

UNIT 4:
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Tent Ropes.
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The Improper Use of My Freedom.
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SIN
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11th Grade.

Sin is the disorder and chaos in my life.

Sin, wounded love.

**These wounds can be healed. I just have to use the
right means.**

The weapons against sin: grace and the virtues.

3. Why Does Lovelessness Destroy Me?

“...because of the hardness
of your hearts...”

Mt 19:8



Recognizing that not responding to the call to love hardens and damages the heart. Love is a GIFT that must be taken care of, and wounded love can be healed.

This session is divided into three distinct moments:

1. The story of the main character, James, a football player by “vocation” who recounts his desire to play football and the sacrifice and effort that he puts into it.
2. Every type of exercise has its risks, and James suffers an injury that prevents him from doing what he so greatly desires.
3. James goes into treatment to heal his injury.

With this example, we will be able to look at the consequences of sin and lovelessness, and the healing of the wounds that they produce.

ACTIVITY 1: The presentation of James begins with the title “*I was made to...called to love*”:



“Ever since I was little, my greatest desire has always been to be a soccer player.

Everyone who knew me would tell me that I had a special gift: the way that I ran, my mastery of the ball, the way I could see the plays...

I have spent a lot of time preparing myself for this game.

I have trained for several hours a day for years. My diet is ideal for an athlete like myself. I am physically and mentally ready to face this and many other games. I am the perfect soccer-playing machine.”

The teacher can encourage the youth to ask themselves whether having a gift is enough to make someone a good soccer player, or whether other qualities are also necessary, such as: effort, determination, will, sacrifice, ambition, overcoming, etc. Invite the youth to share the qualities they come up with.

It is important that the introduction highlight the desire that arises in the person to BE something, as well as how both the person himself and others recognize his GIFT.

ACTIVITY 2: Using photographs of different famous people, have the youth pick out their different qualities and ask them whether these are innate (i.e. whether we all have the same qualities) and whether there is some quality that is common to all human beings, like the capacity to sacrifice, to love, to make an effort, to be generous, etc.

- *Picasso*: art, painting, _____
- *Harrison Ford*: actor, acting, communication, _____
- *Mozart*: composer, musician, _____
- *Sara Baras*: ballerina, bodily expression _____
- *Steven Spielberg*: writer and film director, imagination _____
- *J.R.R Tolkien*: writer, creative _____
- *Rafa Nadal*: athlete, tennis player, motor skills _____
- *Stephen Hawking*: mathematical intelligence, physics, reasoning _____
- *Elton John*: singer, composer, communicator, _____

ACTIVITY 3: Using the following story, show the youth how true love makes us come out of ourselves to encounter the other and seek the common good.

Invite them to think of a concrete example of when they have seen a generous love: in their parents, siblings, grandparents, etc.

Conclude with the idea that all human beings, regardless of their personal qualities, are CALLED TO LOVE. The dynamic of love is that of donation and the desire for the good of the other.

*"One time, my parents bought a lamp for the living room.
The lamp was...hideous!*

But, surprisingly..., my dad liked it... and my mom liked it, too. When I was alone with my dad, he confessed to me that he didn't like the lamp at all, but...my mom liked it, and he wasn't going to contradict her. Later, my mom also told me that they bought it because my dad liked it, even though she thought it was really ugly. After sharing a few laughs as a family, we finally changed out the lamp in the living room."

"I am made to...?", the answer is to LOVE.

Some people have special qualities or gifts for a certain activity: sports, music, literature, dance, that we don't all share. Nonetheless, there IS something that all human beings have in common, an innate capacity that I have as a person: the capacity to LOVE.

**Only in responding to this call to LOVE will I be happy.
Only in giving and sharing love will I become truly happy.**

ACTIVITY 4: To preface this activity, continue with the story of James:



"One day, I step onto the soccer field and....OW!!! What was that? A pulled muscle? A sprain? Did I tear something? ... my knee? I still don't understand what happened: a misstep, skipping a warmup, overuse...It caused an injury. Something is keeping me from doing the activity that I love so much, to which I have been called."

When James gets injured he reads a book that talks about Narcissus.

At this moment, ask a student to recount the story of Narcissus, or ask them to look it up on the internet or in a mythology book, whichever is easier.

After becoming familiar with the story, ask the youth about this reality and whether it can be considered an "injury" on the "field" of love.

It is important for the teacher to help the youth distinguish between being a narcissist and having a healthy self-esteem. This aspect should be look at in depth, emphasizing the importance of learning to love oneself as a basis for being able to love others and of learning to accept oneself in order to donate oneself to the other.

ACTIVITIES 5-6 : Present the youth with a SCENARIO about two good friends: Joe and Zach. Zach asks Joe for help studying for a test, but if he is Joe helps Zach, then he won't have enough time to review himself and get the grade he needs in order to win a scholarship that he really wants. Joe brings his freedom into play and chooses to help out his friend.

Ask the youth what type of things they would like to do for one of their friends.

The teacher should emphasize the importance of "teaching," "practicing" gestures of generosity in friendship in order to build a dating relationship or marriage based on love.

To conclude this second step, give them a series of affirmations to analyze. Then, have them share, inviting them to give concrete examples and to change the affirmations into something positive:

- PRIORITIZE PAYING ATTENTION TO OTHERS BEFORE MY OWN SELFISH INTERESTS.
- ADMIRE AND ENJOY THE BEAUTY OF ANOTHER PERSON WITHOUT VIEWING THEM AS AN OBJECT.
- MAKE THE OTHER THE SUBJECT OF MY LOVE AND ATTENTION.
- INTEGRATE MY SEXUAL IMPULSE, ORIENTING IT TOWARD LOVE.

There are significant wounds that prevent me from truly loving.

Some of these wounds are found on my body, and others in my person: selfishness, looking only at myself, difficulties seeing the other person, lack of generosity or forgiveness or self-donation. There are other wounds that come from the outside, from the attacks of the "world" that I can't beat.

When I have a stronger love for the things of this world than for people, it becomes very difficult for me to truly love them.

When I accept a disjointed vision of the person and of sexuality, the separation between sexuality and love, and the vision of the person as an object rather than the subject of a relationship, I am destroying myself; I am living love badly, and I hurt both myself and others. I break and destroy myself.

When sin enters my heart, it is easy for lovelessness to appear in my relationships with others, even with those whom I care for the most.

Just like there are wounds that are annoying at the beginning, but that end up getting worse and causing serious problems, so, too, there are behaviors that can cause such a grave deficiency over time that they make it impossible for me to love.

The third part of this session consists of showing the youth how to recognize the proper treatment of the injury:



"This injury hurts!!

Not just my foot. The pain radiates through my whole body and I can't control it. I can't cure it. What's happening to me?

Soon, the trainer steps out onto the field with his assistant. They give me a painkiller and an icepack to help with the inflammation..

A bad break! They have to operate!. Rest and rehabilitation...

I have to do my part: get better in order to keep going!"

ACTIVITY 7: Then, start a dialogue with the class, asking them to think about the transcendence of pain for an injury: how it affects the whole body, the whole PERSON.

We will talk about how pain is often something that we can't control by ourselves, and even less something that we can get rid of and cure on our own.

Feeling needy is the first step toward healing.

The same thing happens with love.

ACTIVITY 8: This activity aims to help the youth recognize the lovelessness in their lives, namely, selfishness, weakness, limitation and sin, and how this lovelessness has painful consequences for themselves and for others.

Present them with a series of scenarios in which they have to identify a concrete example of lovelessness.

Here are some examples:

SCENARIO	EXAMPLES
Wounds cause pain.	Living out your sexuality in an isolated way, deprived of its true meaning of expression and communication, and searching instead for your own pleasure, for example, through masturbation. This causes pain: EMPTINESS, LONELINESS and DISSATISFACTION.
When something hurts a lot, we think what we could have done differently to avoid getting hurt.	Giving yourself to someone before the proper moment in a relationship and engaging in gestures that aren't proper to that relationship, for example, kissing and hugging someone that you don't truly love. Over time, the memories of those kisses and hugs can cause regret and sometimes even disgust. And so we think that WE SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT.
We can't cure ourselves. We need help.	Selfishness is a very powerful force that it is very difficult to overcome alone. We try to improve every day, but we always trip over the same thing. I CAN'T DO IT ALONE. I NEED TO GET BETTER. I WANT TO BE HAPPY AND I CAN'T DO IT BY MYSELF. I NEED HELP.
When we are sick we can be contagious to others, and our illness always affects those around us.	Lovelessness, for example being in a bad mood, angry with oneself, has repercussions in our relationships with others. Answering someone rudely affects the person we're talking to. MY ACTS HAVE CONSEQUENCES. SO DOES SIN.
The doctor diagnoses, treats, and heals.	The priest LISTENS, HELPS, CORRECTS, and heals and forgives our sins in the name of the Lord. GOD GIVES US A CLEAN SLATE EVERYTIME WE RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.
We also have to do our part in order to heal.	I need to BE HEALED, TO CHANGE, TO RENEW the LOVE that had fallen into LOVELESSNESS. I NEED TO PULL MYSELF UP AND LOOK FOR THE BEST DOCTOR.

Lovelessness and sin destroy me. The acts of lovelessness hurt not only me, but also affect others.

When the pain of sin affects me I need to be cured, and this healing does not depend on me. I need the help of another, and must do everything in my own power to collaborate with them.

There is a "doctor" who perfectly diagnoses the wounds of love, who knows how to cure them with incomparable gentleness and who gives a personalized treatment that is suitable for every wound of the heart.

This "doctor" has assistants that he himself has chosen with much care, and he has prepared them for this mission with tenderness and patience. This is the good news, that ALL wounds can be cured. I only have to do the "rehab exercises" that I see Christ, the One who truly loves, doing.



Just like I go to a physical therapist to tell me which exercises will help me heal an injury, in the case of sin, I can go to a priest.

I have to pay attention to the love of Christ, who will teach me to love. First, he will teach me to forget everything that makes it impossible for me to love. Then, he will make it so that I can love better every time, so that every time it will be easier and more satisfying than the "love" that I used to give only to myself.

I can prevent lovelessness by training and exercising the virtues of love.

TIMING AND MATERIALS

This lesson is designed for students in the 11th grade.

ACTIVITY	TIME (minutes)	MATERIALS
Introduction 1. Activity 1-2.	10	Worksheet. Photos.
Activ. 3: Personal reflection and sharing.	7	Worksheet. Lamp story.
Introduction 2. Activ. 4: Personal reflection.	12	Worksheet. Story of Narcissus.
Activ. 5- 6: Personal reflection and sharing.	12	Worksheet.
Activ. 7-8: Personal reflection and sharing.	15	Worksheet.
CONCLUSIONS.	4	