

Redeeming Singleness Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. When you are ready to relax after busy work week, do you prefer spending time with other people or time by yourself?
2. Can you think of any ways in which focus has enabled you to effectively achieve your personal goals?

Read the following passage: Read 1 Corinthians 7:7-9; 17-35.

In writing to the Corinthian church, Paul made a strong case for the benefit of singleness for the Christian. He saw clearly from his own life the benefit of being single and commended this “gift” to others (v. 7). This was a revolutionary proposal in the first century. In fact, Christianity was the first religion to affirm the validity of long-term singleness for an adult. It’s clear that Paul’s reason for recommending singleness was not motivated by selfishness, but, rather, because of the way it enables the individual to live a life of “undivided” devotion to Jesus Christ (7:35).

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. The affirmation of long-term singleness as a valid and meaningful way of life was radical in the first century. Do you think this is a viable alternative in today’s world? What are the obstacles and advantages to this way of life?
2. Loneliness is a massive problem in many modernized nations including the United States. A recent survey by the healthcare corporation Cigna revealed that approximately half of those surveyed reported feeling lonely. In what way might significant involvement in a church community help to alleviate loneliness in the lives of its members?
3. Most of us experience some measure of dissatisfaction in life. This is true for people in all stages, seasons, and circumstances of life. Sometimes we can begin comparing our life experience to others and miss out on experiencing joy and making a difference right where we are. What does Paul say in 1 Corinthians 7:17-24 that is relevant to this issue?
4. While Paul recommended singleness as a viable and respectable way of life, it’s also clear that he did not think it was a sin to marry (thankfully!). What are some good reasons that one might seek to be married?
5. Our lives are to be primarily about devotion to God. What does Paul say in verses 32-35 about the benefits of singleness in living a life of devotion to the Lord? Are you

currently living a life of devotion to the Lord? If you are single, how are you using this unique opportunity for “undivided” devotion to the Lord?

Pray