**EXTRA! Ideas for Adults – Owning a Faith That Matters – Session 6**

**Date: February 25, 2024**

**Maturing Faith**

**The Point: Faith matures as we humbly obey God.**

**Get Into the Study**

As you discuss Question #1, share the following:

“It’s the prime home-buying years for” millennials, and yet, the data shows: they aren’t buying. Many are sitting back, “waiting for more favorable conditions.” Housing prices are high. Mortgage rates are high. And since the pandemic in 2020, the construction market has slowed due to continuing supply chain issues. “By some metrics, this is the worst time to buy a house in 40 years.”

Some experts point to an ongoing housing shortage. Redfin’s chief economist noted that the market is “4 million homes short of demand.” Even though we’ve added 30 million people to our country in the past 15 years, there are one-sixth as many houses for sale as there were 15 years ago. A significant majority of homes on the market are out of reach for the average middle-class buyer. “The lack of inventory means many buyers are struggling to find a home that meets their needs at a price they can afford.”

Some note the rise of investment groups and hedge funds that purchase real estate for long-term holdings. When securities like BlackRock snap up starter homes, it reduces the options available for the average buyer. Perhaps in response to this, in December 2023, Congress began considering a bill to “prevent hedge funds from owning single-family homes in the U.S.”

Even for millennials who have purchased their own homes, it hasn’t been all they dreamed of. Newsweek reports that “a whopping 90 percent of millennials have regrets about their first home purchase.”

Say: Until the market changes, young adults in particular will struggle to afford housing. For many, whether it’s renting an apartment, or buying a home, moving into “their own place” is the first time they feel like a real adult.

Information for this post was gleaned from:

* <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/06/realestate/wall-street-housing-market.html>
* <https://www.npr.org/2024/01/25/1225957874/housing-unaffordable-for-record-half-all-u-s-renters-study-finds>
* <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/ESALEUSQ176N>
* <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/11/buying-house-market-shortage/676088/>
* <https://www.theringer.com/2023/12/8/23992832/us-housing-market-2023-recession-crash>
* <https://realestate.usnews.com/real-estate/articles/should-i-buy-a-house-now-or-wait-until-2024>
* <https://www.newsweek.com/millennials-regret-buying-homes-housing-market-1862807>
* <https://fortune.com/2023/11/09/gen-z-millennials-difficulties-buying-house-finding-job/>

**Study the Bible**

Use the following information to introduce Question #5.

“Former first lady Rosalynn Carter died November 19, at 96 years old, with husband, former President Jimmy Carter,” by her side. The romance of the longest-married presidential couple in American history stood the test of time.

When Jimmy Carter first noticed Rosalynn, “she was standing on the steps” of her church. That week was their first date. A year later, they married. Rosalynn said she “loved campaigning and meeting Americans across the country,” but that “everything with Jimmy has been an adventure.” After his presidency, the couple built more than 4,000 homes through their work with Habitat for Humanity. In 2021, she said, “we’re always looking for things we can do together, like birding and fly-fishing and just anything we can find to do together.”

Jimmy noted, on their 75th anniversary, “It’s been the best thing I’ve ever had happen to me– marrying Rosalynn, living together for so long, growing to know each other more and more.” A few months before she died, their grandson commented about how his grandparents were doing while in hospice: “They’re doing it in the best way possible; their faith is really grounding in this moment.” The night before she passed away, “aides helped [99-year-old] Jimmy Carter into his own hospital bed, opposite his wife’s with their feet facing each other, so that they could talk.” After her passing, Jimmy wrote, “Rosalynn was my equal partner in everything I ever accomplished. She gave me wise guidance and encouragement whenever I needed it.”

Say: “Over more than 77 years of marriage, through child-rearing, the ups and downs of political life, and navigating many decades after leaving the White House, Jimmy and Rosalynn matured in faith and love alongside one another.”

Then ask Question #5.

Information for this post was gleaned from:

* <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/jimmy-carter-rosalynn-carter-death-last-moments-together-wife-77-years/>
* <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2023/11/20/jimmy-carter-rosalynn-carter-marriage/8107857002/>
* <https://www.npr.org/2023/11/20/1214151967/rosalynn-jimmy-carter-marriage-77-years>
* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2023/11/20/rosalynn-carter-jimmy-carter-marriage-nobel/>
* <https://www.biography.com/political-figures/jimmy-rosalynn-carter-love-story>

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**Study the Bible [Option from Adult Leader Guide]**

In advance, play a [video clip](https://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/unbroken/louies-legacy) demonstrating someone who has matured in their faith to a point where they are able to help others. Then reinforce “The Point.”

**Additional Questions**

**Icebreaker**

* What event in your life made you feel like you had finally become a mature person?
* What are some of the privileges our culture associates with being “grown up?”
* What is something you’ve been working on for a while?
* What ideas or images come to mind when you hear the word “mature”?

**Luke 17:1-4**

* Why is the decision to forgive an accurate indicator of spiritual maturity?
* What are the challenges associated with forgiving someone repeatedly?
* Why is forgiveness important to your spiritual development?
* What has helped you extend forgiveness to others?

**Luke 17:5-6**

* How does our level of faith affect our level of obedience?
* What are the obstacles that prevent believers from stepping out in faith?
* The disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith.  Have you ever asked God to do the same for you?  What are some ways God increases our faith?
* How has God strengthened your faith on your spiritual journey?
* How does faith help us forgive?
* How would you describe the connection between faith and action?

**Luke 17:7-10**

* What is the connection between humility and spiritual maturity?
* How does our culture encourage people to seek personal recognition?
* What area of life, or what relationship, could be changed if you stopped focusing on whether or not anyone notices or thanks you?
* What are some truths that can help us cultivate a heart that doesn’t seek recognition?
* What opportunities does our group have to serve the church together?

**For Those in Your Group**

Send the following link to your group members as either a teaser before the group meets or as a follow-up thought:

[What Does a Mature Christian Look Like?](https://lynnhpryor.com/2024/02/12/what-does-a-mature-christian-look-like/)