



Gospel-Centered Families

Singleness Part 1: Gospel-Centered Satisfaction

How to Prepare

1 Corinthians 7:7-9, Philippians 4:11-13

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/single-but-not-lonely>

<https://www.gotquestions.org/single-Christian.html>

Sermon Outline:

1 Corinthians 7:7-9, Philippians 4:11-13

1. Singleness Is a Given. 1 Corinthians 7:7-9

2. Singleness With Self-Control Is a Gift. 1 Corinthians 7:7-9

3. Singleness Finds Satisfaction in the Gospel. Philippians 4:11-13

**1 Corinthians 7:7-9,
Philippians 4:11-13**

Teaching on Marriage

7 Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.

8 But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I.

9 But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

God's Provisions

11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Discussion Questions

Ask a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 7:7-9 & Philippians 4:11-13.

INTRODUCTION

Here is a question or two to help introduce the topic and jump-start discussion.

1. What stood out to you from the sermon or from the text this week? What has God shown you about the centrality of the gospel in your life this week?

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

I. Singleness Is a Given. 1 Corinthians 7:7-9

2. In what way is singleness a reality that every human being understands while also being a possibility for many people in the future? How should these realities shape how we live now and prepare for the future?

3. How do many people treat the reality of singleness both in the world and in the church today? How does this text treat the reality of singleness? Why doesn't this text treat the reality of singleness with sorrow and contempt?

4. What are some practical implications of embracing singleness as a divinely appointed state, rather than a waiting period?

II. Singleness With Self-Control Is a Gift. 1 Corinthians 7:7-9

5. What does "self-control" specifically mean in this context, and why is it highlighted as essential for singleness to be a gift?

(Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit that all Christians should have. In this context, Paul is talking about having control over desires for physical intimacy, which are not bad desires, but can lead to sin if not put under control. He has been teaching that physical intimacy is only for the context of marriage, but if one does not have a problem controlling desires for physical intimacy, then God has given them a gift, and they have no need for marriage.)

6. What does this text instruct someone to do if they strongly desire a spouse, and how is that also a form of self-control?

(Because self-control is an expectation for all believers, Paul gives instructions on how to exercise self-control when you have not been given the gift of singleness. One should pursue marriage in this case so that the desires for physical intimacy, which are not bad desires, do not lead one to sin.)

7. What does God expect us to do with our singleness, and why is that a benefit? How can individuals cultivate self-control in their singleness, and what role does the gospel play in empowering this?

(The gift of singleness truly is a gift, because it allows one to fully and without distraction pursue a relationship with the Lord. The worries of the world are significantly less for someone gifted with singleness {1 Cor. 7:32-35}, and their flexibility to expediently serve the Lord is increased. That said, marriage and singleness are both gifts and callings that God gives to different people for different reasons. They are both God's will.)

III. Singleness Finds Satisfaction in the Gospel. Philippians 4:11-13

8. What does Philippians 4:11-13 teach us about finding satisfaction through the gospel? How does this apply specifically to finding satisfaction in singleness?

9. How does gospel-centered satisfaction in singleness differ from worldly sources of satisfaction? In what practical ways can single individuals actively pursue and experience this gospel-centered satisfaction in their daily lives?

10. How might the principles we've discussed influence the way we view, discuss, and support single individuals within our families and in the church?

Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

1 Cor. 7:1–11:1 Three Issues from a Corinthian Letter. Paul now turns to a series of problems raised in a letter from the Corinthians written to him (7:1). He signals a move from one topic to another with the phrase “now concerning” (7:1 [see note], 25; 8:1; the phrase also occurs later at 12:1; 16:1, 12). He first addresses issues related to marriage, divorce, and one’s lot in life (7:1–24). He then turns to whether the betrothed and widowed should marry in light of the urgency of the times (7:25–40). Finally, he discusses food sacrificed to idols (8:1–11:1).

1 Cor. 7:1–24 Marriage, Divorce, and Unchangeable Circumstances. The Corinthians are commanded to be faithful in their marriages, to avoid divorce, and to be content in their calling.

1 Cor. 7:6–7 The concession refers to permission to refrain from sexual relations for short periods of time (see v. 5). Paul does not demand such periods of abstinence, though he does permit it. Each has his own gift. Both marriage and celibacy have their own benefits, and both should be considered “gifts.” Paul is happy that God has given him the gift of being content with remaining unmarried, since this permits single-minded devotion to the Lord’s work (vv. 32–33, 40). Paul recognizes, however, that his situation is not the norm. Remaining unmarried is a gift that many others do not have. See vv. 28, 36; Matt. 19:12.

Phil. 4:1–23 Concluding Exhortations and Thanksgiving. Paul encourages the Philippians, calling for reconciliation, joyful faith, and disciplined thinking (vv. 2–9).

Phil. 4:10–11 Paul is grateful for the Philippians’ support, but he wants them to know that even in difficult circumstances he has learned . . . to be content.

Phil. 4:12–13 The secret of living amid life’s difficulties is simple: trusting God in such a way that one can say, I can do all things through him who strengthens me. This does not mean God will bless whatever a person does; it must be read within the context of the letter, with its emphasis on obedience to God and service to God and others.