

June 10, 2016. Final week of the "Oneness" series

STUDY THE BIBLE (God's Word)

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Each week we have tried to focus on both singles and couples. This week has special focus on our 30% of adults that are single. However, the theme of being "laser-focused" on Christ and His mission applies to all believers.*

1 Corinthians 7:7 (Note: The author, Paul, is single.)

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Paul's preference is that all are free to serve Christ without restriction. He is not advocating that people should not get married. Rather, he is indicating that those who are single, as he is, are free from some earthly "troubles" (v. 28) and this can be a distraction from our focus on our purpose to know and serve Christ.*

What's more, he considers his ability to remain single and focused as a "gift" from God.

1 Corinthians 7:25-35 (Note: "Virgins" means 'unmarried women' but further verses include unmarried men.)

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Because of the "concerns" and "troubles" that come with marriage, singleness can be an option that we choose. This can better enable us to be "laser-focused" on "the Lord's affairs" including "undivided devotion" to Christ and His mission.*

How could 7:32 be a theme in all of our lives? What is the special challenge for those who are married (7:33-35)?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Paul's great concern was "how he can please the Lord." The purpose of this question is to explore together what are the distractions and attraction of this life and purpose in our hearts, actions, and choices to "please the Lord."*

DISCUSS TOGETHER

How can married couples be purposeful to include those living single?

NOTES TO LEADERS: *There are many ways. Here are a few suggestions:*

- *Be intentional to build relationships with singles*
- *Include them in your groups*
- *Include them in holidays, gathering, fun activities, etc.*
- *Ask them into leadership positions*
- *Value their opinions in all settings*

How is the concern to “please the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:32) made more difficult by our complicated world? Does marriage add to this challenge? How can we all be more “laser-focused on Him and His mission?”

NOTES TO LEADERS: *Think of the many things that are ‘musts’ in our world that occupy our time, our thoughts, and our actions. There are SO MANY! Marriage adds to the list.*

However, God loves marriage, having children, etc. – so we dare not say these are outside of the will of God. Paul’s point here is that we all should evaluate how we can best keep our priority to “please the Lord.”

Grace and peace to you,
Steve