

1 Corinthians Chapter 7

1. Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*

A. Now concerning the things of which you wrote me:

1. concerning the things

a. The Corinthians wrote to Paul inquiring about some things they had questions about. This showed some level of humility. Questions are a sign of humility.

2. wrote- Gr. **grapho**

a. This letter has been lost to time. We do not know all the things they asked about but we do know they asked about marriage.

B. *It is good for a man not to touch a woman*

1. **good**- Gr. **kalos**- *morally good, noble, beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable*

a. This statement needs to be taken in context of this chapter and what Paul says in verse 26. He mentions a present distress that had or was about to hit Corinth. This distress was great persecution. Paul is saying that under these circumstances it is good to remain single. It is not expedient to be martyred and leave behind family that are not provided for.

b. This is probably the time of Nero and his persecution of Christians had begun throughout the Roman empire.

2. **man**- Gr. **anthropos**

3. **touch**- Gr. **haptomai**- *to fasten one's self to, to attach oneself to, adhere to, cling to, of carnal intercourse with a woman or cohabitation, to light, kindle*

a. This is not a mere touch of the finger. This Greek word means to attach to and to have intercourse with. The word touch is similarly used in the OT. [Prov. 6:29](#)

b. This Greek word also means to light fire [kindle a flame]. It is good not to touch a woman before marriage that would kindle a flame or set a fire in either the man or woman.

4. woman- Gr. *gune*

2. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

A. Nevertheless,

B. because of sexual immorality,

1. because- Gr. *dia*

a. Sexual immorality was rampant in Corinth, thus the temptation would be great to sin sexually if you were not married and having sexual relations within the confines of marriage. [1 Cor. 7:9](#)

2. sexual immorality- Gr. *porneia*

C. let each man have his own wife,

1. each man

a. It is God's general will for men to marry. You need to hear from God if you are not!

2. have- Gr. *echo*- *used of those joined to any one by the bonds of natural blood or marriage or friendship or duty or law etc, of attendance or companionship*

a. "Let each have" reflects a Greek idiom for "Let them have sexual relations." *Bible Background Commentary*

3. own wife

a. This speaks of God's blessing only on monogamous marriage. You should not be intimate with any woman except your wife.

D. and let each woman have her own husband

1. each woman

a. It is God's general will for women to get married. You need to hear from God you are not!

2. own husband

a. This means that the man does not have the only say in the sexual relationship. The wife also does towards the husband. [1 Cor. 7:4](#)

3. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

A. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her,

1. **husband-** Gr. **aner**

2. **render-** Gr. **apodidomi**

3. **affection due-** Gr. **eunoia opheilo-** *gift or present in token of goodwill, conjugal rights rightfully given*

a. The oldest manuscripts read simply, “her due”; that is, the conjugal cohabitation *due* by the marriage contract.

b. Sex is a gift you give your spouse. It is a token of goodwill and love. It is not right to withhold this within the covenant of marriage.

c. For years it was taught it was the wife's duty to meet the sexual needs for her husband, but the Word says the man is also to provide this for His wife. This is a two way street. I believe Paul put the man first in giving the affection due his wife because the husband usually is the one demanding it from the wife. He needs to know it is a two-way street.

B. and likewise also the wife to her husband

1. **wife-** Gr. **gune**

a. A wife should not withhold physical intimacy as a weapon against her husband. She should freely give that gift to him. Gifts are not earned or deserved.

2. **husband-** Gr. **aner**

4. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.

A. The wife does not have authority over her own body,

1. **wife-** Gr. **gune**

2. **authority-** Gr. **exousia-** *to possess control over, the right to act, to have or exercise power or authority over anyone*

a. Notice that this says authority and not power. The husband has authority over his wife's body but it does not say he has

power over her and can force his way on her. Authority means to have certain rights. However, he never has a right to force his way upon his wife or force her to do things for him.

3. own body

a. Today many women are saying they have sole authority over their body. This is not scriptural. First of all our bodies were purchased by Christ. [1 Cor. 6:19](#) You are not your own, you were bought with price. They belong to Him. He has authority over them. Next, if you are married, your spouse also has authority over your body.

B. but the husband does.

1. husband- Gr. aner

a. Notice the words husband and wife in speaking of the sexual relationship. God never intended the sexual relationship be between unmarried people. Intimacy is only safe on the basis of covenant. Marriage is a covenant relationship between one woman and one man bound together by God.

C. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body,

1. authority

2. own body

a. Again, marriage is a two way street. The wife has claims on her husband's body just as he has claims on hers.

D. but the wife does.

1. In context, this is speaking of sexual relations. However, the principle can be extended further than this. If your spouse is sick in their body, the spouse has authority over their body and should exercise it to drive sickness out.

5. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

A. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time,

1. **deprive-** Gr. **apostereo-** *rob, despoil, defraud one of a thing, refuse payment of a debt, detach, withdraw oneself from a person or thing*

a. When we withhold sexual relationship with our spouse we

are robbing from them.

b. If a spouse is finding sexual pleasure outside of their covenant marriage then they are robbing from their spouse.

c. Many times one spouse or the other will withdraw themselves and detach emotionally and physically. When this happens they are defrauding and robbing their spouse of the intimacy they need and rightfully deserve.

2. **consent**- Gr. **sumphonos**- *agreeing in sound, harmonious*

a. To stop sexual relations in a marriage and it be pleasing to the Lord then both partners should be in symphony about it and they do it for a time to seek Him.

3. **time**- Gr. **kairos**- *a season, a set period of time*

a. This should be an agreed on time between **both** of the partners after prayer to the Lord for His mind.

B. that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer,

1. **give**- Gr. **scholazo**- *to be unemployed, to be at leisure; to be at leisure for a thing, to devote one's self entirely to a thing*

a. This is one of the benefits of being single. You can have undistracted attention upon the Lord. If you are married you have a split devotion.

2. **fasting**- Gr. **nesteia**- *a fasting- voluntary religious observance*

a. Fasting was a practice in both the OT and NT time periods.

3. **prayer**- Gr. **proseuche**- *to pray towards*

a. If you don't add prayer to fasting it then becomes just a bad diet.

C. and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1. **come together**- Gr. **sunerchomai**

2. **Satan**- Gr. **Satanas**- *The Adversary*

a. Anytime there is a split between man and God and man and man the work of Satan is at play. He is the Adversary. He creates strife and adversarial situations.

3. **tempt**- Gr. **peirazo**- *to try in order to find a breaking point or failure*

- a. Please know that Satan personally does not tempt or come against every believer. He is only one place at a time. However, he has spirits under his authority that he commands. When one of them comes against you it is Satan coming against you. When you stand against Satan and command him to flee then you are commanding the spirits under him to do so. [James 4:7](#)
- b. Satan is also called the Tempter. [1Th 3:5](#)

4. lack of self-control- Gr. **akrasia-** *powerless, that is, without self-control*

- a. This is a fruit of the Spirit. If we are out of line with the Word, we will be out of line with the Spirit. The Word says not to withhold sexual relationship with your spouse. If you don't heed the Word, then you don't heed the Spirit. This means you are in your flesh. When you are in your flesh you will be without self-control.

6. But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment.

A. But I say this as a concession,

1. say- Gr. **lego**

2. concession- Gr. **suggnome-** *pardon; concession, leave, permission*

- a. A teacher of the Word should either speak the Word of God or what is by permission by God, which will never violate the Word of God.
- b. We can get the permission of God by checking our spirit for the inward witness.
- c. It is important when we say something that is not specified in the Word that we share it is our opinion. We should keep our opinions to a minimum while teaching.

B. not as a commandment

1. commandment- Gr. **entole**

- a. From God.
- b. Paul was not speaking a commandment from God that a couple had to leave sexual relations to have a set time to fast and pray. This was what Paul was advising.

7. For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

A. For I wish that all men were even as I myself,

1. **wish-** Gr. **thelo-** *to will*

2. **all men**

3. **myself**

a. Here Paul was not saying he wished all men were unmarried. This would be against God's will that humans marry and populate the earth. Paul is referring to having a gift of self-control in the area of his sensual desires.

b. At the time of this writing Paul was single. It has been debated if Paul was ever married. If he was a member of the Sanhedrin then he had to have been. At the stoning of Stephen it says Paul gave his assent to his death. This may mean he was part of the Sanhedrin who approved of the action. Some say Saul of Tarsus would have been married since he was such an ardent follower of the Law and over accomplished over his contemporaries. [Gal. 1:14](#) He would not have been looked on favorably if he was not a married Jew. It has been speculated that Paul's wife left him because of his conversion to Christianity. We can not know for certain.

B. But each one has his own gift from God,

1. **each one**

a. There is not a human that does not have a gift from God to fulfill His specific will for them.

2. **gift-** Gr. **charisma-** *a grace gift*

C. one in this manner and another in that.

1. We all have differing gifts that are to complement one another, not to compete with one another.

8. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am;

A. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows,

1. **unmarried-** Gr. **agamos**

a. This would include those never married or currently divorced.

2. **widows**- Gr. **chera**- *from the root word chasma*

B. It is good for them if they remain even as I am

1. **good**- Gr. **kalos**

a. It is good under the present distress- persecution.

2. **remain**- Gr. **meno**

a. Remain unmarried

3. **as I am**

a. This shows Paul was unmarried- either he never married or was divorced. [1 Cor. 9:5-6](#)

9. but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*.

A. but if they cannot exercise self-control,

1. **exercise self-control**- Gr. **egkrateuomai**- *to exhibit self-government, conduct, one's self temperately*

a. Some do not exercise self-control within the confines of marriage. Ultimately, we find this as a fruit of the Spirit inside our personal relationship with Christ.

B. let them marry,

1. **marry**- Gr. **gameo**

C. For it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*

1. **better**- Gr. **kreitton**- *stronger, better, more noble*

2. **burn with passion**- Gr. **puroo**- *to burn with fire, to set on fire, kindle; in a metaphorical sense, to be troubled, vexed, or made uneasy*

a. The sexual drive is one reason to marry but it should not be the sole reason you marry someone. [1 Tim. 5:11](#) There should be friendship and love present as well.

10. Now to the married I command, *yet* not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from *her* husband.

A. Now to the married I command,

1. **command-** Gr. **paraggello-** *to transmit a message that had been received*

a. The job of teachers of the Word today is to transmit the message that the Lord has given to us in the Scriptures.

B. yet not I but the Lord,

1. **not I**

a. This was not his personal opinion.

2. **the Lord**

a. This was not a new communication that he got from the Lord Jesus but based upon what Jesus had already said about marriage during his earthly ministry. [Mat 5:32](#), [Mat 19:6-9](#); [Mar 10:11-12](#); [Luk 16:18](#)

C. A wife is not to depart from her husband

1. **wife-** Gr. **gune**

2. **depart-** Gr. **chorizo-** *to separate, divide, part, put asunder, to separate one's self from, to depart*

3. **husband-** Gr. **aner**

a. This was the Lord's direction found in the gospels. There was a stipulation for divorce because of marital unfaithfulness. [Matt. 6:9](#)

b. God Himself is a divorcee. He divorced Israel because of their unfaithfulness. [Jer. 3:8](#)

11. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.

A. But even if she does depart,

1. **depart-** Gr. **chorizo-** *to separate, divide, part, put asunder, to separate one's self from, to depart,*

a. This scenario is when the wife leaves a marriage and not for the reason of unfaithfulness.

B. let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband,

1. **remain-** Gr. **meno**

2. **unmarried-** Gr. **agamos**

a. This is not a commandment to the spouse that was left.

3. **reconciled**- Gr. **katallasso**- *to change, to reconcile (those who are at variance), change a person from enmity to friendship*

a. The basic meaning of this Greek word is *to change*. There can be no reconciliation in a marriage unless change comes first. You can forgive someone, but that is not the same as being reconciled. Reconciliation can only take place if there is a true heart change- repentance.

b. God has forgiven everyone because of Jesus' death, but not all will be reconciled to God. [2 Cor. 5:19-20](#) This takes repentance and faith. [Mark 1:15](#)

C. And a husband is not to divorce his wife

1. **divorce**- Gr. **aphiemi**- *to send away, to give up, keep no longer*

a. Jesus was clear on His stance towards divorce. [Mat 5:32](#), [Mat 19:6-9](#); [Mar 10:11-12](#); [Luk 16:18](#)

12. But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her.

A. But to the rest I,

1. **rest**- Gr. **loipoi**- *the remainder*

a. He has been speaking to the unmarried ([1Co 7:8](#)) and to married parties, both of whom were Christians ([1Co 7:10](#)). By *the rest* he means married couples in which one of the spouses remained a heathen. VWS

b. Also, Paul could have used the phrase “the rest” to refer to the rest of their questions on marriage that Jesus did not specifically address in His earthly ministry.

B. not the Lord,

1. Jesus did not address a believer married to an unbeliever in His earthly ministry because people could only get saved and born again after Jesus rose from the dead. This was a question that arose in the church dispensation.

C. say

D. If any brother has a wife who does not believe

1. **brother**- Gr. **adelphos**

a. A believer in Christ

2. **wife-** Gr. **gune**

3. **does not believe-** Gr. **apistos**

a. This obviously is the case where both husband and wife were unsaved but the man got saved and his wife did not.

b. It is explicitly clear that a believer is not to select an unbeliever as their spouse. [2 Cor. 6:14](#), [1 Cor. 7:39](#)

E. and she is willing to live with him,

1. **willing-** Gr. **suneudokeo-** *to be pleased at the same time with, consent, agree to, to applaud*

a. It is not God's intention to break up a happy marriage and home. If the couple is content to dwell together they should continue to do so.

b. In the OT it was commanded for the Jewish men to send away their heathen wives. [Ezr 10:2-3](#), [Ezr 10:11-19](#) These were chosen by them when they knew better and did it anyway. They already were covenant people and knew intermarriage with heathen women was prohibited. They did it anyway. Here in the NT the marriages spoken of here took place when both of the people involved were heathen and one got saved later. There is a difference between what happened in Ezra and here.

2. **live-** Gr. **oikeo-** *to dwell*

F. let him not divorce her

1. **divorce-** Gr. **aphiemi-** *to send away, to give up, keep no longer*

13. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

A. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe,

1. **woman-** Gr. **gune-** *wife or woman*

a. This is an example of the Greek word **gune** being translated as “woman” when it should be translated “wife”. This is done in other places where it seems that women are not supposed to teach men or have a place of vocal ministry in the church. However in these passages the Greek word **gune** should be

translated as “wives” not “women”. We see this by the context. [1 Tim. 2:11-13](#), [1 Cor. 14:34-35](#)

b. Marriage is a two way street. This verse is the same situation as the previous verse but the roles are reversed. This verse speaks of the wife and the previous verse the husband. Before the gospel elevated women marriage was a one way street and the wife had very little freedom or choices.

2. not believe- Gr. apistos

a. Again, the marriage took place when both were unbelievers and now the wife got saved and the husband is still an unbeliever. This does not condone marrying an unbeliever if you are a believer. God has not called you to missionary dating!

B. if he is willing to live with her,

1. **willing-** Gr. **suneudokeo-** *to be pleased at the same time with, consent, agree to, to applaud*

a. If someone applauds the fact you are with them, then you need to keep that person!

2. **live-** Gr. **oikeo-** *to dwell*

C. let her not divorce him

1. **divorce-** Gr. **aphiemi-** *to send away, to give up, keep no longer*

14. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

A. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife,

1. **sanctified-** Gr. **hagiazō-** *set apart, made holy, sanctified*

a. It is important to take scripture in context. Here we see Paul's discussion is marriage and not our standing before the Father. Our standing with the Father is established by a personal faith in Jesus Christ. Every person must believe for themselves. For a believer they are justified and sanctified in the eyes of God. However, here the subject is natural marriage. This is speaking that the believing spouse sanctifies the union of marriage and makes it legitimate in the eyes of

the church and is blessed.

b. Paul is not teaching here that an unbelieving spouse is saved by virtue of being married to a believer. If this was the case then it would be a goal of many Christian women to marry unbelievers to get them saved. The Scripture forbids this practice.

B. and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband;

C. otherwise your children would be unclean,

1. **children-** Gr. **teknon**

2. **unclean-** Gr. **akathartos-** *impure, unclean; lewd; foul defiled; evil; impure; unclean*

a. Unbelievers by themselves are unclean and are not to be accepted into the Christian assembly as members.

D. but now they are holy

1. **holy-** Gr. **hagios-** *set apart, holy, consecrated*

a. This does not mean the children are saved or made right with God. This means that the family unit is consecrated and blessed and should be accepted into the Christian assembly.

b. I have a club membership at the gym I attend. I am a member. Because I am a member my wife can visit and participate as well even though she herself is not a member. My membership allows her access to the club. This is what Paul is referring to here. The family is accepted into the Christian assembly. As my membership sanctifies my wife at the club, so the believing spouse sanctifies her family and give them access to the church.

c. Hopefully, the spouse and children will be influenced by the gospel and holy conduct in the home and in the church and will come to saving faith themselves.

d. In the OT the unclean made the clean ceremonially unclean. In the NT when it comes to the marriage relationship and in the family unit the clean makes the unclean ceremonially clean! The power of the righteousness in Christ is stronger than that of sin and death in the world!

15. **But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*. But God has called us to peace.**

A. **But if the unbeliever departs,**

1. **departs-** Gr. **chorizo-** *to separate, divide, part, put asunder, to separate one's self from, to depart,*

B. **let him depart,**

1. This means to stop believing and praying that they will return. This means you don't beg him to return.

C. **a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases.**

1. **brother-** Gr. **adelphos**

a. Male believer

2. **sister-** Gr. **adelphe**

a. Female believer

3. **bondage-** Gr. **douloo-** *to reduce to servitude, enslave, oppress by retaining in servitude*

a. To remain month after month, year after year, hoping and praying for an unbelieving spouse to return to you is bondage. Move on with your life!

4. **cases-** Gr. **toioutos-** *these things, these situations*

D. **But God has called us to peace.**

1. **called-** Gr. **kaleo**

a. The NT is clear that God is a God of peace and has called us to live in peace in ourselves and with each other. [1Co 14:33](#); [Rom 12:18](#), [Rom 14:19](#); [2Co 13:11](#); [Gal 5:22](#); [Heb 12:14](#); [Jas 3:17-18](#)

2. **peace-** Gr. **eirene-** *tranquility, peace, harmony, prosperity*

a. Hanging on hoping an unbelieving spouse will return brings inner disruption in your heart that does not go away. Move on in peace and tranquility into the new and better things God has for you!

16. **For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife?**

A. **For how do you know,**

1. know- Gr. **eidō-** *to see or perceive with the mind*

a. This verse has been taken two ways. The first way connects this verse with verse 14 and gives the thought that if you stay married to your unbelieving spouse that wants to stay with you that you might win them to Christ. The second way connects this verse with verse 15 and gives the thought that it is ok to let an unbeliever leave if they want to and that you are not assured of winning them to Christ even if they stayed. Both are true, but I believe that the immediate context is preferred connecting this verse with the last verse.

B. O wife,

C. whether you will save your husband

1. save- Gr. **sozo-** *save, deliver*

a. It is not assured that you will win your unbelieving husband to the Lord. 1 Peter 3 says she “may” be able to win him.

[1Pe 3:1-2](#)

D. Or how do you know,

E. O husband,

F. whether you will save your wife

17. But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches.

A. But as God has distributed to each one,

1. distributed- Gr. **merizo-** *to divide; to divide out, distribute, to assign, bestow*

a. It is so important to take scripture into context! The context for this phrase in this verse and with this chapter is having the gift from God to be single or not. God has distributed to each person the gift to be single or the gift to be married. This is what Paul is referring to.

b. If you don't take this in the proper context you can make this say that whatever is happening in our life has been given to us by God whether good or bad and we are just to endure whatever comes our way as coming from God.

2. each one

a. Each person either is gifted for singleness or being married.

1 Cor. 7:7

B. as the Lord has called each one,

1. called- Gr. **kaleo**

a. Again the context is important. This phrase in context means that whatever marital state you were in when you were called [saved], you should not seek to change it.

b. This does not mean that whatever happens to you that it is God's call for you to endure it.

c. We don't need to see to change our external but live a supernatural life from the internal. 1Co 7:18, 1Co 7:20-21, 1Co 7:24

2. each one

a. Each one was either single or married when they got saved.

C. so let him walk,

1. walk- Gr. **peripateo**

a. The Christian life is a walk of faith.

D. And so I ordain in all churches

1. ordain- Gr. **diatasso-** *to arrange, appoint, ordain, prescribe, give order*

2. all churches- Gr. **pas ekklesia**

a. All the churches Paul oversaw. He had no jurisdiction over churches he did not oversee. However, what he wrote to churches that were recorded in the NT are direction for all churches worldwide for all time.

b. There is only one universal church, but many local churches or assemblies of the universal church. The universal church includes those living on the earth presently and all that have been saved and have gone to heaven.

**18. Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised.
Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised.**

A. Was anyone called while circumcised?

1. called- Gr. **kaleo**

2. **circumcised**- Gr. **peritome**- *to cut around*

a. In other words they were Jewish.

B. Let him not become uncircumcised

1. **uncircumcised**- Gr. **epispoma**- *to draw upon or after; in NT mid. to obliterate circumcision by artificial extension of the foreskin*

a. Some Jews elected to have this procedure done to fit in with the Greek or Roman cultures they lived in.

C. Was anyone called while uncircumcised

1. In other words they were Gentiles.

D. Let him not be circumcised

1. I am sure all those who were uncircumcised rejoiced at hearing this. It saved them a lot of pain!

2. There were religious zealots in the early church that taught a gentile who got saved must also be circumcised to be saved.

[Act 15:1](#) This is false. [Act 15:19](#), [Act 15:24](#), [Act 15:28](#); [Gal 5:1-3](#)

19. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God *is what matters.*

A. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing,

1. **nothing**- Gr. **oudeis**- *not even one*

B. but keeping the commandments of God

1. **keeping**- Gr. **teresis**- *a keeping, practical observance, strict performance*

2. **commandments**- Gr. **entole**

a. The phrase "circumcision is nothing [avails anything] and uncircumcision is nothing [avails anything] is quoted two other times in Paul's writings. In [Gal 5:6](#) instead of mentioning the keeping of the commandments there we have "faith which worketh by love"; and in [Gal 6:15](#), instead of mentioning keeping the commandments of God we have "but a new creature." We keep the commandments by our faith in Jesus and receiving and walking in His love. We can do this in our reborn spirit.

b. [1 John 3:23](#) gives us the commandments we are to keep-

believe upon the Lord Jesus and love one another. When we believe upon the Lord Jesus His love is shed abroad in our heart and we can then love people with His love.

20. Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.

A. **remain-** Gr. **meno-** *stay, abide, remain*

B. **calling-** Gr. **klesis-** *a call, invitation*

a. The power of the Gospel is not seen in the changing of outward circumstances, but it is seen by flourishing in any circumstance.

b. You may be looking to change your circumstances so you can be happier. It won't, at least in the long run. Joy and contentment is an inside job. It comes from the abiding presence of God in us. Instead of you moving, rest in his abiding presence within you.

21. Were you called *while* a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use *it*.

A. **Were you called while a slave?**

1. **called-** Gr. **kaleo**

2. **slave-** Gr. **doulos**

B. **Do not be concerned about it;**

1. **concerned-** Gr. **melo-** *care for, take an interest in, busied with, to be anxious, weigh on the mind*

a. Notice that Paul never taught against the evils of slavery or encouraged revolt. Jesus did not come to create a cultural revolution. He came to cause a heart revolution that in sufficient numbers would create a cultural revolution. However, we also see that he teaches in this verse that if one could obtain freedom they should.

b. In Christ there are no slaves. [1Co 12:13](#); [Gal 3:28](#); [Col 3:11](#)
We are freemen in the Lord. If we are free in the natural we are the Lord's servants. [1 Cor. 7:22](#)

c. In whatever state we are in we can learn to be content.
[Php 4:11](#)

C. **but if you can be made free,**

1. **made free-** Gr. **eleutheros**

D. **rather use it**

1. **use it-** Gr. **chraomai-** *make use of, employ, to take advantage of*

- a. Although Paul is teaching in this chapter that we should not seek to change our circumstances, on the other hand he says it is not a command to stay in them either. If the opportunity arises that a change can occur that is more advantageous in the natural then it is fine to take it.

22. **For he who is called in the Lord *while* a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called *while* free is Christ's slave.**

A. **For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman.**

1. **in the Lord**

- a. This speaks of being saved and being in Christ.

2. **freedman-** Gr. **apeleutheros-** *restored to freedom, emancipated*

- a. Some of the most free people in the world are those in prison who got born again and are growing in their faith in Christ.
- b. It is the truth that makes us free, not a physical key in a lock.
[John 8:31-32](#)

B. **Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave.**

1. **free-** Gr. **eleutheros**

- a. We can always see our circumstances with a new perspective which makes all the difference in the world! God can give us this new perspective if we ask Him.
- b. Many who are free in the natural are bound to sin. [Rom. 6:16](#) We can be bound to Christ and righteousness. [Rom. 6:18, 22](#)

23. **You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.**

A. **You were bought at a price;**

1. **bought-** Gr. **agorazo-** *to buy out of the marketplace, redeem, acquire by a ransom or price paid buy; purchase*

- a. We were redeemed out of the slave-market of sin.

2. **price**- Gr. **time**- *a pricing, estimate of worth; price, value, substantial value, real worth*

a. The price was the life blood of the Son of God- our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. do not become slaves of men

1. **slaves**- Gr. **doulos**

2. **men**- Gr. **anthropos**

a. Paul is not referring to the institution of slavery and that slaves needed to revolt or escape because he just stated that they are to continue being slaves unless the opportunity opens for them to obtain their freedom.

b. Paul is saying we should see Christ as our only true and rightful owner. We should serve Him ultimately as we serve other people.

c. Many do not have shackles on their hands and feet in the natural but they do have in the spiritual because they are bound to the approval of men. They are man-pleasers. You cannot be a man-pleaser and be a servant of Christ. [Gal. 1:10](#)

24. Brethren, let each one remain with God in that *state* in which he was called.

A. Brethren- Gr. **adelphos**

1. This was a term of endearment that takes the edge off correction or a hard saying to accept.

B. let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.

1. **each one**

a. When the term "each one" is used in the NT it speaks of it being a universal directive for all believers.

b. Paul uses this term "each one" **27 times** in his letters [excluding Hebrews since we do not know if Paul wrote it]. **20 of those times** he says it to the Corinthians! The Corinthians were puffed up in pride. Those in pride have a tendency to exclude themselves from directives. They see themselves as special cases that rules and directives don't apply in comparison to "other people".

2. **with God**

a. This is the key to being able to flourish in any circumstance. The fact that you are there "with God" is what makes the difference. You can draw upon His life, strength, and grace to overcome in any situation!

3. **state-** *not in the Greek-* It was added to make sense of the sentence. It would be safest to insert the word calling here.

25. Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy *has made* trustworthy.

a. Now concerning virgins:

1. **virgins-** Gr. **parthenos-** *a woman who has never had sexual intercourse with a man*

a. This word speaks of those who have not been married before which implies sex should only be reserved for marriage.

b. This Greek word can apply to men or women.

b. I have no commandment from the Lord;

1. **commandment-** Gr. **epitage-** *an injunction, mandate, command*

2. from the Lord

a. Jesus never gave commands concerning those who had never been married during His earthly ministry.

c. yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy

1. **judgment-** Gr. **gnome-** *the faculty of knowledge, mind, reason, that which is thought or known, one's mind*

a. There was no scripture on the subject Paul was addressing so he said he would share his own mind and thinking on it. We should keep this to a minimum as a minister. The Holy Spirit is much better a teacher to each Christian on subjects that are not addressed in scripture than man is. We are to teach and preach the general principles found in the Word. The Holy Spirit teaches each saint on the specifics or what is outside of the written Word.

2. mercy- Gr. **eleeo**

a. This is a powerful thought! It is God's mercy that he makes us faithful and trustworthy. We need to pray for God's mercy

to make us faithful. God always gives His mercy. He delights in giving mercy. [Micah 7:18](#)

3. **trustworthy**- Gr. **pistos**- *faithful, reliable, true*

a. We are to be found faithful. [1 Cor. 4:2](#) We can be counted faithful. [1 Tim. 1:12](#) It is God's mercy that makes us so.

26. I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—that *it is good for a man to remain as he is:*

A. I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress

1. **suppose**- Gr. **nomizo**- *to suppose, presume, to deem, think*

2. **good**- Gr. **kalos**- *useful, suitable, good, excellent in its nature and characteristics, and therefore well adapted to its ends, profitable*

a. Singleness in a time of persecution and grave danger is suitable and useful.

3. **present**- Gr. **enistemi**- *to be upon, impend, close at hand, present*

a. This is speaking a present or soon coming distress. This admonition is for that moment not direction for all time. If one is put into a place of severe persecution this advice from Paul could be employed then. There are persecuted Christians throughout the world that this passage speaks to their situation presently.

b. This letter was written around the time of Nero's persecution of Christians.

4. **distress**- Gr. **anagke**- *calamity, distress, straits, trial, affliction*

a. Undoubtly this is speaking of persecution.

b. It would have been better for a young man or woman to be martyred as a single than to leave a spouse or children orphaned.

c. Jesus in speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem said woe to those who have small children in those days. [Mat 24:19](#); [Luke 23:29](#)

B. that it is good for a man to remain as he is

1. **good**- Gr. **kalos**

2. **man**- Gr. **anthropos**

3. **remain-** *not in the Greek-* translate "to be"

27. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

A. Are you bound to a wife?

1. **bound-** Gr. **deo-** *to bind, tie, fasten*

a. There is a marriage bond that is not broken until death or divorce.

b. I would not use this phrase with your wife gentlemen! It is not wise.

2. **wife-** Gr. **gune**

B. Do not seek to be loosed

1. **seek-** Gr. **zeteo-** *to seek, i.e. require, demand*

2. **loosed-** Gr. **luisis-** *a loosing, setting free, a release*

a. This would be by divorce.

C. Are you loosed from a wife?

1. **loosed-** Gr. **luo**

a. This is by divorce or by the death of the spouse.

D. Do not seek a wife

1. **seek-** Gr. **zeteo-** *to seek, i.e. require, demand*

a. This is God's word to singles. Do not seek a wife. If you follow God and prepare for a mate he will bring your spouse to you if you are a man or bring you to your spouse if you are a woman.

b. The biblical pattern for singles is that God gives a man a field to work and then escorts a prepared woman to the man. [Gen. 2:22](#), [Gen. 24:63](#), [Ruth 2:3](#)

28. But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you.

A. But even if you do marry,

1. **you**

a. Those who have been married before.

2. **marry-** Gr. **gameo**

B. you have not sinned,

1. **sinned-** Gr. **hamartano**

a. It is not a sin to get remarried.

C. and if a virgin marries,

1. **virgin-** Gr. **parthenos**

a. One never married before

D. she has not sinned,

1. This verse teaches that if you are single and want to get married that it is not a sin to do so in God's boundaries- to another believer.

2. Many singles are paralyzed with a fear that they would go outside God's plan for their life if they get married. They spend agonizing weeks, months, and even years praying if it is God's will for them to marry. You actually need to hear from God not to get married.

Marriage is God's plan A for almost everyone. He would have to tell you it is not for you specifically!

3. Sin is going outside God's plan for your life. Here Paul says you have not sinned if you get married if you want! Get out of paralysis on God's will on this. You can find God's will deep in your heart and its desires. Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you your heart's desires. [Ps. 37:4](#) Delight in Him and He will place His desires in your heart for what He wants you to have. Do you have a deep desire in your heart to get married? Then do it! He placed the desire there. If God was calling you to be single you would not want to be married. You would be perfectly content single.

E. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh,

1. **trouble-** Gr. **thlipisis-** *crushing pressure*

a. Your family will be put in great pressure if you or your spouse is imprisoned or martyred for their faith.

2. **in the flesh**

a. This speaks of the natural life.

F. but I would spare you.

1. **spare-** Gr. **pheidomai-** *to spare, in respect of hard dealing*

- a. Sometimes in life we want things but don't see all of the problems or responsibilities of what comes with them in the future. When God says no to us it is always to spare us from bad things. He always has the best for us.
- b. However, if we are set on having something then God will allow it, but we will have to deal with the consequences of our choices.

29. But this I say, brethren, the time *is* short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,

A. But this I say,

B. brethren,

- 1. A term of endearment used when a hard word is given.

C. the time is short,

1. **time-** Gr. **kairos-** *the season, period of time*

- a. In context this is speaking of the season and time of persecution at hand.

2. **short-** Gr. **sustello-** *to draw together, contract, to shorten, abridge*

- a. The season of persecution is right at hand.

D. so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none

1. **now-** not in Greek- omit

2. **none**

- a. Again it is important to take scripture in context. This is not Paul's admonition for all time, but for the present impending distress of persecution.

b. Christian men at this time needed to be prepared to suffer and even be imprisoned for their faith. They should not deny their faith to hold on to their wives and children. Christ is our first allegiance.

c. The only bond that is eternal is with our God and Savior.

d. This verse is not to be taken out of context as a pretense for a man to neglect his wife and home. This goes against the rest of the Word of God.

30. those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess,

A. those who weep as though they did not weep,

1. **weep-** Gr. **klaio-** *to wail, cry loudly*

a. If we were not tied to this world so much, we would not weep as much.

B. those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice,

1. **rejoice-** Gr. **chairo-** *to rejoice, be glad*

a. If we were not tied to the things of this world, we would not rejoice in them as much.

C. those who buy as though they did not possess

1. **buy-** Gr. **agorazo-** *to buy out of the market place*

2. **possess-** Gr. **katecho-** *to hold down; come into full possession of, seize upon; to keep, to detain, retain,*

a. We may purchase things but they never truly are ours. Everything we see really belongs to God. We came into the world with empty hands and we will leave this world carrying nothing with us. We should not get wrapped up in the natural things that can be purchased with money. We should be wrapped in those things that are priceless and cannot be bought.

b. Our life does not consist of the things we possess. [Luke 12:15](#)

31. and those who use this world as not misusing *it*. For the form of this world is passing away.

A. and those who use this world as not misusing *it*.

1. **world-** Gr. **kosmos-** *world system and all that is in it*

2. **misusing-** Gr. **katachraomai-** *to use downright; to use up, consume; to make an unrestrained use of, use eagerly*

a. Some Christians are living it up and using and experiencing all this life has to offer. They are wrapped up in this world because they love the present world more than the life to

come. [2 Tim. 4:10](#)

b. Being consumed with the pleasures of this world will choke the Word of God. [Luke 8:14](#)

B. For the form of this world is passing away.

1. **form**- Gr. **schema**- *fashion, form; external show, appearance; figure; form*

a. The glitz and glamor of this world is a mere external show to detract from its emptiness. A city that is the epitome of this is Las Vegas. It is filled with glitz, glamor, and flashing lights but Sin City is empty.

2. **world**- Gr. **kosmos**

3. **passing away**- Gr. **parago**- *to pass along or by*

a. The world is passing away and Jesus is coming to stay!

32. But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord.

A. But I want you to be without care.

1. **want**- Gr. **thelo**

2. **without care**- Gr. **amerimnos**- *not anxious, not to expend careful thought, not to have the thoughts occupied with, no concern*

a. If you were about to face the possibility of going to prison or being martyred it would cause great worry and concern about what would happen to your wife and children.

b. Being single has its advantages. So does being married. Both have their disadvantages. There is not perfect situation in life. Heaven is perfect. This is not heaven.

B. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord

1. **unmarried**- Gr. **agamos**

2. **cares**- Gr. **merimnao**- *to be anxious, to expend careful thought, to have the thoughts occupied with, concern*

C. How he may please the Lord

1. **please**- Gr. **aresko**

a. One of the advantages of being married is having free time to spend with the Lord and serving Him more freely and with

more of your time.

33. But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please *his* wife.

A. But he who is married cares about the things of the world

1. He has a wife and family to feed and protect.
2. He has to concern himself with the schooling and daily schedules that come with a family.

B. how he may please his wife

1. You cannot please a wife casually. It takes thought and effort to do this.
2. Jesus makes sure he pleases His bride. He takes great thought and work to do this.

34. There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please *her* husband.

A. There is a difference between a wife and a virgin.

1. **difference-** Gr. *merizo*- *a division between*
2. **wife-** Gr. *gune*
3. **virgin-** Gr. *parthenos*

B. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord,

C. that she may be holy both in body and in spirit.

1. **holy-** Gr. *hagios*- *set apart for God*

a. This does not mean that a married woman is not holy in her body and spirit before the Lord. This means that being unmarried and untethered by the cares of a family she is set apart in her body to do a greater work for the Lord utilizing more of her time and energy.

2. **body-** Gr. *soma*

3. **spirit-** Gr. *pneuma*

D. But she who is married cares about the things of the world

E. how she may please her husband

1. Pleasing a husband in most cases is easier than pleasing a wife.
Most men only need two "S's"- a sandwich and sex to be happy.

35. And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.

A. And this I say for your own profit,

1. **profit-** Gr. **sumphero-** *be for the benefit of any one, be profitable, advantageous, expedient, to suit best, be appropriate*

B. not that I may put a leash on you,

1. **put-** Gr. **epiballo-** *to throw upon*

2. **leash-** Gr. **brochos-** *a noose, slip-knot, by which any person or thing is caught, or fastened, or suspended, to lasso*

a. Paul was not saying this to corral and lasso people like in a rodeo. He did not say this to control them. He was saying this for their benefit.

C. but for what is proper,

1. **proper-** Gr. **euschemon-** *of good appearance, pleasing to look upon, comely, honorable, reputable, of high standing and influence*

D. and that you may serve the Lord without distraction

1. **serve-** Gr. **euprosedros-** *sitting constantly by, devoted*

a. This is what Paul meant by that an unmarried person is set apart in their body and spirit. They can constantly be ready to do what the Lord directs and not be distracted by other duties needed to attend to a spouse or children.

2. **distraction-** Gr. **aperispastos-** *without distraction, without solicitude or anxiety or care*

36. But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry.

A. But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin,

1. **man-** Gr. **tis-** *any*

2. **thinks-** Gr. **nomizo-** *deem or regard*

3. **behaving improperly-** Gr. **aschemoneo-** *to behave in an*

unbecoming manner or indecorously

4. virgin- Gr. **parthenos**

a. "In those early times, both among the Hebrews and Christians, the daughters were wholly in the power of the father, so that he might give or not give them in marriage as he chose; and might bind them to perpetual celibacy if he thought proper; and to this case the apostle alludes. If the father had devoted his daughter to perpetual virginity, and he afterwards found that she had fixed her affections upon a person whom she was strongly inclined to marry, and was now getting past the prime of life; he, seeing from his daughter's circumstances that it would be wrong to force her to continue in her state of celibacy; though he had determined before to keep her single, yet he might in this case alter his purpose without sin, and let her and her suitor marry." - Adam Clark

b. I like God's Word translation of this verse: "*No father would want to do the wrong thing when his virgin daughter is old enough to get married. If she wants to get married, he isn't sinning by letting her get married.*"

B. if she is past the flower of youth,

1. **past the flower of youth-** Gr. **huperakmos-** *past the bloom of life, past one's prime*

C. and thus it must be,

1. **must be-** Gr. **opheillo ginomai-** *to become necessary*

a. When the daughter strongly desires to get married and is in an unhappy state single.

D. let him do what he wishes

1. **wishes-** Gr. **thelo**

E. He does not sin,

1. **sin-** Gr. **harmartano**

F. let them marry

37. Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.

A. Nevertheless he who stand steadfast in his heart,

1. **steadfast**- Gr. **hedraios**- *sedentary; met. unmoving, settled, steady, firm, steadfast, constant*

2. **heart**- Gr. **kardia**

B. having no necessity,

1. **necessity**- Gr. **anagke**

a. Where there is nothing in his daughter's disposition or inclination that would make marriage necessary, or when there is no "engagement or obligation" that would be violated if she did not marry. - Albert Barnes

b. I like the **Weymouth** translation of this verse: *But if a father stands firm in his resolve, being free from all external constraint and having a legal right to act as he pleases, and in his own mind has come to the decision to keep his daughter unmarried, he will do well.*

i. This is taking into context that it is good for the present distress [i.e. persecution].

C. but has power over his own will,

1. **power**- Gr. **exousia**- *authority*

2. **will**- Gr. **thelema**- *determination, choice*

a. He has authority to do as he pleases; is not bound in the case by another. When there is no "engagement, or contract," made in childhood, or promise made in early life that would bind him. Often daughters were espoused, or promised when they were very young, and in such a case a man would be bound to adhere to his engagement; and much as he might desire the reverse, and her celibacy, yet he would not have power over his own will, or be at liberty to withhold her. - Albert Barnes

D. and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin,

1. **determined**- Gr. **krino**- *to judge or decide a matter*

2. **heart**- Gr. **kardia**

3. **keep**- Gr. **tereo**

E. does well

1. **does-** Gr. poieo
2. **well-** Gr. kalos

38. So then he who gives *her* in marriage does well, but he who does not give *her* in marriage does better.

A. So then he who gives her in marriage does well,

1. **gives here in marriage-** Gr. ekgamizo- *to marry off, to give away in marriage: a daughter*

2. **well-** Gr. kalos

B. but he who does not give her in marriage does better

1. **does not give her in marriage-** Gr. ekgamizo me

2. **better-** Gr. kreisson- *more useful or profitable, more conducive to good*

a. Due to the present distress. It is important to interpret all the verses speaking to the unmarried here in the context of the present or impending distress [persecution] coming that Paul warns about. This would spare them undue pressure of marriage and a family during this time.

39. A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

A. A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives;

1. **wife-** Gr. gune

2. **bound-** Gr. deo

3. **law-** Gr. nomos

a. This is both governmental law and the law of God.

4. **lives-** Gr. zao

B. but if her husband dies,

1. **dies-** Gr. koimao- *to sleep in death*

a. When a believer dies it refers to death as sleep. [1 Cor. 11:30](#), [1 Cor. 15:51](#), [1 Th. 4:14](#), [1 Th. 5:10](#) He will awake [rise] again in the resurrection.

b. Marriage on earth is a flesh contract. It ends on the physical death of one of the spouses. [Rom. 7:2-3](#) There are no eternal

marriages in heaven between people. [Matt. 22:30](#) The only eternal marriage there will be is with Christ and the Church.

C. she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes,

1. **liberty-** Gr. **eleutheros-** *freedom*

2. **wishes-** Gr. **thelo**

a. The Lord gives us a lot of latitude to make our own decisions in our life. He wants us to guide those decisions by the general principles found in the Word of God.

D. only in the Lord

1. Here we see the direct will of God that Christians only marry other believers. We are not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. [2 Cor. 6:14](#)

40. But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment—and I think I also have the Spirit of God.

A. But she is happier if she remains as she is,

1. **happier-** Gr. **makarios-** *happy, blessed; favored; fortunate; privileged*

a. The chances a widow being happier with a brand new spouse than with the one they were with for many years are lower than just staying single.

b. I heard it said once, "Don't marry a widow because the greatest man that ever lived just died."

2. **remains-** Gr. **meno**

B. according to my judgment,

1. **judgment-** Gr. **gnome-** *view, judgment, opinion, mind on a matter*

C. and I think I also have the Spirit of God

1. **think-** Gr. **dokeo-** *to suppose, think, seem*

2. **have-** Gr. **echo**

3. **the Spirit of God**

a. "He is using irony here. His apostleship and his teaching had been under attack by some at Corinth. They professed to have the mind of the Lord in what they were saying. Paul is saying in effect, "Whatever else others may say of me, I think that I also

have the Spirit of God. They profess to have Him but surely they do not think that they have a monopoly on the Holy Spirit.” - Believer Bible Commentary- MacDonald