LESSON SEVEN – SINGLE OR MARRIED

1 Corinthians 7:1-9

OPEN IT: What was the worst dating experience you have ever had? Tell us about it.

DIG INTO IT:

1. Read 1 Cor. 7:1-2; 8-9 and answer the following questions: a) List some benefits of not being married: b) Are there things you could be more effective at in the Kingdom by being single? Name them:

c) In what way could being single lead a person to live an immoral life? Is this always the case with single people?

2. Read 1 Cor. 7:3-5 and answer the following questions:

a) Why would a husband or wife choose not to fulfill their “marital duty” to their spouse?

b) Are there behaviors or actions that would lead a spouse not to desire intimacy? What are they and how can they be overcome?

c) Is ownership of the other spouse’s body something that is forcefully taken or willingly

surrendered? How could this text (v. 4) be misinterpreted and/or misapplied?

d) What negatives things could happen to a relationship where one spouse sexually deprives the other?

e) When would be an appropriate time to refrain from sexual intimacy in the marital relationship? What benefits would be derived from it? How long should this continue?

REFLECT ON IT:

1. What advice would you give to a young person considering marriage? Is it advice that you personally follow?

2. How has marriage or singleness helped or hurt your devotion to Christ?

3. In what ways could you compare marital intimacy to intimacy with God? In what way is it similar and in what way is it different?

4. If sexual intimacy became an impossibility in your relationship what other type of intimacy could take its place?

5. If married, what can you do to make yourself more desirable to your spouse (let’s not get too graphic! ).

6. How can we pray for your marriage or singleness

singleness today?

PRAY ABOUT IT:

“God does not delay to hear our prayers because He has no mind to give; but that, by enlarging our desires, He may give us the more largely.”

~ Anselm of Canterbury

LESSON EIGHT – MARRIAGE GOD’S WAY

Gen. 1:26-28; Eph. 5:21-33

OPEN IT: What do you admire most about members of the opposite sex? What confuses you the most about them?

DIG INTO IT:

1. Read Gen. 1:26-28 and answer the following questions: a) Notice the singular use of “man” yet the plural use of “them” both describing Adam and Eve. What can we assume to be true of their relationship

relationship as God intended it? b) What does it mean to be made “in the image of God”? Do male and female reflect different aspects of that image? If so, how and why?

2. Read Eph. 5:21-33 and answer the following questions:

a) Why is mutual submission necessary? (v. 21)

b) How does submitting to her husband fulfill a need in the life of the wife, or does it? (vv. 22-24,33)

c) How is the term “submission” often misinterpreted?

d) To what extent is a husband to love his wife? (v. 25)

e) How does loving his wife to this degree fulfill a need in the life of the husband, or does it?

f) Should the instruction given to husbands and wives be a difficulty or a blessing? What determines which type of experience they will have?

g) In what way does the relationship of marriage correspond to the relationship between Christ and the Church?

REFLECT ON IT: 1. As a group, list some notable differences

between men and women below and discuss the positives and negatives of those differences: 2. In what positive ways can you build on the differences in your relationship? 3. Name some practical and God-honoring ways a couple can be in submission to one another: 4. For those who are married: Do you feel like you are living out your God-ordained role in the relationship you’re in? For those who are not married: How can you help those who are married live as God intended? 5. How can we pray for you today?

PRAY ABOUT IT: “Worship and intercession must go together, the one is impossible without the other.  Intercession means that we rouse ourselves up to get the mind of Christ about the one for whom we pray.” ~ Oswald Chambers