



WHO SAYS I DON'T HAVE A LIFE?

DOWNLOAD: TEACHER PREP

LESSON TITLE: Swipe Right - Week One: Who Says I Don't Have a Life?

BIBLE PLATFORM: 1 Corinthians 7:25-38, Paul on Being Single

LESSON OVERVIEW: Is it true that if you're not dating, you don't have a life? No! Being single is a blessing few people truly embrace because of our love-obsessed culture. Paul shows us that if we commit ourselves to God during our single times, we can be an even greater blessing to others than when we are with someone else.

TEACHER QUESTION: What messages are we sending to our kids – both explicit and implicit – about dating, the need for relationships, self-worth, and holiness?

LESSON CHALLENGE: The world's standard is that romantic relationships are good, singleness is bad. We need to show our kids that God's standard is different. Single, dating, married, whatever our relationship status, it is a gift of God.

3G – THREE TEACHING GOALS THIS LESSON:

- **CONTENT:** Students will learn that Paul embraced singleness as a blessing rather than a curse.
- **ALERTS:** Students will discover that our culture's view of relationship differs greatly from God's standard.
- **APPS:** Students will examine whether they are serving and honoring God, whatever their current relationship status.

YOUTH LEADER FEED: Remaining single can be brutal when everyone around you seems to be joining up into couples. When we tell kids that singleness is a gift, it can be hard to accept. Even if they believe it as a part of God's word, the feelings of "less than" may remain the same. How do we get kids to move away from the world's standard and towards God's standard? It starts with you. If you are single, make sure that you have fully embraced your status as God's gift to you (understanding that the gift may change over time). If you are in a relationship, think about ways that this limits you. Remind yourself of the advantages a single person possesses. In your lesson, emphasize that God can be served, in our singleness and our relationship.

HOW-TO PRAYER:

Dear God,

Show us how it can be a blessing to be single.

In Jesus' name, Amen

LESSON 1: WHO SAYS I DON'T HAVE A LIFE?



WHO SAYS I DON'T HAVE A LIFE?

UPLOAD: LARGE GROUP TEACHING GUIDE

SERIES AND LESSON TITLE: Swipe Right - Week One: Who Says I Don't Have a Life?

PRAYER:

Dear God,

Whether we are alone or in a relationship, help us to devote ourselves to you.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

**LOG
IN**

The teenage years are a time filled with changes and transitions. Moving from elementary school to middle school, and then to high school. Contemplating college, or trade school, or moving into the workforce in the future. Growth spurts, acne, and hormones working overtime.

Relationships can be particularly difficult. Many of you will start dating during your teen years. You have questions. How do I make a relationship work? What kind of guy or girl should I be looking for? How long should I wait until taking the relationship further? Am I a loser if I'm a junior and still single? What does it mean to honor God in my relationship? Is that even possible?

Over the next few weeks, we're going to attempt to tackle some of those questions. We're going to start by addressing the subject of singleness. Being single can be hard; especially when everywhere you look, it seems like every other teenager is pairing up into couples – at school, in the youth group, definitely on TV shows and movies. Is there anyway to be single and for it not to be a total disappointment.

**BOOK
MARK**

Paul was a Christian missionary. He traveled all over the known world at the time and told people about Jesus. He started churches in many different cities all over. Even after he moved on to other cities, Paul wrote letters to the churches he had started. Those letters make up a big portion of the New Testament we have today. Paul devoted himself to Jesus.

Another thing about this great man of the Christian faith: He was single. We often look at singleness as a burden. But Paul saw singleness as a great blessing, and more desirable than getting married. He even encouraged others to remain single. Let's read a portion of his first letter to the Corinthians to find out why.

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UPLOAD: LARGE GROUP TEACHING GUIDE

READ
IT

1 Corinthians 7:25-38

Why does Paul think that being single is the bigger blessing? Because it allows him to serve God with his whole heart. A married woman or man is still able to serve God – definitely – but they have more concerns in this life to distract them. Making your spouse happy, raising kids, etc can pull you away from the things of God.

You might be thinking, “Whoa! Who said anything about marriage or kids? I just want to start dating.” Paul’s words still apply to you. In our culture, having sex has become a very casual thing. But in Paul’s time, the cultural norm was for people to wait until marriage to have sex. And that remains God’s standard for sex.

POST

Paul understood that some of the people reading his letters were only getting married because they could no longer control themselves. They were rushing into marriage because of the physical rewards. Paul is not telling us to not get married. In fact, he makes it clear in verses 27 and 28 that if we have made a commitment to a relationship, we should honor that commitment. However, Paul tells us that if we can stay single and still remain pure, that is the more desirable way. It gives us the opportunity to devote ourselves to God. Single people can serve God in ways that couples cannot. It also gives time to learn from God and understand what he wants for us. Then, if we do decide to be in a relationship later on, you will know the kind of partner that God wants you to have. Someone else who is committed to Him.

If you are currently in a relationship, take some time to examine that relationship. Are you with someone who truly cares about you – your life, your opinions, your dreams? Does the other person have a relationship with Jesus? Do you serve Jesus together? Is that something you are both interested in developing? Do the physical aspects of your relationship violate God’s standards? If your relationship examination doesn’t stand up to the test, perhaps it’s time to choose singleness for a while.

If you are single, take a moment to let it sink in that singleness is a blessing and not a curse. Avoid the temptation to envy the couples you see. Instead, ask God to show you how you can serve him in your singleness. Pray that God would use this time to grow you into a person who will make a better boyfriend or girlfriend when the time to date comes around.

TAG

Whatever your relationship status, honor and serve God. Every moment we are given is an opportunity to obey God, to serve Him, and to praise Him.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Dear God,

Our relationship status may change over time, but the one that matters most is the status of our relationship with you. Help us to devote ourselves to you.

In Jesus’ name, Amen



WHO SAYS I DON'T HAVE A LIFE?

POP QUIZ

FILL IN THE BLANKS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

#1:

_____ was a missionary who wrote many letters to the churches he started.

#2:

Paul's relationship status was _____.

#3:

God's standard is that sex should be saved until _____.

#4:

Paul believed a single person is more concerned with how to please _____.

#5:

Singleness is a _____, not a curse.

#6:

Paul was writing to the _____ church.



WHO SAYS I DON'T HAVE A LIFE?

POP QUIZ

FILL IN THE BLANKS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

#1:

Paul was a missionary who wrote many letters to the churches he started.

#2:

Paul's relationship status was single.

#3:

God's standard is that sex should be saved until marriage.

#4:

Paul believed a single person is more concerned with how to please God/the Lord.

#5:

Singleness is a blessing, not a curse.

#6:

Paul was writing to the Corinthian church.



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COMMENT AND SHARE: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

CHAT

QUESTION #1: What is your current relationship status?

QUESTION #2: How do you feel about that status?

QUESTION #3: What are the biggest challenges of being in a relationship today?
Being single?

READ IT

Have someone in your group read 1 Corinthians 7:25-38.

COMMENT

QUESTION #1: Why was Paul so gung ho about being single?

QUESTION #2: What do you think Paul meant by “this world in its present form is passing away”?

QUESTION #3: How did Paul’s belief that his time on earth was short, affect his attitude toward singleness and serving God?

CONNECTION: The early Christians believed that Jesus was returning any day. Paul devoted himself to his missionary work, so that everyone could hear the good news of Jesus before it was too late.

SHARE

QUESTION #1: If you knew that Jesus was returning in one week, what would you do during that last week?

QUESTION #2: What are some ways a single person can devote themselves to God?

QUESTION #3: What are some ways someone in a relationship can devote themselves to God?

PRAYER:

Dear God,

You are less concerned with our relationship status than whether we are living our lives for you. Help us to serve, obey, and celebrate you, whatever our relationship status.

In Jesus’ name, Amen



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INTERACTIVE: LESSON ACTIVITIES

INSTRUCTIONS

Use one or more of the following activities to reinforce this week's Bible Lesson.

CROWDSOURCING: Lesson Based Game or Activity

Group Game or Lesson Activity: TWO- & THREE-LEGGED RACE

Set up a racecourse in your space. Divide the majority of your kids into pairs. Use masking tape or rope to join each pair's inside legs together, for a three-legged race. Set aside a few kids to run the same course alone. On your mark, have all the competitors run the race. Afterward, talk about the results of the race: Why did the two-legged racers fare better? How can we apply this to what Paul wrote about singleness being a blessing?

PEER-TO-PEER: Turning Students into Disciples

Turning Students into Disciples: WHAT'S THE STANDARD?

Draw a line down the middle of a whiteboard. On one side of a whiteboard write "Society's Standard." On the other side write "God's Standard." Have kids name different beliefs and behaviors, then list them under Society's Standard or God's Standard. Whenever you write one standard on the board, try to come up with the corresponding standard for the other side. Start with the topic of relationships, but feel free to move beyond it. Discuss why God's standards might be so different from societies. Discuss which is easiest to follow, as well as which one is best for living.

NETWORK: Serving Others with Christ's Love

Serving Others with Christ's Love: ALONE NOT LONELY

Being alone is not the same as being lonely. Many single people are surrounded by friends and family. Many people feel isolated even when they are in a romantic relationship. Challenge each kid to think of someone (of the same gender) at school who seems lonely or depressed. Pray together for those individuals – kids do not have to give names. Challenge your kids to reach out this week – in friendship and in Jesus' name – to show some kindness to this individual and continue to pray for them.



TRENDING: SOCIAL MEDIA+ LEADER IDEAS

INSTRUCTIONS:

The following ideas will help you stay connected to your students during the week through email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social networks – and to keep your students engaged in the lesson beyond your meeting time.

HASHTAGS: #SwipeRight, #SingledOut, #DevotedToGod

VIRAL VERSE: *"Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 2 Timothy 2:22 (NIV)*

PICTURE: https://www.reddit.com/r/Sidehugs/comments/98r225/gift_of_singleness/

QUESTION: Whether you're single or in a relationship, how can you serve God today?

LINK: A short message about the "gift" of singleness. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0t-glKJMcF4g>

QUOTE: "Singleness is the best gift God has given us right through our youthful days. For it gives us the opportunity to enjoy, learn, seek, and grow." - Unknown

TEXT IDEA: On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy are you with your current relationship status? Reply with your number and reason why!

EMAIL IDEA:

Subject Line: Relationship Status

Hey guys and gals,

I want to know your relationship status. I don't care so much whether you are dating someone or not. I am interested in the relationship that matters the most: Your relationship with God.

Do you have a healthy, active relationship with God? A long-distance relationship? No relationship at all? A relationship with God the Father starts by believing that He sent his Son Jesus to earth to die for our sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) God moved heaven and earth so that he could be in relationship with you.

If you want to change your relationship status with God, reach out to me today. We are on this journey together.

BIBLE FOCUS: 1 Corinthians 7:25-38, Paul on Being Single

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