

**MESSAGE.**

Real freedom isn't about doing whatever you want, nor is it about making up a bunch of strict rules to follow. Instead, it's about trusting Jesus and letting Him lead every part of your life. Whether it's managing your desires, embracing your current stage of life, staying faithful in marriage, or navigating a difficult home situation, the goal isn't to control everything or rely on a checklist. It's about letting go of the struggle, stopping the comparison game, and accepting God's grace right where you are. True freedom actually comes when you stop trying to run the show and hand the controls over to a God who loves you.

***Freedom is found in faithfully living under the authority of Jesus.***

**ENGAGE.****Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-9 (Desires, Marriage, & Singleness)**

- In verse 2, what specific reason does Paul give for why a man and woman should marry?
- How do verses 3-4 challenge our modern, individualistic view of bodily autonomy and personal rights within a relationship?
- Paul mentions in verse 7 that both singleness and marriage are "gifts" from God. Why do you think he views both seasons as valuable blessings rather than one being better than the other?
- Legalism often rejects what God has permitted, while sin abuses it. How do we see both of these traps playing out today when it comes to our desires?
- What does it practically look like to steward a season of singleness or marriage rather than just trying to survive it or escape it?

**Read 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 (Commitment and Spiritually Mixed Households)**

- Look at verses 12-14. Why does Paul tell the believer *not* to divorce their unbelieving spouse if the unbeliever is willing to stay? What does it mean that the unbelieving spouse and children are "made holy" or "sanctified" because of the believer?
- According to verse 16, what is the ultimate hope and ultimate motive for a believer who chooses to stay in a challenging, mixed-faith marriage?
- The Gospel asks, "*Am I being found faithful?*" rather than, "*Does this person still make me happy?*" Why is shifting our mindset from personal happiness to gospel faithfulness so incredibly difficult?
- How does a believer act as "salt and light" in a tough home environment without turning into a legalistic rule-maker or trying to force their spouse to change?

**Reread 1 Corinthians 7:1-16 (Formulas vs. a Lord)**

- Notice how Paul carefully balances his instructions, often alternating his advice between men and women, singles and married folks. Why do you think Paul avoids giving a one-size-fits-all checklist for these messy, real-life relationships?
- The Corinthians wanted a formula, but Paul instead gave them a Lord. Where in your life right now (your marriage, your singleness, your family, or your secret desires) are you searching for a quick-fix formula or trying to take total control?
- What would it look like for you to stop striving this week and actually surrender that specific area to Jesus' authority?

Looking for the Family Devotions? – Family Devotions will be paused for the remainder of the summer. We plan to revamp this resource this Fall.