

The *Soul Shaper* is a convenient tool that takes the subject matter from the Spiritual Talk series and breaks it down even further. This self-study guide is also the source of lively discussions in our weekly Community Groups. You may download the accompanying Spiritual Talks or listen online at www.threadschurch.org. There's always a place for you in our Community Groups and our Sunday Worship Gatherings at 9:15am or 11:00am. Questions?...Email connect@threadschurch.org or call the office at 269.327.0445.

SPIRITUALITY & SINGLENESS (9/16/2007)

Read: 1 Corinthians 7:17-24

- What problem or problems do you think Paul is addressing here?
- From the passage, what kinds of changes were the new Corinthian believers making in their lives? Why?
- Is there ever a time when a new believer should make an immediate change in his or her situation? What kinds of situations might require that kind of change?
- What does Paul say is most important (v. 19)? Why?

Read: 1 Corinthians 7:25-40

- What are some of Paul's concerns for the Corinthians, both as a community and as individuals?
- As Christ followers, what is our focus supposed to be?
- What are some of your current challenges, in light of what Paul says here?

GROWing toward God

Pray that God give you contentment in your heart regarding the place of singleness in which He has placed you. Ask God to help you see his plan for you and that He soften your heart to it so that you can walk it out with His strength.

WHEN RIGHT IS WRONG (9/23/2007—Week One)

Read: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

- Have you ever wounded someone by exercising your personal rights or freedoms? How did you feel about it when you found out?
- In what ways can knowledge “puff up” a person? What’s the difference between “puffing up” and “building up” a person?
- Why is love more important than knowledge?
- How does Paul’s emphasis on love differ from our culture’s emphasis on personal rights?
- When does personal behavior cross the line and become destructive to another Christ follower who doesn’t have the same freedom?
- What attitude should we have toward Christ followers who don’t share our convictions about personal freedoms?

Webster’s Dictionary defines freedom as “the absence of necessity, coercion, or constraint in choice of action; liberation from slavery or restraint or from the power of another”.

GROWing toward God

Pray that you will not become the stumbling block in another’s journey toward Christ. Ask God to give you a sacrificial heart toward others in your community and all those with whom you come in contact.

WHEN RIGHT IS WRONG (9/30/2007—Week Two)

Imagine a typical high school lunch room. Think about the cliques, the tables that only a privileged few are allowed to eat at. The barriers, though invisible, are very real, and usually involve the “popular” groups making sure that they have as little contact with the “uncool” outcasts as possible. After all, who wants to hang out with losers?

Paul deals with a very similar situation among the Corinthian believers. It was the custom in the early church to share a “love feast” after the Lord’s Supper. Everyone would bring food to share, but it turned out that the rich believers were sharing only with their particular friends and excluding the poor.

Read: 1 Corinthians 11:17-22.

- How could these gatherings be harmful? Who was being harmed?
- What is the purpose of celebrating the Lord’s Supper?
- Why would Paul say that the Corinthians weren’t truly celebrating the Lord’s Supper when they came together?
- What was the attitude of those who enjoyed their own private suppers toward the rest of the church?
- Webster’s Dictionary defines humility as “not proud or haughty; not arrogant or assertive.” Is an attitude of humility necessary to being welcoming and inclusive? Why or why not?

GROWing toward God

Pray for God to give you the ability to see and include those being excluded in our community. Pray for the open chair in each of our community groups. Pray that God puts individuals in front of you to invite and that He give you the courage to do the asking.

SPIRITUALITY & COMMUNITY (10/07/2007)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-7, 27-31

- What is the purpose of the specific gifts given to each believer?
- Are some gifts more important, or more necessary, than others? Why or why not?
- What should our attitude be toward our own gifts? How are we to exercise them?
- What should our attitude be toward other believers' gifts? What about dissatisfaction with our own gifts?
- How do we maintain unity when there are so many different gifts?
- How can we find out what our particular spiritual gift or gifts are?

GROWing toward God

Take a moment to pray, asking God to help you recognize the spiritual gifts He has given you. Ask him to put willingness in your heart to seek out a space in which you can use those gifts for His purposes. Ask God how He wants you to contribute to the body of Threads.