

1 CORINTHIANS

gospel formed relationships / discussion guide



OVERVIEW FOR PART 2:

Join us as we walk through the Apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. We'll see the many cultural similarities between the pacific northwest and ancient Greece, as well as be challenged in how we are designed to live out the gospel through the local church.

In the second mini-series we will see how God designs relationships and the inner workings of church life, even when things are hard.

PART 2: WEEK FIVE **Single-Minded Devotion**

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:24-50

In the previous passage, Paul ends with a strong statement about our freedom in whatever place of life we find ourselves in. We are not slaves to our station or situation in life. We are free as servants of Jesus to serve him and fulfill his mission. Now Paul will address the issue of singleness. The Corinthians were asking: In light of our present situation, the urgency of mission, and the reality that Jesus is coming back, wouldn't it be better to remain single?

Paul's answer is that we have the freedom to choose to marry or to stay single, though staying single may be a better choice since it means you are less divided in your

attention and concerns. Whereas a married person has to also care for their spouse, and children if they have them. Both the single person and the married person are called to be devoted to Jesus and his mission. Why add more competing concerns to what is already a challenging endeavor, Paul reasons? He doesn't want to increase their anxieties (cares for others).

Paul wants them to make their decision about remaining single or getting married in light of a motivation to be devoted to Jesus and free from external pressures. So often decisions we make are compelled or controlled by something other than a heart submitted to the Spirit of God and Jesus' purposes. If you are single, the choice to marry or remain single should be motivated not from external pressure but from a pure desire to pursue and obey Jesus. This should also be true of all who are married. In a world with so many external pressures, we need to regularly check to see if we are being properly motivated by love for God and love for others.

Read: 1 Corinthians 7:25-40

1. What is great about being single?
2. What should govern our relational decisions according to this passage?
3. What kinds of anxieties or cares are keeping us from being fully devoted to Jesus and his mission?
4. What might need to change in our lives to secure a full devotion to Jesus?