, we've got to anticipate that some of those brothers and sisters are wrestling with their sexual brokenness. In the midst of their confusion and struggle, the enemy of their soul is whispering lies like "you're the only one dealing with this" or "no one else here would understand." Are we going to speak against those lies and reveal the beauty of what God intended with His wonderful gift of sexuality and the hope of restoration that only comes through Jesus Christ?

Are you creating space for brothers and sisters to talk about their brokenness in helpful and redemptive ways? As long as these issues are kept in the dark, they hold power over folks and enslave them.

When you expose sin to the light, it begins to lose its power. When you begin to realize that you're not alone in your struggles and sin, the lies of the enemy become less enslaving.

While we may be broken, we are not broken beyond repair! The Gospel of Jesus Christ offers us the only hope that can restore what's been so horribly broken and marred. Let's respond as Jesus followers, full of truth and grace, proclaiming and demonstrating His Gospel to a culture that's reeling, confused and broken.

Christ's Peace,

***Lance***