

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

Questions provided by April Yamasaki

1. The teaching time surveyed just a few Bible passages focused on honouring singleness and marriage in the wider context of community. How does this teaching apply to our own more individualistic society?
2. Reflect on your own life experience as a single and/or married person. How do you honour your marriage? How do you honour your singleness? In what ways do you honour others in their marriage or singleness?
3. What practical things can the church community do to be more supportive/welcoming for single people? For married people?
4. Loneliness is not new. Consider and discuss this quote from the 19th century, written to a single friend by Quaker author Hannah Whitall Smith, who was married and had four children:
"The loneliness thou speaks of I know. For do not think that it is confined to unmarried people. It is just as real in lives that have plenty of human ties, husbands and children and friends....Thy loneliness is only different in kind but not in fact from the loneliness of every human heart apart from God. Thy circumstances are lonely, but thy loneliness of spirit does not come from these, it is the loneliness of humanity. Therefore nothing but God can satisfy."
5. What other questions did this teaching time raise for you?

PRAYER:

FEBRUARY 28, 2021

REAL RELATIONSHIPS *with April Yamasaki*

Singleness and Marriage

January 24: Forging Friendship in a Lonely World

February 28: Honouring Singleness and Marriage

March 28: Valuing Family

Give honour to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage.
Hebrews 13:4

BE FAITHFUL
You must not commit adultery.
Exodus 20:14

You must not covet your neighbour's wife...or anything else that belongs to your neighbour.
Exodus 20:17

DON'T SEXUALIZE OR OBJECTIFY YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 5:28

CHOOSE WISELY

This at last is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh!

Genesis 2:23

COMMIT FOR BETTER OR WORSE

Let no one split apart what God has joined together.

Matthew 19:6

MARRIAGE ISN'T FOR EVERYONE

Matthew 19:11-12, The Message

HONOUR SINGLENESS

Jesus was single.

I wish everyone were single, just as I am. Yet each person has a special gift from God, of one kind or another.

1 Corinthians 7:7

God gives the gift of the single life to some, the gift of the married life to others.

1 Corinthians 7:7, The Message

Don't determine value according to marital status.

Don't equate marriage with maturity.

Do treat single people as whole people.

I am saying this for your benefit, not to place restrictions on you. I want you to do whatever will help you serve the Lord best, with as few distractions as possible.

1 Corinthians 7:35

Love the Lord your God

with all your heart,

with all your soul,

with all your mind,

with all your strength.

Love your neighbour as yourself.

Mark 12:30-31