

Celibate and Celebrating
Core Group Discussion Guide
(Date)

Message Overview:

One of the things I am so challenged by when I read church history is the lengths to which people will go in service to Christ. It is truly inspiring. Some give up family. Some give up dreams of wealth. Others give up their hope of marriage to focus on God's work in the world. The last half of I Corinthians 7 speaks about this final group. They give themselves to the Kingdom, remaining celibate and committed to following Jesus wherever he leads. This devotion is challenging to many of us who might find it difficult to recount one act of costliness we have endured in the name of Christ. This week's message will be a teaching that exhorts the committed single life and calls all of us to a greater willingness to sacrificial living.

Text:

- I Corinthians 7:25-40
- Matthew 19:10-12

Questions for Discussion:

1. What struck you from the message?
2. How does someone know if they have the gift of singleness?
3. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: "In our church, we prioritize marriage over singleness." – why or why not?
4. Do you feel that single believers are pressured to marry? In what ways do you feel our church can help to fight and alleviate that pressure?
5. In chapter 7, Paul gives honor to both married folks and single people. In our church and community, we often pit the two against each other.
 - a. Question for Celibate Singles: how can you love and honor the married folks in your life?
 - b. Question for the Married crowd: How can you love and honor the single people in our church? (It might be helpful for married folks to make a list of actual ways we can treat singles as equals in our lives.)

Change of Direction:

6. Notice I Cor. 7, verses 32-35 (read) What are the anxieties that married people face that celibate single people don't have to worry about?
7. Is it possible to use these verses as an excuse not to give ourselves to Kingdom work? If so, how do we avoid that?