

Series - Sexuality

Date/s - 31 July 2016

Topic - Single & Living Strong in a Sexualized Society

Speaker/s - Pastor Ben KC Lee

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “You are Good” or “O Praise the Name (Anástasis)”.

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand singleness from a biblical perspective
2. Honour and affirm those who are singles in our midst
3. Choose to seek and serve God in our present life stage, whether single or married.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Ben spoke about how a single can live strong in a sexualized society. Nowadays, popular culture portrays singlehood negatively. Movies commonly depict singles as being frustrated and leading dissatisfied lives.

He shared this popular culture is similar to the then-Corinthian culture during Apostle Paul’s time, and it is for the church to ponder how it can support singles better (1 Corinthians 7:1 –9, 28–35).

We are created as relational and sexual beings. Though the world is permissive about sexuality, the Bible teaches the importance of chastity within marriage and singlehood. Pastor Ben also spoke about how the Church is the Bride of Christ in Eternity. We are being sanctified and glorified as we get ready for our marriage to the Lamb.

Pastor Ben spoke about five pointers:

1. Singleness is a good state to be in (verses 1 & 8) – Jesus was single. Paul was also single. Being single is not equivalent to being a second class citizen. Paul did not say that singleness is better than marriage, instead that there is worth and dignity being a single person.
2. Those married are not to live as singles (verses 2 to 6) – Marriage is between a male and female. A husband and a wife should come together in a marital union as God intends.
3. Singleness is a good gift (verse 7) – Some people are given the gift of singleness (the capacity to live as a single) and it is a good gift. Marriage does not solve temptations or loneliness or emotional needs. Commitment to Christ enables us to find our needs met in Him. Other verses: That is each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them (Matthew 19:10 – 12, 1 Corinthians 7:17).

4. Singleness has disadvantages (verse 9) – Pastor Ben shared that for those who are single, they will encounter difficulties as sex can only take place within marriage. However, meeting sexual needs should not be the reason to be married as marriage comes with a whole host of challenges that married couples should be aware of. Singles may struggle with loneliness more than married couples. Singles may also struggle with sexual temptations and unmet expectations from family, friends and society. Pastor Ben encouraged singles to remember that they are loved by God and the church. He shared a quote “Learn to live a fulfilled life with unfulfilled desires.” – Walter Trobisch (Philippians 4:12).
5. Single living has benefits (verses 28 – 35) – Singles may be spared of troubles that may be encountered in marriage. For those who are single, they may feel more available to serve the kingdom of God as they may have lesser family concerns (Matthew 24:19 -21).

Pastor Ben concluded with three points for the singles in our midst:

- A. Don't desire to get married for the sake of getting married.
- B. Be the right person instead of looking for the right person.
- C. Be sexually whole. Trust the Lord to give you strength to resist temptations.

Discussion Questions

1. **In your group, share one of the pointers in the sermon that you can identify with or something new you have learnt.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *This question is for members to share what they learnt in the sermon. If appropriate, leaders may wish to get members to share more or to think of how they could respond to the lessons they learnt in the sermon. Possible points include:*

- a. *Expectations and pressures placed on singles by society and popular culture. Learning to be sensitive and supportive towards singles.*
- b. *Importance to remain chaste for both married couples and singles.*
- c. *The benefits and disadvantages of being married or single.*

2. **There are both joys and struggles in single or married life. Share your recent experience of a joy or a struggle.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *A relate question. We might have heard that singles wish to be married and the married miss their single life especially when their children are still young or newly added into the family. Have members share about the joys and struggles they have without the fear of being judged and without giving too much details. After each sharing, for those who have shared to summarize in one word their sharing. It could be words or phrases e.g. “contentment”, “discipleship”, “trusting in God” etc.*

If appropriate, have members think about the misconceptions people have of being single or married, especially in the context of serving God's purposes in the areas He has called them. Know that whether single or married, God will give us the capacity to serve Him for His glory as we continue to seek Him.

3. **Loneliness is something that is experienced by both singles and marrieds. How would you agree with the quote by Walter Trobisch: “Learning to live a fulfilled life with unfulfilled desires”?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes:

A paraphrase: “You can be alone and not feel lonely. You can be lonely but not alone.” Would there be many who do not mind being alone but mind loneliness? Particularly for the singles, having the fear of loneliness can be a real struggle especially when the family ties or community bonds are perhaps no longer around, or geographically apart or not close/strong. How can the marrieds including dating couples as well as singles handle loneliness and still have a fulfilled life? How can we help one another in the church family from the young to the seniors?

Have cell members suggest practical ways to help one another intentionally. One can be alone and still live a fulfilled life. Refer to 1 Timothy 6:6 – “But godliness with contentment is great gain” and see if it is relevant.

4. **1 Corinthians 7:17** says “**But in any case each one of you should continue to live the way God has given you to live—the way you were when God called you.**” What is one reminder to give yourself as you grow in Christlikeness in this stage of life, whether single or married? [10 min]

Leader’s Notes: *This is a response question for members to reflect on how they could continue to honour and trust God in their present life stage. Leaders can talk through the concluding three points mentioned by Pastor Ben which were given for the singles, including those widowed and divorced, in our midst. For married couples, leaders can perhaps focus on the commitment to the marriage through fidelity, honour, respect and love. The same would also apply even when married couples have children. Leaders can ask members to share in small groups, perhaps based on gender, and pray together in that small group.*

Works [10 min]

Let’s pray:

1. All the singles to stay strong in a sexualised society & continue to avail themselves to serve in the kingdom of God.

Announcements

1. LIVING THE GOSPEL

19 Aug – 24 Sep | Worship Centre (3 Fri night & 1 Sat)

Registration closes on Sun, 14 Aug (e-Life sign up through cell leader)

For more information, please contact Christine Tan at 65114145, or email her at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg.

2. JOINING THE FAMILY

Sat, 27 Aug | 2–5pm | Faith Chapel

Sign up at the Information Counter by Sun, 21 Aug

For more information, please contact Clara Tan at 65114160, or email her at claratan@riverlife.org.sg.