

## Week 13 **LEADER** Discussion Questions

**EXTRA SPECIAL NOTE: This is our final week of discussion questions for 2024!**

**We'll start back up in early January.**

**Text:** 1 Cor 7:25-40<sup>1</sup>

**Icebreaker:** What has been most helpful to you so far in our *Undivided* series?

**1.** Read this week's passage. What stands out to you from the text or from the sermon you heard Sunday?

**2.** Read verses 25-35. What are Paul's motivations for the guidance he gives? Paul refers to "the present distress" in v. 26, which may be in reference to the general difficulty Christians face or it may be aimed at a more specific crisis such as limited food supplies. In addition, he sees that "those who marry will have worldly troubles" that he would like them to avoid. He believes the end is near (v. 29) and that "this world is passing away" (v. 31). Paul wants to free them of anxieties (v. 32) that can be compounded in marriage and distract from an "undivided devotion to the Lord" (v. 35). In all, we can see that Paul has the Corinthians best interests in mind.

*Application:* How would you compare Paul's counsel about marriage and singleness to common reasons in our culture today for getting married or remaining single?

What are some motivations for people to remain single or get married today, whether Christian or not?

**3.** Paul places a high value on singleness. What advantages does a single person have according to these verses?

Verses 32-35 spell it out.

*Application:* Singles, rather than feeling valued, sometimes feel pressure to be married. How can a church like Calvary grow in its practice of including and encouraging singles?

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 7 is our last section of 1 Corinthians before we transition to our Advent series. Each campus is taking a slightly different approach to chapter 7 but the questions last week (verses 1-24) and this week cover the entire chapter. Discussion questions will resume in early January when we pick back up in 1 Corinthians 8.

**4.** In verses 25-40, Paul acknowledges that, while his guidance is not a direct command from the Lord (v. 25), his words are nonetheless guided by God's Spirit (v. 40). Where in this passage can we see evidence that Paul's guidance is influenced by God's Spirit?

First, Paul expresses a humble reliance on God's mercy for the counsel he gives (v. 25). His specific advice is based on the dual desires of honoring the Lord and doing what he believes is best for the Corinthians. Why should someone remain single? So they can have an undivided devotion to the Lord. Why else? Because Paul believes a single (who is equipped for it by God)

*Application:* There are countless scenarios not directly addressed in Scripture where we might find ourselves wondering what God's will is for us regarding our singleness or marriage. How can we seek out Spirit-guided counsel when we're not sure what's best?

**5.** Chapter 7 has addressed situations where one option (singleness) is better, but the alternative (marriage) is still said to be good. In what ways are both singleness and marriage gifts from God?

From a high level, singleness is a gift in that it presents a freedom to pursue the Lord without restriction. Marriage is a gift in that it is God's idea for filling the earth (Gen 1-2) and reflecting his love for his people (Eph 5).

*Application:* Based on your own experience, what advantages have you noticed in being single or married? How do these advantages relate to your relationship with the Lord?