

5.28.23

Group's Guide

1 Corinthians 7:6-8, 25-39

Pastor Doug Hankins

Awkward Conversations

Text: 1 Corinthians 7: 6-8, 25-39

6 "Now as a concession, not a command, I say this.^[a] **7** I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.

8 To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am.

25 Now concerning^[i] the betrothed,^[a] I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. **26** I think that in view of the present^[b] distress it is good for a person to remain as he is. **27** Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. **28** But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman^[j] marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that. **29** This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, **30** and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, **31** and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

32 I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. **33** But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, **34** and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. **35** I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.

36 If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed,^[j] if his^[k] passions are strong, and it has to be, let him do as he wishes: let them marry—it is no sin. **37** But whoever is firmly established in his heart, being under no necessity but having his desire under control, and has determined this in his heart, to keep her as his betrothed, he will do well. **38** So then he who marries his betrothed does well, and he who refrains from marriage will do even better.

39 A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. **40** Yet in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I too have the Spirit of God.”

Sermon Notes:

Instructions:

This discussion guide serves as a conversation starter for your small group. Every week we will feature an icebreaker question in the **Getting Started** section. Your main discussion will be centered around the **Big Idea** section where you will read the key passage and answer suggested questions based on the sermon. Feel free to use some or all of these questions or add your own. Finally, in the **My Life** section we will give you a couple of ways to practically apply what we have learned together and a closing suggested prayer to pray.

Belong:

Recap: Last week Pastor David spoke on 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. He reminded us that because of the Lordship of Christ, and our oneness with Him—we are not our own.(1 Cor 6:19). We need to run from immorality because it will destroy us. Today, Pastor Doug Hankins is going to talk about the gift of singleness from 1 Corinthians 7.

Ice Breaker Question: What is the best gift you have ever received and who gave it to you?

Big Idea:

Read: 1 Corinthians 7:6-8

Paul is offering wise counsel to the church in Corinth. Explain in your own words what he is suggesting.

Do you agree or disagree?

What are the benefits of being single?

What are the benefits of being married?

Do you think the church encourages and supports being single?

How could we as a church do better at building a community that includes single adults?

Read 1 Corinthians 7:25-31

The Corinthians have a question about women who are not yet married. Paul does not have a specific command from the LORD about this, but what does he have?

Who is one wise person that you trust when you have questions that are not specifically addressed in Scripture?

What questions have you asked that trusted person?

What is the best advice they have ever given you?

Did you do what they suggested? What was the result?

Why does Paul tell them that it is better to stay unmarried?

If you are married, what does Paul say to do?

Whether you are married or not is not really the issue here—Paul says the time is short. What should the goal be?

How can you make good opportunities to do God's work if you are married?

How can you make good opportunities to do God's Work if you are single?

Read 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

What does it mean to have an undivided heart?

If you are married, what types of worries do you have? What types of things do you and your spouse discuss most?

If you are single, what types of worries do you have? What do you talk to your friends about the most?

Read through this passage one more time in a different translation. What timeless truth is Paul communicating that we can pursue whether we are married or single?

What is our ultimate goal no matter what?

Read 1 Corinthians 7:8 and 1 Corinthians 7:36-40

How does this passage inform what you might say to your unmarried friends or children in the future?

Look closely at verse 39. Paul mentions two guidelines here regarding marriage for a believer. What are they?

Do you have any examples in your life of strong marriages that have stood the test of time?

What types of truths did you learn from observing these marriages?

My Life: How has this week's sermon and Bible Study challenged your view of marriage and singleness? What will you do differently as a result? If you are in a complex marriage situation, how can we pray for you and encourage you?

Prayer: LORD, we pray that we would have hearts that are undivided and fully committed to you no matter our marital status. Show us how to content in our current stage of life and give us strength to live according to your ways.