



The Week of February 14, 2021
1 Corinthians 7
Love & Marriage
Conversation Guide

This Week's Take-Aways

- **About God's Design for Marriage and Family:** (Ephesians 5:22-6:4) I believe marriage and family are gifts from God and serve as a picture of Christ's relationship with the church. Family is the first environment where I am able to demonstrate my love for God by the way I love others.
- **I place God's priorities above my own:** (Matthew 6:33) I will place God's priorities as described in the Bible ahead of my own.

Intro Questions

- Do you think that Corinth had a divorce court?
- Single people, how many times have you been asked "if you have someone special in your life?" or when are you gonna settle down?
- Married people, what is the most ridiculous thing you've ever fought about?

Married People & Single People

- Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-9

Now in response to the matters you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." But because sexual immorality is so common, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman should have sexual relations with her own husband. A husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise a wife to her husband. A wife does not have the right over her own body, but her husband does. In the same way, a husband does not have the right over his own body, but his wife does. Do not deprive one another – except when you agree for a time, to devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again; otherwise, Satan may tempt you because of your lack of self-control. I say this as a concession, not as a command. I wish that all people were as I am. But each has his own gift from God, one person has this gift, another has that. I say to the unmarried and to widows: It is good for them if they remain as I am. But if they do not have self-control, they should marry, since it is better to marry than to burn with desire.

- What were the circumstances in Corinth at the time Paul wrote this letter?
- Why are those circumstances so important to understanding everything he wrote in this chapter?
- Pastor David has shared that there is only one sexual ethic in the Bible. What is it? (Sex is for a married man and woman. If you're not married, sex isn't for you yet).
- What does Paul say our attitude toward singleness should be?
- How can we make sure our single brothers & sisters feel welcomed and valued in the church family?

- Read Matthew 22:30

"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven."

- Should we make marriage the ultimate goal in life?

- Read Matthew 22:37-38

He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command."

- What should our ultimate goal in life be?

Divorce for Believers & Unbelievers

- Read 1 Corinthians 7:10-16

To the married I give this command – not I, but the Lord – a wife is not to leave her husband. But if she does leave, she must remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband – and a husband is not to divorce his wife. But I (not the Lord) say to the rest: If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. Also, if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce her husband. For the unbelieving husband is made holy by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy by the husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy. But if the unbeliever leaves, let him leave. A brother or a sister is not bound in such cases. God has called you to live in peace. Wife, for all you know, you might save your husband. Husband, for all you know, you might save your wife.

- What reasons for divorce does Paul give?
- What is the benefit of staying married to an unbelieving spouse? For the spouse? For the children?
 - What is the difference between being “made holy” (mentioned here) and being justified (made right with God)?

- Read Matthew 19:8-9

He told them, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because of the hardness of your hearts, but it was not like that from the beginning. I tell you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery. I tell you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery.”

- How does God feel about divorce?
- What reason for divorce does Jesus give for divorce?

Know Your Role

- Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-28

Let each one live his life in the situation the Lord assigned when God called him. This is what I command in all the churches. Was anyone already circumcised when he was called? He should not undo his circumcision. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? He should not get circumcised. Circumcision does not matter and uncircumcision does not matter. Keeping God's commands is what matters. Let each of you remain in the situation in which he was called. Were you called while a slave? Don't let it concern you. But if you can become free, by all means take the opportunity. For he who is called by the Lord as a slave is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who is called as a free man is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of people. Brothers and sisters, each person is to remain with God in the situation in which he was called.

Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord, but I do give an opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is faithful. Because of the present distress, I think that it is good for a man to remain as he is. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. However, if you do get married, you have not sinned, and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But such people will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.

- How does Paul deal with discontent in our circumstances?
- What does Paul say really matters in verse 19?
- What is the danger in marrying just to check a box on your to-do list?
- What is the potential harm in forcing a relationship outside of God's will instead of waiting on Him?

Time is Short

- Read 1 Corinthians 7:29-40

This is what I mean, brothers and sisters: The time is limited, so from now on 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 didn't own anything, and those who use the world as though they did not make full use of it. For this world in its current form is passing away.

I want you to be without concerns. The unmarried man is concerned about the things of the Lord – how he may please the Lord. But the married man is concerned about the things of the world – how he may please his wife – and his interests are divided. The unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But the married woman is concerned about the things of the world – how she may please her husband. I am saying this for your own benefit, not to put a restraint on you, but to promote what is proper and so that you may be devoted to the Lord without distraction.

If any man thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to, if she is getting beyond the usual age for marriage, and he feels he should marry – he can do what he wants. He is not sinning; they can get married. But he who stands firm in his heart (who is under no

compulsion, but has control over his own will) and has decided in his heart to keep her as his fiancée, will do well. So, then, he who marries his fiancée does well, but he who does not marry will do better.

A wife is bound as long as her husband is living. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to anyone she wants – only in the Lord. But she is happier if she remains as she is, in my opinion. And I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

- What is Paul saying our focus should be?
- What advantages of singleness does Paul give?
- What are the pitfalls of courtship and marriage?
- Although Paul was talking about arranged marriages in this passage, how do these principles apply to dating today?

Next Steps

- Know Your World View
 - What is forming your worldview? Scripture, culture, or your own opinions?
 - What is forming your view on marriage/divorce/singleness?

- Lead others to be Christ-Like.

- Read Philippians 2:13

For it is God who is working in you both to will and to work according to his good purpose.

- How do we go about having a true change of heart?
 - Can we bring about a true change of heart in others?

Extra Resources

- What does the Bible say about divorce?
 - <https://www.familylife.com/articles/topics/marriage/divorce/realities-of-divorce/what-does-the-bible-say-about-divorce-when-is-it-allowed/>
- Enduring Word commentary on 1 Corinthians 7- Great commentary for verse by verse teaching on this chapter
 - <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/1-corinthians-7/>