



## **Discussion Guide**

**February 11, 2018**

**Contrast: *Distinctive Marriage***

**I Corinthians 7:1-16**

### **Introduction:**

*Read I Corinthians 7:1-16 together. Most married couples must work through challenges and some are in present crisis. Two people who see marriage as chiefly about satisfying their own needs will have difficulty in relationship. Another possible challenge is when a Christian is married to an unbeliever. Paul offers practical teaching to Christians that offers a clear contrast to the ways of the world regarding sex, marriage and treating one's spouse with the heart of a servant. Please be sensitive to the life situation of all those in your group as this discussion proceeds. Are there singles, widows, divorced, married-again, and unbelievers in your group? Are there those you know are in present crisis because of things they have shared? Ask God to guide you as you care for all in your group.*

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Assuming you are married (or were, or are presently dating someone) do you have any Valentine's Day traditions that are special to you? What is the best Valentine date you ever planned or were a part of?
2. If you are a follower of Christ [and chances may be good that you are] what do you feel are 2 or 3 distinctly good differences your faith has made in your marriage – maybe some things that you know wouldn't be true if it were not for your faith?
3. Answer this question only if you feel comfortable – don't go around the circle for responses. Was there a time when you were in crisis as a couple, and you feel that your faith helped you to find a resolution to the issue? Just share if you care to.



4. Paul advocates that married couples should not abstain from sexual relations except by agreement for the sake of a season of prayer. We won't get into discussions of our personal sexual habits. But what about your prayer habits with each other? As a couple, do you typically pray with or for each other – at times other than before a meal? Don't feel shame if you don't – some couples find that awkward. If you do pray with each other, share how that goes. If you don't, if you feel comfortable saying, why doesn't that happen or why does it feel awkward?

5. If you are married, were you a Christian at the time of your marriage? Was your spouse? What difference did it make to you at the time, whether both you and your spouse-to-be were serious followers of Christ? What difference does it make now?

### **Moving Forward:**

*Several questions were suggested at the end of the Sunday service, that spouses could ask each other to better understand each other's needs. If you didn't jot those down, here they are again. If you haven't done this already, take some time outside of your group meeting to have this conversation with your spouse.*

#### **Dedicated to giving, not taking**

- What can I give you to make you fulfilled?
- What can I give you that would bring you pleasure?
- What can I give you that communicates my love, honor and respect?
- What can I give up, what sacrifice can I make that would unblock our relationship?
- Things don't always have to go my way. How can I help things in our marriage go your way?
- What do you need to hear me say? What do you need me to do?