

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"THE GOSPEL CHANGES EVERYTHING AND HARDLY ANYTHING" | 1 COR 7:10-24 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

When you think of a person making a big change to their career or relationships, what person, movie or song comes to mind?

"To the Married" 1 Corinthians 7: 10-11

Paul repeats what is also taught in the rest of scripture and by Jesus: that married couples should stay together, not divorce. **What are the benefits of staying together for all married couples? For Christian couples, how does not divorcing show God's love?**

"Believer Married to an Unbeliever" 1 Corinthians 7:12-16

Paul encourages believers who are married to unbelieving spouses should stay married, and shares they bless their spouses. **What are ways a believing spouse can bless and/or witness to an unbelieving spouse? What are ways the church can help them?**

"Changed Radically, But Not at All" 1 Corinthians 7: 17-24

Paul says "each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them" and not change their career or relationship status right away because a believer's identity and strength is in Jesus. **What is hard about remaining in the situations we are in? How can we let Jesus change us and mold us while we remain in these situations?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

When people come to Jesus, it is hard to know what needs to change and what shouldn't. It's different for each person. Paul says in verse 19 "Keeping God's commands is what counts." Obedience is something all believers should focus on no matter their career or status and look to Jesus for love and wisdom. **Which people in your life does God want you to show faithfulness to? Have you asked Jesus for strength and wisdom "to live as a believer" in your situation? Pray and ask God to give you the ability to live out your faith in each situation this week.**

The Gospel Changes Everything *and* Hardly Anything

I. Announce:

- A. Good Morning to those watching in the Fellowship Hall & Online.
- B. Thank you for all who helped/volunteered make JM a great success.
 1. Some voiced their appreciation that these hard topics can be discussed in “church”. Others who have experienced trauma have said that it makes them feel seen and cared for. “God sees you, loves you, and is there for you. Always. Forever.” Kel in @Risk email
- C. Slide1 At-Risk: There is no meeting this month, but mark your calendars for our next meeting on March 17th in the Agape Room.
- D. Slide2 Men’s Ministry: Murrieta Men will be starting a new series on Tues Nights called, *The Divine Exchange*. You can sign up for this series on our CM App or at calvarymurrieta.com/men. The Series will start 7:00 PM this Tues, Feb.13 in the Fellowship Hall.
- E. Slide3 Prayer: [49’rs & Chiefs, but most imp will Taylor Swift make it? - I want the red, white, & gold team :)]

II. Intro: The Gospel Changes Everything *and* Hardly Anything (explained later)

- A. From 7:1 they were asking Paul questions like: Maybe I should leave my marriage so I can really serve Jesus. Maybe I should quit my job so I can really focus on Jesus. Maybe I should tell my boss that he’s not the boss of me because Jesus is.
- B. Let me start with, *we can never speak exhaustively, on any subject, in 40 minutes*.
 1. That means everyone will leave with some questions ... *but what about this situation?* Great, ask does Scripture talk about that situation. If not any general principles that should guide us. By all means have conversations about it. And don’t be dogmatic about what Scripture doesn’t say.

2. What I have learned over the last 3+ decades is *marriage/divorce is complex*. Work for marriage. Work for God's best. And allow God time to work in your life and not rush things.
- C. **Some spouses** are sitting here this morning *with a plan of breaking up*, as soon as they can figure it out. Maybe because: they believe they married the wrong person. Incompatibility. We shouldn't have gotten married to begin with. We only got married, because she was pregnant. I fallen out of love. They changed. I found someone that understands me. **And** the list goes on.
- D. **Others** already have been through the agony of divorce. **And** I'm here to tell you, Read Jn.4 and tell me *how tender Jesus treated the woman at the well* [who was on #5]
1. **Maybe you ask**, what if I blew it in relationships or even marriage(s) in the past? You **can't** always go backward and fix the past, **but** you can honor God's Word *today and moving forward*.
- E. 2 weeks ago Paul talked about *the purity of marriage*. Here he starts with *the permanence of marriage*.

III. Slide4 TO THE MARRIED (10,11)

- A. 1st please look at vs.10 & vs.12 - **what's Paul saying?** Let me be clear. Everything we read in this chapter *IS Inspired by the HS*, **but** sometimes **Jesus** spoke on a subject, **and** sometimes He didn't. That's all Paul means here.
1. **And Paul** doesn't get *the final/only say here on Marriage/divorce*. **What I mean is** this subject is found in Moses writings in **Genesis**, by the prophet **Micah**, by **Peter** in his 1st epistle, by Paul in **Ephesians** ... **for an overall picture**.
- B. So Paul starts with what **Jesus** taught ... **Married people, Stay Together!** *“For better or for worse, for richer or poorer, through sickness or health, while we wait for the promise of this coming, or until death do us part.”* [that's by natural causes :)]
- C. Generally, *don't separate, don't divorce, remain unmarried*.
1. I added **generally** because, the very next set of verses add another time divorce is allowed.

2. To Jesus, divorce is never desirable. However, Jesus (and Moses before Him) recognized that *human sinfulness can irrevocably damage a marriage*. [Mt.19:9 Jesus gives the *sexual immorality exception clause*]
3. I also believe *remain unmarried* connects to vs.8 just above it, *to the unmarried* (*unmarried 4x's only*) ... *it is good for them to remain single, as I am*.

IV. Slide5a **BELIEVER MARRIED TO AN UNBELIEVER (12-16)** *abandonment clause*

- A. Now Paul, *inspired by the HS* adds to what Jesus taught on marriage and divorce.
- B. *Some Christians* in this category had married someone that was not a born again Christian, *so should they divorce them now? Or now saved, but* their spouses still has not become a Christian, *should they divorce them?* (7:1 wrote)
- C. (14) *Made holy* (3x's) - it's not about *salvation* (they are an *unbeliever* vs.12,16). It's about *sanctification, or consecration, or to be set apart*. It's about the *influence* you can be in their life.
 1. OT examples: **Laban** was blessed because of **Jacob** being around. *"Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience that the LORD has blessed me for your sake."* Gen.30:27.
 2. It's about blessings, not salvation. **Pharaoh's** house was blessed because Joseph was in it. Gen.39:5.
- D. (16) Slide5b "Your *unbelieving wife may* come to faith, because of your *believing life*." (or husband). It's the idea that christianity should be *infectious* to all who come in contact with it.
 1. So remain married *as a sanctifying influence in the relationship*. **And** for your kids sake, as Malachi said, *He seeks godly offspring*. (2:16)

V. Slide6 **CHANGED RADICALLY, BUT NOT AT ALL** *in other areas* (17-24)

- A. Slide7a **GOSPEL RADICALNESS/Focus/Identity** [the radical change *the gospel* brings]
- B. The gospel changes everything! **But** for some it has barely changed their **Mondays**, *let alone every bit of their life*.

1. The good news of Jesus for some is just a supplement. An add-on at best. An *Identity enhancer*, not a *soul transformer*.
2. But that was not so with the Corinthians they were all in.
 - a) Slide7b If the ocean was the gospel: it's the difference in *tipping your toe* in the water, vs. *snorkeling*, vs. *scuba diving*. In *scuba diving* you see more wonders and beauty *than* when snorkeling, *and much more* than your toes do, standing in the surf. [*which are you?*] Some are still sitting on their towel.
 - b) Don't settle with being a toe-dipper. Most toe-dippers are thoroughly disappointed with their Christian life, because they are *not-all-in* like the scuba diving believers.

C. Slide8a **GOSPEL FOCUS** [what the gospel calls us to first]

D. Paul doesn't care what you do career wise. [if you're a parent a HS'er, you'll probably be mad at that statement, but hear me out].

1. What he cares about most is *who you are in your career*.
2. He doesn't care *as much about* our current situation or circumstance, *but who we are in* our current situation or circumstance. [this is the focus the gospel brings]

E. Slide8b Remain Where You Are.

1. *Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him.* (17)
2. *Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called.* (20)
3. *So, brothers/sisters, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.* (24)
4. In other words, when you come to Christ, when He calls you from *lost and found*, from *death to life*, **there remain with God**. [Paul's rule for all the churches (CM)]
 - a) So, If you're **single** and come to Jesus (great, stay single). If you're **married** and come to Jesus (great, stay married). If you're **married to a nonbeliever** (remain married if your spouse will stay with you). If you're **not circumcised**

(don't get circumcised). If you are **circumcised** (don't get uncircumcised???)
I let you figure that out in your Community Groups, Ha!

b) **Circumcision** - think **Roman bathhouses**, think **Greek athletics** running in their birthday suit. [*Uncircumcision* is found in I Maccabees 1:14-15 where Jews were forced to stretch their shortened foreskins with a special weight]

5. **Remain** there, with an entirely different focus, looking through a brand new lens.

F. **Slide9a GOSPEL IDENTITY** [the radical change the gospel brings, *while* remaining the same]

G. **In coming to Christ**: our **heart** has changed, our **identity** has changed, our **affections** have changed. It is so transforming **AND YET** so much **DIDN'T** change.

1. **Jonathan Edwards** understood the human soul to have **2 faculties**: the **understanding** (by which the soul perceives, speculates, discerns, views, judges things); **and the will** (by which the soul is inclined or disinclined, pleased or displeased, approves or rejects) < *affections* have to do w/this 1.
2. **Slide9b *The gospel changes everything** (spiritually) **and hardly anything** (relationally & vocationally). *Our Title*.

H. **Who we are** doesn't rest upon **what we do** any longer.

1. **Identity** is not dependent upon your situation or circumstance. We have been **freed**.
2. (23) **Don't be a bond servant/slave of men** - not *literal* slavery, **but** don't be enslaved to a **mindset** that says, *If I'm not married, I'm not complete. If I don't have kids, I'm not complete. If don't get a better job, I'm not complete, or that people will think less of me.*
 - a) **Paul says no!** You have **Jesus**. It's Jesus *over* our job ... **better yet, the glory of Jesus through** our **job**, our **occupation**, our **situation**, and our **circumstances**.
 - (1) It is not that we are to be **oblivious** of our circumstances, **but** we are to be **confident** in the fact that God has called us **as we are** into His family **and** in whatever marital situation, job, economic status or culture we are in.

b) **Every vocation** then becomes *Christian service* performed for **the Master**.

c) **Slide9c** *The gospel transcends every job, relationship, cultural boundary, social status, economic status, if you're in prison - just bring Jesus there.*

- I. **Wrap Up Thoughts:** it is **not wrong** to make a change, Paul has already said that.
1. If you're a **slave** and have an opportunity to **be free**. **Or**, if you're **single**, and feel called to be **married**. **Or**, if you want to **change jobs**, you have the freedom to do so. **But** do it as *an extension of who you already are, in Jesus*. It depends on **motivation**.
 2. **Jesus** called **Levi** to leave the Tax office. He called **James, John** and **Peter** to leave the fishing business. *It's not wrong to change jobs or career paths*.
 3. It's not wrong to have *goals, aspirations, ambitions*. Just let them all be used for **His name** and **His fame**, which will give us our **greatest satisfaction**.
- J. **Also**, don't remain in an in an **abusive** situation (protect yourself and your children)
- K. **Also**, if you're a **teacher**, stay a teacher. *I hope you hear a beauty/sweetness in this.*
- L. **Also**, just because you are treated **unfairly**, doesn't necessarily mean that you should move on from it. Perhaps God has assigned this for you right now, because it gives greatest opportunity for his glory and your satisfaction.
- M. **Remember**, *you lack no good thing right now*. Ps.23:1 *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want/lack.*
- N. **Let's take a minute to Pray** through what we just heard:
1. **Do you know of some marriages that are in trouble?** (pray 4 them by name)
 2. Pray for those struggling with **divorce**. For those struggling with **separation**. For those struggling with **singleness**.
 3. **Have you** been focusing on God *changing your circumstance or situation rather than* on changing your heart?
 4. Pray for those struggling with their **job/career**.