

Scripture and Background Information for February 9-February 16

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

Background for 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

In chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians, Paul begins answering the questions from the Corinthian church after his lengthy introduction (7:1). Clearly, the Corinthians were having a difficult time dealing with their new-found identity in Christ and what it meant for both their respective singleness or betrothal. Given that the occasion and purpose for Paul's writing is deeply seated in the divisions in the church at Corinth, it makes sense that some were boasting of their status as either single or married. However, in this beautiful chapter, (and we would encourage you read it all in your preparation for group) Paul corrects the Corinthians' perspective by showing them the big picture.

In chapter 7:25-31, Paul encourages the Corinthians to remain either single or remain married. He encourages his audience to remain this way because "the present form of this world is passing away" or that the current world is not the end of our story. Paul continues to clarify his thought in verses 32-35. It is here that Paul makes clear that singleness presents a unique opportunity that being married does not. Singleness allows for "undivided devotion to the Lord". Single himself, Paul had opportunities that other married people would have not had. However, Paul's entire chapter makes it clear that we are called to glorify God and do the work of the ministry as diligently as possible regardless of our circumstances.

Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:

February 16

John 2:1-11

February 23

John 5:2-9