



RELATIONSHIP STATUS

SERMON SERIES

CHANGE YOUR AIM (Week 5)

WELCOME: What is the purpose of being in a relationship?

WORSHIP: Sing, **GREAT THINGS** (*Elevation Worship*)

WORD: Read 1 Corinthians 7:25-35

This series is about going back to God's original design for marriage, sex, singleness and relationships. Our desire is to let God's Spirit reshape our minds regarding these things. We need to know what God says because God knows best—and not only that; He wants what's best for us. Our culture has led us to make marriage and romance, sex and relationship; dating and singleness into something that they are not meant to be. We need to allow God to bring holiness back into what our culture has made meaningless (marriage), dirty (sex) and ridiculous (singleness). Pastor said, "A growing disciple of Jesus Christ puts Jesus at the center of everything, because JESUS makes everything better!" Whatever our status may be (married, single or dating), the most important thing is to make Jesus the center of our world.

Context of Verses 25 to 35.

- Paul gives a piece of trustworthy "wisdom" to the Christians in Corinth regarding how they ought to live in whatever status they may be in. In the NIV and the ESV, the word used is "judgment." The Greek word he used is *gnome* which is associated with the modern word *knowledge*. *Gnome* means *knowledge that can be applied* (wisdom).
- Paul's advice is related to the "present crisis" that he mentions in verse 26. Do you remember what Pastor shared regarding the various interpretations of the crisis Paul writes about?
- What was Paul's purpose and desire for giving this advice (in the last part of verse 28)?
- This section of Paul's letter is about our *aim*, whatever our status may be. It is about choosing to do "whatever will help you serve the Lord best, with as few distractions as possible" (verse 35).

"Don't be aimless."

Pastor mentioned that being aimless is the worst thing in the world. "A person, a relationship, an organization, a church, a government—without vision (without any aim), is about as useful as a glass hammer!"

- Do you know any aimless person, a floater, a drifter? What factors contributed could have to why they are aimless?
- Anyone whose dream is too big may also lead to aimlessness because they wouldn't know where to start. It's important to think big but start small.
- Whether you're a teen or an adult, what are you aiming for this year? What are your goals for growth? Pastor suggested a few things: 1. aim to reach four people for Jesus this year—invite them to church and follow them up. 2. Aim to be mentored by someone or mentor someone. 3. Aim to start a DGroup.
- Division (*di-vision*) means to have several or conflicted points of view. An aimless person is a conflicted individual. Having an aim makes us function better. It keeps us from being wrapped up in unnecessary and conflicted complications.

MARRIED OR SINGLE, WHEN WE ARE AIMLESS, WE CAN GET WRAPPED UP IN UNNECESSARY COMPLICATIONS.

What are some of these complications we get wrapped up in when we have no aim?

UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS.

We all have unrealistic expectations of others, of God, and of ourselves; and these expectations create unnecessary complications. We project our disappointment in ourselves onto other people who may not be disappointed in us at all.

- Have you had some unrealistic expectations of anything or anyone? Share with the group.

SPECULATIVE SITUATIONS.

So often we live in our "What ifs"—our fear of things that will never even happen! Our what-ifs evolve into becoming a conversation with the devil, who aims for nothing else except to entrap us in a vicious cycle of worry and anxiety. Our anxiety and worry can be the enemy's biggest weapon to drag us out of our marriage; or commitment to purity; it can talk us out of aiming for the best that God has for us!

- In verse 32, the word that Paul used for *concern* is the same word that Jesus used for *worry* in Matthew 6:31. Worry is a state of anxiety that take us away from our focus. In Matthew 6:32-33, and in 1 Corinthians 7:29-31, we are encouraged to focus on the more important facet of life and not let our secondary concerns precede.
- What has been your greatest worry lately? Has worrying about it solved anything?

LIVING FOR LIKES.

We want our life to look good in the eyes of other people, so we stage our life for likes. When we complicate our decision-making based on what we think others will like instead of what is actually best for us or what God calls us to do, we lose our aim. God did not call us to a picture-perfect life so our Instagram, Facebook, Tumblr or Pinterest followers will think we're doing well. Pastor said, "*If we will live for likes we will be very, very unhappy, which could lead us to compromise our faith, our purity or even our future for the sake of likes.*"

- Are you deeply concerned about what people think about you? Read Galatians 1:10.
- People who receive affirmation and encouragement the best are those who get their primary approval from God. As God's people, we're called to seek and follow the will of God (for our joy and for His glory)! When you live for God's approval, you won't even care what other people think about you anymore! Read Psalm 40:8.
- Do not compromise who God is making you into by living for people's likes. Read Proverbs 3:6.

REGRET AND BITTERNESS.

Regret is what we did that distracts us from what we're supposed to do and be; bitterness is what someone else did to us that's distracting us from what we're supposed to do or be! Either way, they both belong in the past and have the potential to distract or even destroy us if we put them in front of us instead of behind.

- Regret and bitterness both have a way of keeping us from the joy that God sets before us!
- Bringing our past hurts into present relationships will choke the potential out of our present circumstances.
- It's time to stop punishing yourself repeatedly for things Jesus already died to forgive and heal.
- Pastor Jon said, "*Forgiving is hard, but we're called to do the hard things anyway.*" Jesus did that by coming great lengths to die on the cross so we can be forgiven. Freedom from regrets and bitterness is received by faith. Let God's grace be the basis for you to forgive yourself.
- We can simplify our present by fully submitting our past to God and fully trusting Him with our future. Know and believe that GOD wants the best for you! God wants you to be free from all your regret and bitterness. God wants to get our aim right by setting us free from our regrets and bitterness. Read John 8:36.

SINGLE OR MARRIED, OUR AIM IS TO LIVE IN UNDIVIDED DEVOTION TO JESUS.

None of us are perfect, but God gives us a Word on how to live right in a world of distractions and secondary interests.

- Read verse 35 in NLT and then in the NIV. What is the right way to live according to this verse?
- Because devotion is what brings attention. When we are deeply devoted to something or someone, nothing can steal our attention away from that which we are devoted to. Devotion does not mean putting Jesus first on our priority list because that will compartmentalize or divide our life. Instead of putting Jesus first, **YOU MAKE JESUS THE CENTER OF YOUR WORLD.**
- The core of a planet cannot be divided without destroying the rest of the world.
- Pastor said it's important to have an indivisible center. When we put something weak as the center of our world, it will crumble in no time. Jesus is the strongest core that could hold our life together (read Colossians 1:17 NIV). If Jesus is the center (the core) of our world, storms or turbulences will still happen, but they will only be at the surface level and will not cause our whole world to fall apart.

WORKS:

- What are some ways that you've experienced the devil trying to distract you?
- How can Satan use dating/marriage/singleness to distract you? Has he distracted you in these ways in past relationships?
- How can you safeguard yourself and relationships from these distractions?
- Give each a piece of paper (or have each take their smart phones) and write out vision statements for the following for the next 12 months (with Jesus at the center of):
 1. Their relationship (marriage/dating/friendship).
 2. Their ministry and leadership potential. (church involvement and development as a leader).
 3. Their impact (bringing and leading others to Jesus)
 4. Their family (embracing a better role in their present situation).
- Share these aims with the group and close in prayer, committing these goals to God. Be sure to review your aims once in a while during your DGroup sessions in the next 12 months.