

Small Group Study

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people

Discussion

Created for Connection: “Eternal Connection”

Questions

Please feel free to adjust this study to fit your group’s needs and to listen to the direction of the Holy Spirit. It is not necessary to use all of the questions.

1. What do you think is the “Christian ideal” for sex and marriage?
2. Have a volunteer read the following scriptures:

Matthew 19:10-12 (NLT):

Jesus’ disciples then said to him, “If this is the case, it is better not to marry!”

“Not everyone can accept this statement,” Jesus said. “Only those whom God helps. Some are born as eunuchs, some have been made eunuchs by others, and some choose not to marry for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let anyone accept this who can.”

1 Corinthians 7:7-9, 28, 32-34, 39-40 (NLT):

But I wish everyone were single, just as I am. But God gives to some the gift of marriage, and to others the gift of singleness.

So I say to those who aren’t married and to widows—it’s better to stay unmarried, just as I am. But if they can’t control themselves, they should go ahead and marry. It’s better to marry than to burn with lust.

But if you do get married, it is not a sin. And if a young woman gets married, it is not a sin. However, those who get married at this time will have troubles, and I am trying to spare you those problems. I want you to be free from the concerns of this life. An unmarried man can spend his time doing the Lord’s work and thinking how to please him. But a married man has to think about his earthly responsibilities and how to please his wife. His interests are divided. In the same way, a woman who is no longer married or has never been married can be devoted to the Lord and holy in body and in spirit. But a married woman has to think about her earthly responsibilities and how to please her husband. A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but only if he loves the Lord. But in my opinion it would be better for her to stay single, and I think I am giving you counsel from God’s Spirit. When I say this.



Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

1. If you could have any superpower, what power would you want and what would you do with it?
2. If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you live and why would you want to live there?
3. If you could befriend any living person in the world, who would you befriend and why?

Paul doesn't seem concerned about whether a person is married. If you aren't, great. You're more free to serve God. If you are married, splendid. Love the person well, and the two of you get on with your life together.

After all, it's better to marry than to burn.

If you are single, and you've been sent messages or it's been hinted at or even said to your face that you are somehow missing something, that you aren't good enough, that you don't fit—that is not true. It's not just that you're fine single. The premise of the Scriptures is that you are able to connect with God and serve God in ways that those who are married can't. The tilt is *for* being single, not away from it.

How does this contrast with the viewpoint that our society often promotes? What are some of the ways that we as Christians miscommunicate this truth?

3. The last thing Jesus ever says, or implies, is that people who aren't married are somehow missing out. So according to Jesus, if you aren't having sex, you aren't missing out on anything? And if you aren't missing out, and marriage, according to the Scriptures, is somehow temporary, then what does this say about our future? Our future, together, after this life? What does sex now say about life forever?

For many people, sex is brief moments when everything is okay with the world, even if it isn't. It's escape from the pain and suffering and brokenness of life. It's a short time when all is right, even if lots of things around us are falling apart.

In Revelation, God announces, "I am making everything new!" Isn't that the longing of every embrace, every act of love, sex itself? To start again, to give yourself away, again, to try again for hope and healing and restoration?

We find sex so powerful because it provides people with glimpses into the world we all desperately desire but can't seem to create on our own. Which raises a few questions to think about.

If marriage has a purpose, to bring hope to the world, what happens when the world doesn't need hope? What happens to marriage when every hope has been fulfilled? If sex is about connection, what happens when everybody is connected with everybody else? If marriage is about the man and the woman filling each other in, complementing each other, bone of bones and flesh of flesh, what happens when the man and woman are complete in and of themselves? What happens when everything we need from each other we have in God? What happens in the presence of God when we are everything we were originally created to be? Is sex in its greatest, purest, most joyful and honest expression a glimpse of forever? Are these brief moments of abandon and oneness and ecstasy just a couple of seconds or minutes of how things will be forever?

In Second Corinthians 12, Paul claimed to have seen a vision of heaven, and the phrase he used to describe it in Greek is translated "unwordable words." He wrote that he saw things man is "not permitted to tell." Maybe that's why the Scriptures are so ambivalent about whether a person is married. About whether a person is having sex. Maybe Jesus knew what is coming and knew that whatever we experience here will pale in comparison with what awaits everyone.

Questions to answer:

Could sex be a picture of heaven? Do you long for that? What are your thoughts on what you just read? What can a single person accomplish for the Kingdom that a married person cannot?

Note: Next week we begin our 4-week Turbo Groups and a new sermon series based upon the parables!

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God bless,

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