



Frisco First Baptist Church

SPIRITUAL ADULTING: 1 CORINTHIANS SINGLENES 1 CORINTHIANS 7 2/22/2026

MAIN POINT

God calls believers to make the most of their singleness, or whatever situation they find themselves in, for His glory and the advance of His kingdom.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is the worst date you have ever been on? What made it so bad?

If you could change one major aspect of your life, what would you change and why? How might that change influence your impact for Christ?

The Corinthian believers had questions about how Christ impacted their identity. Now that they were followers of Christ, how much in their lives needed to change? Did they need to end their marriages to non-Christians? Should they stay single forever? Should they quit their jobs? Should the slaves run away from their masters? In response, Paul emphasized that their current life situations didn't negatively affect their faith. Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers to take full advantage of their life situations, including their marital status, in order to make an eternal impact.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-11.

Paul said it is "good" to remain single (v. 8). He viewed singleness as a "gift" from God (v. 7). Do you tend to view singleness that way? Why or why not?

Read Philippians 4:11-13. What is the “secret” to being content? Why did Paul encourage unmarried people and widows to “remain single (1 Cor. 7:8)?

What do you see as the main differences between a Christian view of singleness and a non-Christian view?

In 1 Corinthians 7:7, Paul wrote that “each has his own gift from God.” Both marriage and singleness are gifts from God. Whether you are married or single, the focus of your life should be on pursuing holiness. In verse 8, Paul wrote that it is good for people to stay unmarried. Why? Because the single person is free to commit every bit of his or her life to serving God in a way that married people cannot.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 CORINTHIANS 7:25-31.

In 7:25-31, Paul gave his thoughts on the issue of Christians’ remaining single. He knew of no command the Lord had given in the matter; thus either being married or remaining single was OK for believers. He viewed the world’s “present distress” (7:26) as a strong reason for remaining single, yet he counseled all who were married to stay that way.

What was Paul’s encouragement to singles in verses 25-28?

In verse 28, Paul noted that those who marry “shall have trouble in the flesh.” In light of his teaching on living solely for God, what troubles do you think he was alluding to? What troubles do those who are married have that singles do not?

How does a sense of urgency for Jesus’ return affect the way we live day to day?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 CORINTHIANS 7:32-40.

In your own words, what is Paul’s main point in these verses? Whether people marry or not, what is the overriding issue here?

Do you agree with his comparisons between marriage and singleness? Why or why not? Which of his statements is most surprising to you?

Do you resonate with the specific anxieties or concerns Paul mentioned in connection with your stage of life? If not, what are your chief concerns right now? How can you keep from being distracted by those concerns?

In this section Paul shares his motivation for espousing the remain-as-you-are principle for single men, virgin daughters, their fathers, and widows. It comes down to this: The significant change in life status that would result from these choices, particularly during a time of “present distress” (v. 26), could pose a distraction from devotion to the Lord.

What are the biggest threats to a single person’s devotion to and focus on God?

What are the biggest threats to a married person’s devotion to and focus on God?

How can an unmarried person find emotional fulfillment and intimacy if they have chosen to remain single in order to be more fully devoted to the Lord?

The over-arching principle in 1 Corinthians 7 is to serve God faithfully, no matter what stage of life we find ourselves in. We can affirm that single adults may have some advantages in serving the Lord and that married adults may have other advantages. We must all fight the temptation to give into selfishness. Remembering how Christ sacrificed Himself for us helps us to devote ourselves to the glory of God and the good of our neighbors. As the church, we should rejoice and celebrate when either single adults or married adults find ways to express their devotion to the Lord.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

If you’re being honest with yourself and with God, how do you feel about where He has currently called you to be?

What are some specific ways we can encourage and help each other set God as a priority during this season of life?

How “divided” is your devotion to the Lord in your current season of life?

What are the main things that are distracting you?

PRAYER

Ask God for the contentment to accept the place He has called each of you to be as a gift from Him for our spiritual good. Pray that the people in your group will glorify God in their singleness or marriages, and be encouraged as a result. Also pray that as a church we

would have a renewed focus on God and commitment to serving Him and taking His gospel to our community. Pray that this week we would use our singleness or marriages as ways to share the good news.

COMMENTARY

| 1 CORINTHIANS 7

7:6-11. Paul expressed limited agreement to the view stated in verse 1, “It is good for a man not to have relations with a woman.” He did think it was “good” if the Corinthians stayed single as he was—but only if they had the gift to do so. Paul gives another apostolic ruling: unmarried persons who lack self-control should get married. Paul reiterates the Lord’s ruling to the married, giving an injunction to wives that they must remain in their marriage (see Matt. 19:1- 9; Mark 10:1-12). The wife who has separated from her husband has two options: remain apart from him, though celibate, or be reconciled to her husband. Completing his reiteration of the Lord’s instructions for marriage, Paul insisted that the husband is not to leave his wife.

7:32. Paul’s main concern was that all Christians, whatever their marital status, focus on serving God faithfully. That is the point of the phrase “without concerns.” Paul didn’t elevate singleness over marriage or vice versa. His desire was for all Christians to serve God faithfully and not to be unduly concerned over whether to marry. Each status can have advantages. In Paul’s view, an unmarried person could make his or her primary concern the things of the Lord— specifically, learning ways to please the Lord.

7:33. Similarly, we shouldn’t view the phrase “concerned about the things of the world” in this context as a negative judgment. The married man has been called by God to please his wife. That is not a bad thing! Married adults are expected to fulfill their responsibilities to their spouses. Without question, fulfilling family responsibilities can require time, energy, and money that otherwise might have been used in some particular expression of serving the Lord. However, Paul intentionally did not imply that either singleness or marriage is mandatory for all Christians.

7:34. The phrase “he is divided” is a reference to time available to take care of certain responsibilities. Again, Paul was not claiming that either marriage or singleness was a superior lifestyle, but rather was indicating that a single person would not have the same concerns as a married person. The phrase “holy both in body and in spirit” adds an important element to the single experience. All Christians, of course, are to be holy. We

shouldn't think that Paul was sanctioning celibacy as the only means of keeping one's body holy. He was not opposed to married couples engaging in sexual relations. He didn't view sex as some kind of corruption of the body. So in what sense does a celibate single adult have a holy body? Recall that the root meaning of the term holy is "to set apart." That which is set apart is dedicated to God. By resisting the temptation to engage in sexual relations outside marriage, single adults keep their bodies pure for God. Celibacy, then, becomes not a negative and reluctant option, but a positive and holy offering to God.

7:35. Paul was attempting to encourage his readers toward holy living whether they were married or single. His words were meant for their benefit. That he was mandating neither marriage nor singleness is clear from the phrase "not to put a restraint on you."

7:36. The word "virgin" in this context refers to a young woman who is engaged but not yet married. With the phrase "acting improperly," Paul envisioned a hypothetical couple struggling with the temptation to have sexual relations before marriage. Another possible translation of the Greek term is "behaving dishonorably." Take note that Paul clearly described premarital sex as improper behavior. The phrase "do what he wants" means that Paul affirmed the right to marry for single adults who do not have the gift of celibacy. In this section of 1 Corinthians, Paul unquestionably expressed a preference for singleness; but he also affirmed the purpose and value of marriage.

7:37. Some in the Corinthian church may have been touting a demand that all believers, including married couples, practice a celibate lifestyle. Paul repeatedly emphasized that each individual is free to make up his or her mind concerning marriage. The phrases "stands firm in his heart ... under no compulsion ... control over his own will ... decided in his heart" indicate that Paul supported both married and single lifestyles as legitimate for believers. The phrase "to keep his own virgin" refers to a man who had become engaged but later decided not to marry his fiancée. Paul's point, however, was that the man—and the woman—were free to make this decision on their own, without external compulsion.

7:38. Paul laid out the two options. The couple could either marry or not marry. Paul again indicated both his approval of either choice and his preference for singleness. The couple that marries does well, and the couple that decides not to marry does even better.

7:39. This verse shifts from the scenario of a young couple contemplating marriage to the situation of a widow. That she is bound as long as her husband is living is a strong affirmation of the marriage covenant. However, a woman is free to remarry after her

husband has passed away. "Only in the Lord" means that she should marry only a Christian man.