

## Parson to Person

### 1 Corinthians 7 (Part 1)

#### (Singleness, Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage—The Biblical Positions)

“Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: *It is* good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 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*. 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. But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. 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. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*.

Now to the married I command, *yet* not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from *her* husband. 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. 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. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her,

let her not divorce him. 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. 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. 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?

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. Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God *is what matters*. Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. Were you called *while* a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use *it*. 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. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. Brethren, let each one remain with God in that *state* in which he was called.

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. I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is: Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 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. 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, 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, and those who use this world as not misusing *it*. For the form of this world is passing away. 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. But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please *his* wife. 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. 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. 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. 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. So then he who gives *her* in marriage does well, but he who does not give *her* in marriage does better.

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. But she is happier if she remains as she is, according to my judgment—and I think I also have the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 7:1–40).

## **All in the Bible**

The Scriptures provide plenty of insight about celibacy, singleness, fornication, marriage, adultery, divorce, and re-marriage. However, inasmuch as first century Christians had the information given in the Old Testament, the Lord saw fit to provide the Apostolic teachings we now enjoy in the New Testament.

## **Questions and Answers**

In Chapters 5 and 6 Paul stood against the prevalent problem of fornication in Corinth. He gave the Corinthians instruction prohibiting all sexual behavior outside the covenant of marriage—between one man and one woman. Moreover, here in Chapter 7 he addressed several prevalent questions over which the Corinthian inquired. By doing so he answers many of the questions believers ask today.

The subject of human sexuality, matrimonial activity, union between believers and non-believers, divorce, the death of a spouse, and even remarriage provides territory for many emotions, reactions, and rationalizations. However, emotional and subjective reasoning must give way to conclusive objective truth. This, we have in the Bible.

I must mention that all the material found in the Bible should be consulted before suggesting a definitive and/or conclusive answer to many of the questions believers ask. However, within this chapter Paul laid out clear general instruction. For this I am thankful.

As we begin to examine this chapter, an overview is in order.

It is apparent that Paul would rather see the Corinthians live lives of singleness and give full attention to the work of the ministry. It is apparent that this was Paul's present condition as a single adult man. However, inasmuch as it is believed that Paul was once married, at the time of the writing, he was single. Therefore, we can safely conclude that Paul was either divorced or a widower. We will not know the details until we are in eternity.

Having been married earlier in life (as we will surmise), Paul can speak with authority on marriage and singleness. It is possible that Paul's handling of marriage to an unbeliever may prove to be his experience as well—for it is my opinion that his wife may have left him when he trusted Jesus as Messiah.

May the Lord enable us to learn and grow as we study these truths together.

I love you all,  
Pastor Paul