



## Week Four

### Opening Prayer

God, thank you for meeting us here. Help us to hear from you and to connect with one another in purposeful ways. Amen.

### Talk It Over

This week we continued our series #relationshipgoals. During this series, we have been looking at various types of relationships and various practices we can adopt to bring greater health to our relationships. This week the content focused on singleness, but we covered dating, worth, and identity as well. Know, that no matter your relationship status, this guide was created with you in mind.

- Tell us a funny story from your single or dating life.
- Think back to or reflect on a season of singleness or dating, what did or does that season look like?
- Studies show singleness is on the rise. Currently, there are about as many single people as there are married people in the United States. Do you find yourself in friendship with single people this season? Tell us about those friendships.

While we cannot catch what the Bible says about singleness through one verse, we can find scriptures and ideas throughout the Bible that give us some insight. As we move through today's Discussion Guide, we will be looking at five observations that appear in the Bible about singleness. *In addition, please note, singleness throughout this guide also applies to single again.*

### Observation One — Singleness, because of Jesus, is a good gift.

#### Read 1 Corinthians 7:7-8 (ESV)

When this Bible verse was written, culturally speaking, this statement was shocking. In large part, prior to Jesus, singleness was seen as a curse from God. With God's blessing being seen as a man and woman coming together and procreating, and inheritance flowing through lineage, singleness positioned people outside of God's blessing. But then Jesus came and he changed how God's blessing was poured out on all people. Jesus made it clear his goodness was free to flow through people who are married, single, single again, widowed, and so forth.

- What are some of the lies that we find tied to singleness in our culture?
- When you were single what lies were hardest for you to combat?

### Observation Two — Make the most of the gift of singleness.

#### Read 1 Peter 4:10-11 (ESV)

The Apostle Paul, an influential leader in the early church, believed singleness was a total opportunity to make the most of. A key part of this verse is also this idea that God supplies us the strength to steward our gifts.

- What are some gifts that come out of being single?
- Have you ever known someone who made the most out of the gift of singleness? Tell us what you can observe about their life and attitude.

(Content continued on the next page.)

### **Observation Three — Focus on becoming the right person versus finding the right person.**

#### **Read John 10:10 (ESV) and 2 Corinthians 3:18 (Voice)**

While our culture often encourages single people to focus their efforts on trying to find the right person, scripture talks a great deal about becoming the right kind of person. God's goodness is often marked in our life by our own transformation.

- In what ways are you becoming a better version of yourself? *To see a list of qualities God desires to grow in us, read Galatians 5:22-23.*
- This week we looked at the quote, "be the person the person you're looking for is looking for". What does this mean? What is the wisdom behind this quote? *(Leaders: You may want to slowly read the quote again.)*
- Sometimes we add drama and pain to our life by being in a relationship with the wrong kind of person. If you ever found yourself dating the wrong kind of person, what do you think led you to date the wrong type of person in the first place?

### **Observation Four — Don't let your level of intimacy supersede your level of commitment.**

#### **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 (ESV) and Proverbs 4:23**

Respecting physical, emotional, and spiritual intimacy is a part of spiritual maturity. This is true in all our relationships and an important truth for our dating life. This growth and respect are intended to be for our good and the good of others. It's a maturity God looks to grow in us — it is a process the Bible calls sanctification. Sanctification is the process of being made like Jesus.

- What messages did you grow up being told about physical, emotional, and spiritual intimacy? What were the messages you heard in your home and what messages did you hear in culture?

### **Observation Five — Invite God into the whole process.**

#### **Read Philippians 2:13-14 (ESV)**

God desires to be a key player in every area of your life — this is true regardless of our relationship status. No matter your relational status, God looks to lead and work in you. This verse tells us God looks to help us want the right thing and do the right things.

- Have you ever felt God helped shaped your desire to do the right thing? If so, tell us about that.
- Currently, is there any area of your life you need God to help you to do the right thing?
- God wants us to be people who carry joy, grace, and love. Who in your life shines brightly for God? How do you see this person shining?
- Looking at your life this season, what would it look like to invite God into the whole process of your life?

#### **Read Philippians 1:6 and John 15:9 (NIV)**

One of the great gifts of inviting God into the whole process of who we are becoming and into the entirety of our life is he helps us learn and see that our value and identity is rooted in him.

- In your opinion, what are some common things we tie to worth and identity in our culture?
- In your own life, what is something you have tied your worth and identity to mistakenly?
- Do you have a story about realizing God loved you even though you first didn't feel like you were worthy of love?
- Regardless of our relationship status, what do we know the Bible says about our worth or identity?
- When it comes to your value and worth, what do you want to get better at believing?
- How could knowing who God says you are change your everyday life?

### **Closing Prayer**

God, thank you for declaring our value and worth. Help us to know what you say about us and who we are in your perspective, regardless of our relational status. Help us to become who you want us to become. And for

our single friends in this circle or in our life, help them to encounter you in meaningful ways in this singleness. Help them to experience this season as a good gift. Amen.

**If your group is new**, be sure to cover any important details for next week's meeting.

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### **How To Use this Discussion Guide**

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith in your specific group.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead.