



RELATIONSHIP STATUS

SERMON SERIES

BOUNDARIES (Week 3)

WELCOME: Have you been in a relationship that has negatively affected you?

WORSHIP: Sing, *I GIVE YOU MY HEART* (Hillsong Worship)

WORD: Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-9

Passions need parameters to fulfill their purpose! That was one of Pastor's closing statements on Sunday. He shared with us that boundaries are meant to be blessings, not punishment. In our scripture reading, we see several boundaries in relation to sexual intimacy and singleness. These relationship boundaries are meant to keep us safe, yet at the same time, lead us to experience God's best for us.

Let's study the Context.

- Why did Paul say, "it is good to abstain from sexual relations," what did he mean? What was Pastor's explanation?
- Do you remember what Pastor said about the sexual culture of the Corinthians? Can you enumerate what you are able to recall?
- What was Paul's stand in matters of sexual relationship in 1 Corinthians 6:12-20?
- Based on 1 Corinthians 6, why is sexual relations such a big deal to the Lord?

FOR MARRIED PEOPLE

The statements below represent the three key ideas in 1 Corinthians 7:1-7 about **sexual intimacy between married people**.

- Marriage is a blessing; sexual expression is holy and it is a gift for a married couple to enjoy one another.
- Married couples belong to another. Paul uses the word "authority" (a sense of ownership) to describe the relationship of husbands and wives.
- Paul encourages married couples to be generous to each other in the area of sexual intimacy. He says, "do not deprive" because deprivation usually leads to needs and unmet needs lead to giving in to temptations.
- While being married is a blessing; being single is a blessing too. Paul teaches that singleness is a perfectly normal way of life.
- Are you one of those people who "make fun" of single people?
- Why do you think people view singleness like it's an abnormality? What does our culture teach about singleness?

In relation to the topic of singleness, pastor mentioned three categories of single people.

Types of Single People:

Single by default. Some individuals become single because someone walked out on them or they walked out on someone; while others become single because of a spouse's passing. Do you (or know anyone who) fall under this category? What is your (their) greatest need, and how can the church community help? (Read James 1:27)

Single by desire. These are people who so focused on their Vision; their Dreams; their calling and ministry, and their careers. Some of them have the desire to marry someday, while others choose to stay single for reasons of effectiveness. People like them are to be commended because it takes a lot of discipline be single by desire. What can we do to encourage them in their choice? 1 Timothy 2:1.

Single by design. The Teenagers (and kids) are they single by design because they are in transition from childhood to adulthood—being developed into the person that they will be—that's why it's important for them to be surrounded by people who can actually build the up and not tear them down; and be placed in environments that will solidify who they want to be. 2 Timothy 2:22, 1 Timothy 4:12, Proverbs 22:6

FOR SINGLE PEOPLE

The statements below represent key ideas in 1 Corinthians 7:1-7 about **single people**.

- Being single is a blessing. What does the Apostle Paul say about singleness and why does he say "I wish you were all single like me?" Read verse 8, and verses 32-35.
- Why do you think people view singleness like it's an abnormality? What does our culture teach about singleness?
- What are the benefits of bring single? What are the challenges of being single?

- Paul encourages single people to stay single if they can control themselves like he can. Otherwise, they should marry so that their sexual burn will be expressed in the right way and within proper boundaries.
 1. *Thank God you're single for now. Whatever your experience of singleness, recognize it as a gift from God and make the most of it for as long as you have it.*
 2. *Do all you can to be godly. For many singles, it's a time for preparation! But be careful, it's easy for those who are single to lapse into a selfish, self-centred lifestyle and into sexual sin, whether in thought or deed. Be self-disciplined and accountable to others.*
 3. *Keep your eyes fixed on heaven. It is our eternal relationship with Christ that ultimately matters. Allow God to develop you into a wonderful (future) spouse.*

Part of Sunday's sermon also dealt a little bit about *godly dating* and having *relationship standards*.

The Goal of Godly Dating. As followers of Jesus, let's aim for dating that pleases God. In a world where dating is glamorized and idolized, we are made to think that we have to have to be in a relationship in order to be happy, but that isn't what God ever intended for His sons and daughters.

- Pastor said there is nothing inherently wrong with dating. In fact it is a good to get to know someone.
- Dating is not wrong, but it's dangerous, that is why we must be careful to not give in to things and activities too quickly.
- We must to look at dating in the light of marriage. We need to take our romance seriously and use dating as a step towards marriage. Pastor said, *"If you're not ready for marriage, then dating technically has no purpose for you."*
- Christian author, Jefferson Bethke wrote, *"Dating with no intent to marry is like going to the grocery store with no money. You either leave unhappy or take something that isn't yours."*

Godly Standards. Standards are important. Pastor quoted: *"Those who stand for nothing will fall for anything!"*

The world today puts so much pressure on singles when it comes to dating. The world tells us to date now and date as much as you can so we won't "miss out" on any of life's experiences. But God has a different plan for His children. He has a higher standard for us and we must set standards for ourselves. Without standards, we will fall for anything.

- Have a vision for your life that is greater and stronger than the present has to offer. Do you have a vision for your life?
- Believe God wants the best for you. Don't settle for anything less than the best! Why is it important to aim for God's best?
- You are stronger than you think! What type of relational/romantic/sexual pressures do you experience lately?
- Allow God to develop you to be that kind of person that YOU would to have in your life (BE THE ONE).
- Seek Jesus first and God will position you to meet someone in the right place at the right time. Let God develop in you the qualities you're looking for in your future partner. What qualities would you like God to develop in you? Do you remember any of the qualities Pastor shared last Sunday?
- Embrace Boundaries. What kinds of godly sexual/relational boundaries should you set in your next relationship? Are you willing to be called weird by your friends in order to stay sexually pure and avoid compromising your integrity before God?
- How are you going to protect yourself and stay pure from now on?

MANAGE THE FIRE

1 Corinthians 7:9, *It's better to marry than to burn with lust.*

We all have that *burn* is actually a good burn! It was placed inside of us by God, it is good! It waits to be expressed in the right way and the proper boundaries. Pastor used the example: "The fire that heats your home in the winter can also burn up thousands of acres of woodland!"

The difference is in the control. The burn, if not managed or expressed within proper boundaries could be destructive.

The thing that God deposited in you to make you great, enjoy life and lead to your destiny, can also give you great pain if not managed correctly.

It is the YIELDING to the Spirit that puts the fire under control. The presence of the Spirit in a person does not a guarantee controlled burn, that's why many Christians still fall. That's why it's important for us to learn always yield/surrender everything, including our feelings to the Spirit. Without the Spirit's help, we can take a good thing (like sex) and use it in a bad way and it becomes a bad thing for you and for some else. Passions need parameters to fulfill their purpose! When we put our passion in the right place and it will fulfill its purpose for our good and give God glory!

IMPORTANT APPLICATION POINTS

PARENTS/MARRIED	TEENS/SINGLE
If you have children (teens), set a coffee or dinner date with them this week and discuss what you have been learning in our Relationship Status Series. Don't be afraid to share your personal mistakes (<i>those have been forgiven by God anyway</i>). Pray for one another.	Agree to go on a coffee or dinner date with your parents! They're more awesome than you think! You can learn from them and they can learn from you. (Now is always the BEST time to learn from each other). (<i>Throw the 'awkward feeling' into the eternal garbage can as you do this</i>) If your parents don't go to Mosaic, bring them with you!

