

Keeping Commitments

Believers honor God by keeping their vows related to marriage and purity.



The Transformation for Adult LifeGroups

1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-13

January 20, 2019/January 23, 2019

TODAY'S TEXT

Text: 1 Corinthians 7:1-13

Now for the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman."² But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband.³ The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.⁴ The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife.⁵ Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.⁶ I say this as a concession, not as a command.⁷ I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.⁸ Now to the unmarried[a] and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do.⁹ But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.¹⁰ To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband.¹¹ But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.¹² To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her.¹³ And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him.

FIRST THOUGHTS

- For Couples: What advice would you give to a newly engaged couple?
- For Singles: What's one thing married people do that drives you crazy?

We might think the Bible only speaks on marriage relationships, but in reality it gives specific direction to singles, couples, kids, and everyone else. Today we're going to look at Paul's instruction to the church at Corinth regarding relationships. Remember, there were lots of problems in Corinth—among those who were married and those who were not. What we can be sure of is that whatever relationship status we have, God has clear expectations about our sexual morality and the way we treat others.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Paul was not yet finished dealing with sexual immorality and related issues. His discussion in this chapter flows from what he wrote and argued in chapters 5–6, but the immediate connection is to the final section of chapter 6 (vv. 12-20), where he dealt with the relationship between sexual immorality and the body.

Paul was responding to matters they asked him about (7:1). Having dealt with the negative aspects of sexual immorality, he now provided constructive advice to help the Corinthian believers know how to glorify God with their bodies (6:20), whether they were married, single, or widowed. Likely, they asked Paul some specifics related to sex in general, marriage, singleness and more. This chapter addresses those areas.

One of the main principles Paul conveyed to the Corinthian believers in this chapter is that each person is to remain in the situation in which he or she was called (7:24). This principle is repeated three times in verses 17-24 and directs the entire discussion of the chapter. Perhaps some Corinthian believers assumed that Paul's teaching on being a new creation in Christ, in which the old has passed away and the new has come (2 Cor. 5:17), meant that even marital relations were to cease and change. Maybe this was a part of the matters they asked about. Regardless, Paul's counsel was for them to stay in the situation they were in when God called them to salvation.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

MARRIAGE AND INTIMACY

> Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-7

- How do these verses address today's issues about marriage?
- How do Paul's directives strengthen a marriage?

MARRIAGE AND SINGLENESS

> Read 1 Corinthians 7:8-9

- ° How can singleness as an alternative to marriage be satisfying?

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

> Read 1 Corinthians 7:10-13

- ° What resolution should couples make and keep for a lasting marriage?

- ° How does the command to remain married affirm God's design for all marriages?

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

Believers honor God by keeping their vows related to marriage and purity.

- ° Paul responded to specific questions about marriage for a specific group of people during a specific time, but how do Paul's answers translate to today's marriages?

Personal Challenge: If you are married, how would you rate the strength of your marriage in terms of communication, respect and intimacy? What can you do in 2019 to recharge your marriage? Set up a coffee date with your spouse to talk about dreams and goals for this year. Commit to monthly date nights, check out the marriage ministry at Chets (classes kicked off on January 14 at the Hodges Campus but there is still time to join!), or attend a weekend marriage retreat. If you are single, do you view it as a gift from God? Why or why not? Spend time this week reflecting on the positive aspects that Paul laid out of being single. How can you connect with and be an encouragement to other singles?

PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-27
- Is Paul saying he's a people-pleaser in this passage? Why or why not?
- Think about the athletic illustrations Paul uses of a runner and a boxer—how do they picture the Christian life?

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

20th - Genesis 49-50; Psalm 8; Luke 20 | **21st** - Exodus 1-2; Psalm 88; Luke 21 | **22nd** - Exodus 3-5; Luke 22 | **23rd** - Exodus 6-8; Luke 23 | **24th** - Exodus 9-11; Luke 24 | **25th** - Exodus 12-13; Psalm 21; Acts 1 | **26th** - Exodus 14-16; Acts 2