

Week 3: Single Is Complicated

In all you do, I want you to be free from worry. An unmarried man can spend his time doing the Lord's work and thinking how to please him. But a married man can't do that so well: he has to think about his earthly responsibilities and how to please his wife. His interests are divided. It is the same with a girl who marries. She faces the same problem. A girl who is not married is anxious to please the Lord in all she is and does. But a married woman must consider other things such as housekeeping and the likes and dislikes of her husband. I am saying this to help you, not to try to keep you from marrying. I want you to do whatever will help you serve the Lord best, with as few other things as possible to distract your attention from him.

1 Corinthians 7:32-35 (TLB)

1. Live beyond the _____.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

Ephesians 5

2. Live in _____.

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

TLB (Living Bible Translation)
NIV (New International Translation)

NLT (New Living Translation)
ESV (English Standard Translation)

3. Live on _____.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

BIG IDEA: Our identity is our _____,
not our _____.

...you will be given a new name by the Lord's own mouth. The Lord will hold you in his hand for all to see — a splendid crown in the hand of God. Never again will you be called "The Forsaken City" or "The Desolate Land." Your new name will be "The City of God's Delight" and "The Bride of God," for the Lord delights in you and will claim you as his bride.

Isaiah 62:2-4 (NLT)

But now, this is what the Lord says - he who created you... "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine."

Isaiah 43:1 (NIV)

BIG LIE: If we embrace our identity we will be _____.

"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

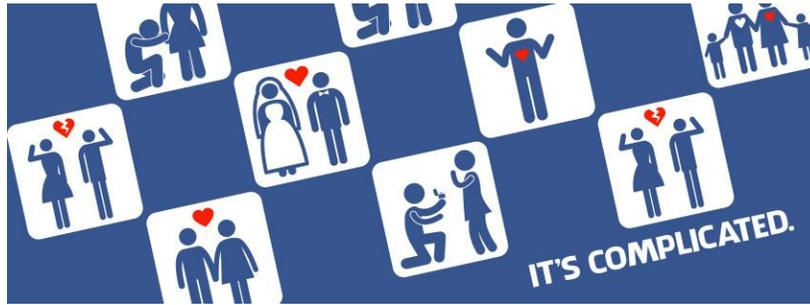
Genesis 3:4-5 (NLT)

For it was I, the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it with good things.

Psalms 81:10 (NLT)

Recommended Resources

- *Redeeming Singleness*, by Larry Danylak
- *Living Single*, by Tony Evans
- *The Sacred Search*, by Gary Thomas



It's Complicated Week Three

Opening Prayer: God, thank you for bringing our group together. Help us to use our time in a way that contributes to our friendships and faith growing.

Talk It Over: This weekend we talked about embracing a Kingdom of God perspective regarding our identity. When we embrace God's identity it impacts how we see our purpose, how we live, and most importantly, how we see ourselves.

- Looking at your childhood, share about a lie you bought into. This can be something serious or something innocent, light and seemingly silly.
- Looking at our culture, what is a common lie or misconception you notice adults buying into regularly?

Read Romans 12:4-5 (NLT)

The Bible not only invites us to live in community, it indicates that we are a family, that we belong to one another, and we find the sweet spot of life in the heart of community — whether we are single or married.

- Despite the value we might see in community, the reality is that living in community can be hard for most people. What are some of the hardest parts of living in community for you? Consider ideas like time, fear, location, chemistry, cultural lessons, childhood messages, personality and so on.
- Do you know someone who does a good job at living in community? Someone who practices treating people as family and includes others in their choices, challenges, and joys regularly? Tell us what you observe about them.

Read Ephesians 2:10 (ESV) and 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

While our life will function differently on some level depending on the specific details of our life, experiencing and living for the Kingdom of God is not determined by any label or relationship status. When we are open to God working in us and through us, there is nothing stopping us from the mission of Jesus. The Bible tells us all believers are qualified and invited to live mission.

- How would you define living on mission for Jesus? Give some real life examples of how regular, normal people live on Jesus.
- While respecting that living for on mission can look a variety ways, what sorts of things have you see stop being from feeling qualified or able to live on mission for Jesus?
- In your own life, what makes living on mission — or even feeling qualified to live on mission — hardest for you?

Read Isaiah 43:1 (NIV)

While there are many different places and ways we can create our identity, God tells us that first and foremost, we are his beloved, cherished, redeemed, valued and cared for children. How we see ourselves matters in significant ways, and God wants us to understand, that above anything else, our identity is securely placed in him and determined by him.

- Where are some common places you see people trying to find or create an identity for themselves?
- Looking at your current life and the various ways you find your value and worth, what are common places you try to find your identity even though you know better on an intellectual level? Once again, this can be something serious or something innocent, light and seemingly silly.

Closing Prayer: God, we want to experience and live in a way that fits your Kingdom — whether we are single or married. Help us to understand and believe what you say about us and to live on mission with you. And, if we are single, help us embrace the gift of singleness.