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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* [Acts 16:31a](#) And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving

your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”* Romans 10:9,10 *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* Romans 10:13 *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Romans 5:1

Divorce and Remarriage

“But God hath called us to peace.” 1 Corinthians 7:15b

One of the problems affecting the Church today is the problem of divorce and remarriage. Many believers in Christ who have become divorced are tormented by guilt over the matter believing they have done something wrong. Out of this body of divorced believers we have two different groups. Group A believers refuse to get married again out of a strict sense of guilt, and Group B believers do get married again, but either have doubts in the matter, or once again, a sense of guilt. Tragically much of Christianity's views on the subject of divorce and remarriage is shaped by other people's emotions and legalism, not on a proper exegesis of what the Bible teaches on the matter.

As to whether believers marry, divorce or stay single is their own personal business before the Lord. My position is to teach what the Word has to say on the matter, and once they have the truth let them make their own decisions in life. Our study on 1 Corinthians 7 should answer all our questions completely on the subject and give the suffering believer relief from their guilt in the light of the freedom of God's truth. In this study we will cover the four states of: being single, being married, getting a divorce and remarrying.

A. Being Single v.1

“Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.” 1 Corinthians 7:1

1. *“Now for the matters you wrote about”*- περι δε ων εγραψατε μοι

This seems to be a pretty familiar situation where a believer is wrestling with a personal or spiritual problem and talks to a communicator of God's Word about it. Apparently it was such a problem to them that they wrote Paul about it so he answers them in his letter.

The problems they were dealing in their day were marriage and divorce, being married to an unbeliever, being married to a believer who was negative to the Word, being married

to a believer who went negative to the Word, being single, sexual immorality, local customs versus biblical mandates and the social customs of their day, these were the matters, *peri*, that they had written Paul about.

2. “*It is good for a man not to marry*”- καλον ανθρωπω γυναικος μη απτεσθα

One of the problems that single people faced in those days, and do to a certain extent today, is that there was a social stigma attached to being single. The Rabbi's didn't consider a man a Jew unless he was married, and in the Gentile cultures they would wonder if something was wrong with a man or woman who was single.

But Paul says that it is *good, kalos*, to not be married. He isn't saying that it's good in the sense of the single life being better, (or worse), but that it's proper, it's OK. *Kalos* tells us that it's an honorable state to be in, that it's perfectly acceptable, that there is nothing wrong at all with being single. There's no shame in being single, neither is there no basis for pride; *kalos* tells us that it's a proper state for believers to live in.

The KJV translates the Greek as, “*It is good for a man not to touch a woman*”. The word for touch is *kapto*, and it was an idiom for having sex with a woman, therefore being married to one. So we have, “*It is [perfectly] proper for a man not to marry.*” This is our first category that we will deal with in this passage, the single state.

There are three institutions that God has ordained and he honors all three of them: the natural individual (being single), the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, and being a parent, a father or mother.

Sometimes it's God's direct will for certain people to be married. Issues of immorality and God's election would fall into this category. Sometimes it's his will for certain believers to be single, as with Paul; and for the rest of believers it's a volitional matter between a believing man and a believing woman.

B. The Immorality Problem v.2

“*Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.*” 1 Corinthians 7:2

1. “*But since there is so much immorality*”- δια δε τας πορνειας

Tas porneias looks at all categories of sexual immorality. Sex in itself is not immoral, as long as it's between a husband and his wife. God created sex for a man and woman to enjoy in the marriage union. It is outside the marriage context that sex does become immoral. Marriage being the covenant union for life between a man and a woman.

The problem is that people have sex drives, some more than others. And because the sex drives of people are so strong there is the tendency to get into trouble. And if one lives in a culture that encourages people to have sex, and sex out of marriage, as it did in Corinth

and in America today, then trying to live one's life properly before the Lord becomes more difficult.

Dealing with this problem in America today is probably more difficult for Christians living now than it was for Christians living in pagan Corinth. Because not only do people today have the same strong drive for sex as they did back then, and not only is illicit sex accepted and even approved of today as it was back then, but in just about every area sex is pushed before the public. We are constantly being bombarded with concepts to stimulate the sex drive in us, by movies, television, advertisements, comedies, even the curriculum in public schools. A psychological warfare has been going on since the sixties in the drug culture of the hippie revolution to get the minds of our youth away from God and the things of decency and into a mind set of being preoccupied with sex. The result is that people want to gratify their desire for sex outside of the marriage union.

2. *“Each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband”* - *εκαστος την εαυτου γυναικα εχετω και εκαστη τον ιδιον ανδρα εχετω*

The word to *have, echo*, means to have, or to possess, to have sex with one's own husband or wife. Found in the present active imperative it's to keep on having sex and it's a command.

Each man and each woman has the word *hekastos* which tells us that God is speaking to every single individual believer in this matter. If believers are going to have sex, and that's entirely up to them, then it's to be only with their own husband and wife. *Idion* tells us that it's to have sex with one's **own** husband or wife, not somebody's else's!

For most believers marriage is the provision for keeping away from sexual sinning. And there were no specific age requirements either. They were considered eligible for marriage **after they had settled into puberty**, somewhere around fourteen to sixteen years of age. Even though these next statements are not according to what we believe as Christians, they do give us insight into what the cultural norm was in those days. In the Misha marriageable age for boys was seventeen to eighteen; twenty was considered too old. With the Babylonian Jews it was fourteen years for boys, girls even younger. The Lord's mother, Mary, was around fifteen when she delivered the Lord!

In our society today many go berserk when you bring these things up, but think about it, when we hit puberty our bodies and our desires are telling us we're ready for marriage. But our society says no. They tell us to finish high school at age eighteen, but then they come back and tell us to get a degree, then to get established in a job and get our financial situation secured, then we can think about getting married. All during this time the sexual desire is totally frustrated and so are our young people. So they tell them to wear protection and get a release somewhere, and all the while they are accumulating scar tissue on their souls!

We tend to forget that America and the west was settled by young married couples in their teens, and that up to a few years ago it was the norm and accepted by many for young people to get married anywhere from fourteen to sixteen years of age. It was these

young people that built the greatest nation on earth! And it was these young people that stayed married for life, many of them for fifty and sixty years!

But in Babylon's industrial revolution there was no profit for people to get married young and build their families. It needed bodies to man the manufacturing lines in their plants. So it guided people toward putting off marriage and getting an education so everyone can make more money. So we have young people for decades now having sex outside of marriage, getting diseases, scarring their souls due to multiple sex partners, to end up with a little sign over their door in some office and some title in a meaningless corporation, and losing out on their right man or woman that they could have been together with. Remember this, that God provided satisfaction and happiness in the divine institutions in the area of being married to the right person and having children. Happiness doesn't come from corporate Babylon.

C. Marital Duty v.3

“ Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.” 1 Corinthians 7:3

1. *“The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife”*- τη γυναικι ο ανηρ την οφειλομενην ευνοιαν αποδιδοτω

The word *should*, *opheilomenon*, is used mostly in the sense of debt, what one is obligated to do, what someone owes you. Debt can come about as the result of borrowing something, such as money. You now owe someone money because you borrowed it from them. Debt can come about as the result of a contractual obligation. You contract with a man to have a roof put on your home. He now owes you a roof and you owe him money, if that was the consideration.

Marriage is a contractual covenant relationship between a man and a woman, and sex is a part of that contract unless there was an understanding and agreement before they entered into the covenant. So, unless the man and the woman had both agreed before they were married that there was to be no sex in the marriage, and they have every right to do so for this is their business and no one else's, or unless they both agreed to not have sex after they were married, then other than that sex is to be supplied to the other partner. The husband owes sex to his wife and the wife to her husband. It is their duty to each other.

2. *“And likewise the wife to her husband”*- ομοιως δε και η γυνη τω ανδρι

The word to *fulfill* is *apodidomi* and it means to pay back what one owes to another person. When a man and a woman agree to marriage they are agreeing to sex with them! So the wife owes her husband sex and likewise the husband to his wife.

This is split up into two separate commands, one for each mate because of the differing sex drives of the individual. No two people are alike, and not everyone has the same exact desire, drive and need for sex.

And one is not to provide sex for the other mate based upon **your** sexual needs, but upon **theirs!** You cannot think, “I don't need much, therefore they don't need much. Or, I'm satisfied, therefore they should be satisfied.” You are to satisfy your mate's sexual needs and vice versa. These matters are commanded by the Lord.

D. Authority Over Each Other's Body v.4

“The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.” 1 Corinthians 7:4

1. *“The wife's body does not belong to her alone”*- η γυνη του ιδιου σωματος ουκ εξουσιαζει

The word *exousiazo* means to have *authority* over something, to exercise authority over it. The word authority means that someone has the legal right to exercise power over a matter. Here it tells us that the wife does not have authority any more over her body; her husband now has this right, and she has authority over his body also in the area of sex.

She gave him this legal right to her body in this area of sex when she married him. And he gave her the legal right to his body when he married her. *“The woman (wife) does not have authority over her own body, but the husband.”*

Of course consideration needs to be there on both parties in this matter due to various things we all have to deal with from time to time. Being sick, tired, injuries, going through changes in life and all sorts of other things can and do enter into the picture. **But one thing married couples are not allowed to do is withhold sex from the other mate, not unless there is mutual consent! And sex is never to be used as a tool for rewards and punishment!!**

It is too common an occurrence to see women withholding sex from their husbands as a means of control and punishment. If their husbands toe the line and do what they want, then they give them sex. If they don't, then sex is withheld. This is unbiblical, cruel and manipulative. It also creates other problems in the marriage and opens them both up to temptation from the devil. Both the husband and the wife have the obligation to provide sex to their spouses to satisfy their spouse's needs and not just their own!

2. *“In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but to his wife”*- αλλ ο ανηρ ομοιως δε και ο ανηρ του ιδιου σωματος ουκ εξουσιαζει αλλ η γυνη

This is not a one sided matter also for just the husband. His wife has authority over his body to satisfy her sexual needs! Again this is addressed to both parties showing their responsibility, duty, even debt to each other to satisfy their respective sexual needs. Once a month might be enough for one mate, but the other mate might need it more! You can't take what **you** need and deny the other mate what **they** need. That's selfishness!

And besides, this is one's marital duty. Romance, candles, being in the mood have

nothing to do with it. **It's satisfying a basic sexual need!** We have no problem in satisfying our physical needs for food; we eat whenever we get hungry. Look at sex the same way. Refusal or failure to do this opens up the other mate to resentment and coming under the attack of Satan. Satisfied mates are not as prone to being tempted in these areas. Note also, our authority in these areas is over the body, not over the spirit.

E. Avoiding Temptation v.5

“Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.” 1 Corinthians 7:5

1. *“Do not deprive each other”*- μη αποστερειτε αλληλους

Me combined with the present active imperative is a command to stop an action in progress. They were depriving each other of sex and were commanded to stop it. “I don't feel like it.” “I'm not in the mood.” “I'm tired.” Are some of the things that one might say to the other, and sometimes they're true, to avoid providing the mate sex, but has it become a pattern, an excuse?

Sometimes a mate will have sex once in awhile, but usually to gratify their own needs, not the other spouse's needs. The husband and wife both have to consider their spouse's needs in the marriage, not just their own.

The word for *deprive* is *apostereo*, but it means to refuse to pay a debt, or to refuse the return of money or property that has safe deposited to another person, to withdraw from a person, to break off a relationship, to default. The word default is also good in this area because it means that someone else has what belongs to you and won't give it to you. In this case it's sex!

We need our spouses to have sex. That's why we got married. That's why they agreed to get married, unless there was an agreement beforehand not to have sex, or one afterward. But one spouse is holding back sex from the other person, and so they are defrauding their mate. We even have authority over the other spouse's body in this area; we have a right to it, but they hold back, therefore we are defrauded.

Our talk on this matter might be a little frank for some people, but it's necessary so that we can put things in their proper context to understand the significance of: being single, getting married, sex, divorce and remarriage. Sex is not something dirty, and it should not be regarded as drudgery or something distasteful to take part in. It's just as much a natural part of life as anything else. It's to be exercised only in the confines of marriage, and for the most part, a practical matter.

2. *“Except by mutual consent”*- ει μη τι αν εκ συμφωνου

Sumphanou, from which we get the word symphony, was a term used in musical instruments where all the instruments involved were playing the same note. From there it

came to express the idea of being of the same mind, or in agreement. From there *ek sumphonou* was used in an economic context to express the mutual consent of both parties to provisions of the contract.

This takes us down to the marriage union, for marriage is a contract between a husband and a wife, (a covenant), and as such there has to be **mutual** consent, an agreement, by **both** parties in this matter of refraining from sex.

3. “For a time”- “προς καιρον

Kairos referred originally to a season, such as fall, winter, spring, etc, then on to the idea of a indefinite period of time. Now this can be for a short time, or a long time; it can be for a period of time measured in days, weeks, months or years.

What one needs to see is that there has to be three elements involved in the idea of a husband and wife not having sex in their marriage, whether it is temporarily, or on a more or less permanent basis. One, there has to be **mutual consent**. One party cannot refuse to provide sex to the other person. Both parties have to agree to this matter. This agreement can be formal, or it can be just understood. Two, it has to be suspended for a **certain period of time**; the time varying upon the situation. Three, there has to be a purpose behind it, **a reason why**. Maybe one is injured, or sick, or going through something in their soul or body, or maybe for a spiritual reason.

Now the reasons and the period of time involved will vary from couple to couple, but both parties need to talk about it and come to an understanding and agreement in the matter. If the one mate will explain to the other one why they would like to refrain for awhile, usually the other party will understand. Withholding sex from your mate, though, **to punish them is never a bona fide reason!**

4. “That you may devote yourself to prayer”- ινα σχολαζητε τη νηστεια και τη προσευχη

Hina plus the subjunctive introduces a purpose clause, which gives us the reason behind a husband and wife temporarily refraining from sexual relations with each other and that is for the purpose of giving themselves wholly over to fasting and prayer.

And again, both parties have to agree to this and only for a period of time. If only spouse wants to do this, it doesn't count. If the other spouse doesn't want to do this, then you must still provide sex for them to satisfy their needs. You can't use a spiritual reason to deny their sexual needs.

Now if a believer in the home is unable to have sex, due to health, or whatever the reason, then that's another matter. Change of life, grief, physical problems, and many other reason make the situation so that sex has to be put on the “back burner”.

Another thing is that a period of time can mean that you know that it's only going to be temporary and for a short period of time, or that you can think it's temporary but end up

for a long period of time. But there needs to be agreement and understanding between the two parties and a reason involved. But sometimes one may not really know the reason.

Now *scholazo* means to give yourself wholly over to something, to be devoted to something, to not be distracted by other things while you are occupied with something. Here it means to be wholly given over to fasting and prayer.

In those days there was public fasting, religious fasting and private fasting. It sounds like a private concept here. Remember, with a reason behind the decision it means that there was **a goal in mind**. It sounds like married couples who were dealing with problems in their lives, or going through something, and were seeking the Lord's wisdom, grace, guidance and power on what to do. So abstaining from sex, from the distraction of sex, for a period of time was for the purpose that they could devote themselves wholly to fasting and prayer and get the answers they needed for their situation. **It was a setting aside of certain physical things for the purpose of concentration on the Word of God and prayer, so that they could get a breakthrough in a matter.**

5. “*Then come together again*” - και παλιν επι το αυτο συνερχησθε

Ete is the verb of status quo, that is, what one normally does. So it's telling us to go back to what we were doing before we refrained from having sex. The word *sunerchomai*, to come together, was an idiom for having sex.

If a married couple have been enjoying sexual relations, (the frequency is up to them), and if they both decide to refrain from sex for awhile to apply themselves to a spiritual matter, then after they have done that they are to go back to having sex again.

The passage implies that there has been some sort of a crisis in their lives that warrants giving themselves to the Word of God and the spiritual dynamic to get an answer on what to do. During this time sex will not be important to them. It's important, but something else is pressing that puts it down the list in priorities. After the crisis, over whatever it is, they can go back to resuming their normal sexual routine.

Sometimes couples are faced with one crisis after another: deaths of loved ones, loss of work, problems with the children, pressures, responsibilities, injuries, finances, loss of health, etc., that demand attention. What the couple, then, is trying to do is just survive the situation, as with Job. So they put all their energy toward the Word of God and other spiritual matters so they can survive spiritually, emotionally, etc.. Afterward, they can pick up where they left off.

6. “*So Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of control*” - ινα μη πειραζη υμας ο σατανας δια την ακρασιαν υμων

Hina plus the subjunctive again introduces a purpose clause. Paul is telling them to go back to having sex again for a purpose. And that is if they don't go back to having sex once more they will open themselves to sexual temptations by the devil. “*For the purpose that the adversary will not tempt you because of your lack of self control.*”

The word for temptation here is *peirazo* and it means, among many other concepts, to tempt someone to do wrong for the sole purpose of getting them to do wrong. The word for Satan here is *ho satanas*, the satan, or the adversary, which looks at Satan's adversarial role against God's people.

The word for self control, *enkrates*, refers to the power of control that one has over his body, his mind, or his mouth. *Akrasia*, which is what we have here, is the opposite of it. What he's telling us is that people have sex drives, sexual appetites like we do for food. It's part of the human condition, some more than others.

People have basic needs and they have basic drives. People need food and water; if someone labors harder than someone else in physical labor they will generally need more food, hence they will have a larger appetite. If people are denied access to food after awhile they will resort to anything to get it: begging, stealing, even garbage cans.

And after puberty sets in the human condition changes where people will start having sexual desires, a sexual drive, and some more than others, that will be with them throughout much of their life here on earth. It's a human condition.

Now if a believer is denied sex by their spouse, which is their proper biblical release, then they will have to deal with all their sexual drives that aren't being met. If that believer is not able to exercise control over this aspect of his/her humanity, or more accurately, if they fail to exercise control over this matter, then he/she is opened up to being tempted by Satan. Once being placed into a weakened condition, there is a greater possibility that they could succumb to one or more areas of sexual sinning. Paul wants them to provide each other their sexual needs so that this avenue of temptation by the devil is removed.

F. A Concession Not A Command v.6

“But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.” 1 Corinthians 7:6

1. *“I say this as a concession”*- τουτο δε λεγω κατα συγγνωμην

I am saying this refers back to verse 2 where Paul is telling them to get married due to the problem of sexual immorality and their inability to control themselves.

Sungnomenon speaks of an allowance or concession one allows due to certain circumstances or faults. Apparently they were not controlling themselves in the matter of sex, probably due to being brought up in the culture of a promiscuous area, so Paul wants them to get married to avoid the sin in the matter of illicit sex.

2. *“Not as a command”*- ου κατ επιταγην

The word *epitagen* speaks of a command or order and goes back to verse 2 where he commands the husband to have sex with his wife and vice versa. He isn't commanding singles believers to get married, that is entirely their decision, but for married believers,

who have made the volitional decision to marry, to have sex with each other. Marriage is a desirable thing and it stems from God's creation plan, but it is not mandatory. One is not better or worse in the state of matrimony.

But he does put the whole matter as a conclusion. Due to the fact that people have sexual drives, some very strong drives, and due to the fact that people have weaknesses because of the element of sin in our human natures, he concedes that marriage is a viable alternative in preventing sexual immorality.

Obviously it is a concession due to the nature of the situation, for he could not order anyone to get married. But he does, though, order believers to fulfill their marital duty to their spouses.

What Paul wants is **for believers to have lives that have a minimum of problems and pressures**. He knows that we won't be pressure free, but to keep it to a minimum. He also knows that marriage brings its own problems with it; we all check in with our own baggage. But he also wants the believer to keep away from sinning and the institution of marriage can provide the environment to relieve sexual frustration. He can't command them to marry, but he puts it forward in concession as an alternative to sinning.

G. Paul Commends Being Single v.7

“For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” 1 Corinthians 7:7

1. *“I wish that all men were as I am”*- θελω γαρ παντας ανθρωπους ειναι ως και εμαυτον

Paul was single; some thought that he had never married, but this is doubtful because of his position as a Pharisee which required men to be married. No mention is made in the Word of him having a wife and children, so all we can assume was that at one time he was married and now he wasn't.

His wife and children could have died leaving him a widower, or she could have left him when he became a Christian. If he was divorced it would be easy to understand why. Here he was before Christ well connected in society, the best education, political clout, having both Jewish and Roman citizenship, a top notch Jewish lawyer, friends, family, social acquaintances, a bright future in the world and position in the community.

But all that changed when Christ saved him that day on the road to Damascus. It is understandable, in the thinking of the world, to understand why a woman would leave her husband. One day she's living the life of prominence, success, respectability and financial security having a husband who was one of the bright shining stars of Phariseism, and who is now looking at nothing because her husband became a Christian. Sounds like a very familiar theme we hear all the time today.

2. *“But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that”*- αλλ εκαστος ιδιον χαρισμα χει εκ θεου ος μεν ουτως ος δε ουτως

Paul's status quo as a believer in Christ was one of being single; he existed as a single man. And he thought so much of it that he wished that everyone was the same as he was. But he also recognized that it was the Lord's grace gift to him that enabled him to live like this peaceful and content. He also recognized that not all Christians had been given this same grace from the Lord, but some were in one area and others in another.

Most Christians think that the important things in life are getting married, having kids, settling down in a little home with the picket fence are the most important things in life. But what Paul is saying is that personal development, growth, stability, peacefulness, contentment, happiness, prosperity and **freedom from concern** are the things that really matter for believers in Christ. What he is saying is that he would like to them to have lives that are free from the concern that comes from married life.

H. Advice to the Divorced and the Widows v.8

"I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I." 1 Corinthians 7:8

1. *"Now to the unmarried and the widows I say"* - λεγω δε τοις αγαμοις και ταις χηραις

The word for *unmarried* is the dative masculine plural of *agamos*, which leads us to think that Paul is addressing only the men, but in verse 11 he also uses it of the women so it's referring to a state of being single. This section is dealing with believers who are widowed and divorced for he addresses virgins separately in verse 25.

So the term *unmarried* here is referring to those who are divorced. And the word *chera* refers to those whose spouses have died. There was a widow's list in the early church where if a woman who had no children or family could take care of her would be placed on the list to be helped by others in the congregation. So basically we are dealing with believers who are divorced and believers whose mate has died.

2. *"It is good for them to stay married, as I am"* - καλον αυτοις εστιν εαν μεινωσιν ωσ καγω

The idea of *it is good*, *kalos*, in this passage goes back to verse 1 where Paul told them that it is proper to be single. **He's addressing the single believers in that passage**. And then he uses himself as an example here to settle any talk on this matter. As a Christian one is not obligated to remarry, or even to marry for that matter. This indicates that **Paul was either a widower or divorced**.

The word for *stay* here is *meno* and it means to abide or remain in a certain condition or state. But in the arist subjunctive with *ean*, it denoted what is expected under certain circumstances or conditions. What this is saying is that as a Christian and a young single person growing up it is not expected that you marry. If you want to, then fine. If you don't want to, then fine again. It's a volitional matter and both ways are perfectly proper.

But if you get married, then it's expected that you stay married. And if you get unmarried, or divorced, then it's expected that you stay that way. But also if you remarry; it's not a sin. It's an individual matter for believers in Christ.

There are three ways that one becomes single in life: by physical birth, by the death of one's spouse and by divorce. The three terms that denote those states of existence are: being single, a widow or widower, and a divorcee. All three states are addressed by Paul. The first one of being single in verse 1 and the second and third states in this verse. The fourth state is marriage and he also covers that in the preceding verses.

I. Marriage As A Solution v.9

“But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.” 1 Corinthians 7:9

1. *“But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry”* - ει δε ουκ εγκρατευονται γαμησατωσαν

This goes back to verse 5 where it says, *“So that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self control”*. The word used there for lack of self control was *akrasia*. The word used here for lack of self control is *enkrateuomai*, which is the ability to exercise control over one's body, mind and tongue.

Now this passage begins with a first class condition of *if*, (*ei* plus the indicative mood of the verb), which is, if something is true and it is. So what he's saying is that this is the situation in the church there. Some single believers there were not exercising control over their bodies in this area. That is to say, they were not keeping themselves from illicit sexual relations.

The present tense tells us that they were presently involved in this, although we do not know the frequency. And the middle voice tells us of their volitional involvement. They were making bad choices.

So Paul tells them, *“They should marry”*. He uses the arist active imperative of *gameo*, which refers to something they weren't doing and is a command to start doing it. Translated out it would be, **“Get married”!**

One needs to see the tone of the letter in all this. Paul is not condemnatory or harsh; he is not yelling at them and trying to put them down. Instead he is quite level-headed, practical and down to earth, working at solving a problem, rather than finding fault.

He fully recognizes the human condition of the weakness of the flesh nature and the strength of the sex drive. And he goes on to give them a practical solution to a problem. **If they can't, or won't control themselves in this area, then get married!** Now if someone gets married obviously they are going to have other problems to deal with: two people living under one roof, the matter of the man's authority, money, housing, food, kids, etc., all kinds of new problems. **But at least they won't have this problem!**

2. “For it is better to marry than to burn”- κρεισσον γαρ εστιν γαμησαι η πυρουσθαι

The word *kreitton* here is better in the sense of preferable. **It is preferable to get married than to constantly burn with sexual passion.** The following points show us that it's a “win-win” situation for all concerned.

From the **practical standpoint** it means that one gets rid of all that built up sexual frustration.

From the **spiritual standpoint** it means that one will be out from under the Lord's discipline.

From the **constructive standpoint** it means that one will be free from all that chasing around after the opposite sex and having “no end” relationships and be able to go on and build a productive life.

From the **emotional standpoint** it means that the believer will stop scarring their souls and have a healthy, satisfying relationship with a life's mate.

From the **health standpoint** it means that one will not have the risk of being infected by someone else.

The word for *fire, puroo*, is used here and is to be taken in its figurative sense. It means to burn with passion. Even today we use the phrases like “to be in heat”, “or to be hot”, as a means of describing sexual passion.

The problem is, if one is not able to control their sexual passion, or doesn't want to, as evidenced all around us today, then an individual is prone to acting upon it. You can pass all the laws that you want to against it, as seen today, but you are not going to stop it. **Whenever the two conditions of a strong sex drive and human weakness exist, then there will always be that problem.**

What's the solution? Obviously not by passing more laws. It hasn't stopped the problem yet and it won't. And remember, Paul is dealing with Christians who have all the spiritual grace provisions to deal with the problem. The solution from the Word of God is to get married! Not college, not a career, not a new car, boat, house, or whatever, but to get married. If one is not able to control himself in this area, as apparently many believers aren't, then **get married**.

J. The Matter of Separation v.10

“And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:” 1 Corinthians 7:10

1. “To the married I give this command, (not I but the Lord)”- τοις δε γεγαμηκοσιν

παραγγελλω ουκ εγω αλλ ο κυριος

The perfect active participle of *gameo*, to be married, tells us that they had entered into the state of marriage of their own free will, the active voice. That they had pondered over it for some time, the perfect tense, and then made the decision to get married, and that they now existed in the state of being married, the participial form.

Parangello is the word for an order or a command, where someone is put under an obligation to do what is said. It is given by one who is above you in authority where they are telling you what you must do. It can come directly by the person above you, or by someone who is above him, who is passing the order down to you. Here Paul is telling us that this command is not coming from him but from the Lord himself.

2. *"A wife must not separate from her husband"* - γυναικα απο ανδρος μη χωρισθηναι

Choris means to be separated from someone; A separates from B, and is the word for separation not necessarily divorce. The passive voice should be taken in the middle sense here where the wife separates herself from her husband.

There's a difference in the two words *chorizo* and *aphiemi*, the woman and the man, and separation and divorce, because in some cultures the woman could and would leave the man, **but it was only the man who had the legal power of divorce**. This will be brought out more later on. So Paul is addressing this command to the women in the church who are married and tells them that the Lord is commanding them not to leave their husbands.

There are all kinds of things going on here by the Apostle Paul and we are not allowed to take even one of them out of its context and make it a platform for our own personal views and legalisms. What we have to do is go through the entire subject of being single, marriage, divorce, etc., so we can understand how all of this works.

K. Keeping The Status Quo v.11

"But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." 1 Corinthians 7:11

1. *"But if she does, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband"* - εαν δε και χωρισθη μενετω αγαμος η τω ανδρι καταλλαγητω

We have here the third class condition of *if* with *ean* plus the subjunctive mood of the verb, maybe she will depart and maybe she won't. The wife is commanded not to separate from her husband, but if she does there is a condition laid upon her.

The third class condition recognizes that believers have volition, but it also tells us that sometimes there are conditions that come with exercising it. Here the condition is that she is to remain unmarried. The use of *chorizo*, to *separate*, to separate herself from her husband tells us that a formal legal divorce can be in mind, or just merely a separation. Either way she is not to do it.

So here's the deal. If one is married, then they are to remain married, that's the Lord's command. The wife is not allowed to even separate from her husband. But if she does, then she is not to remarry. She must *remain*, the present active imperative of *meno*, *unmarried, agamos*. The present imperative of *meno*, to abide, tells us that she is now commanded by the Lord to continue on in her unmarried state.

Or, *e*, this is where the particle *e* comes in to show another concept, kind of showing two opposite states where one has a choice or an alternative in the matter. She can remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband.

To *reconcile, katallasso*, was the restoring of an original understanding and relationship between two people after the onset of hostility. Relationships can become strained between a man and a wife for various reasons to the point of separation or divorce. The wife is commanded not to leave her husband, but if she does then she is to remain unmarried. And in the active voice it shows that she has a choice in the matter.

I think we need to refresh ourselves on the over all picture at hand. There is being **single** where one does not have a husband or wife. There is the state of **marriage** where a man and a woman have been bound to each other in the holy state of matrimony. There is **separation** where one mate or the other has left the home, but they are still legally married. There is **divorce** which severs the legal bond to each other and they are no longer husband and wife. There is the state of being **divorced**. A **divorcee** is one who has been married and terminated the marriage by a legal act of divorce. There is the state of being a **widow or widower** where **death** has terminated the marriage. And then there is **remarriage** where a divorcee becomes married again. This study addresses all these matters and one needs to go through the study to the end to see how it all works together.

2. “*And a husband must not divorce his wife*”- και ανδρα γυναικα μη αφιεναι

With the woman the word *chorizo* is used, to separate from him. While with the man *aphiemi* is used. *Aphiemi* takes in the ideas to leave, to abandon, to divorce, to leave destitute, to desert wrongfully, to leave behind abandoning all claims.

Both *aphiemi* and *chorizo* refer to the same thing, a husband and wife splitting up, but have two different ideas involved. With the wife separating she would simply be leaving her husband. She went to “visit” her sister and never came back. While with the husband he would actually legally divorce his wife.

In many cultures of those days it was only the **husband** who had the legal right to divorce his wife. The woman had no right of divorce. So her only option was to simply leave and go back to her relatives. This “leaving” was her separation. You could call it a divorce, but technically it wasn't because women did not have the right to divorce. We must remember here that the wife, or husband, are not given permission to separate from each other, or get a legal divorce. They are commanded to stay married. But if the woman, of her own volition, leaves her husband, then she is commanded to remain unmarried.

The reason why Paul goes into all this is because of the reality. The reality is that not all believers obey the Lord! So now what does one do after they have made certain bad decisions? So she leaves her husband, or she's thinking about it. What does she do now? The aorist active imperative tells us that she is commanded to be reconciled to her husband. What if she doesn't? Then we go on to plan B.

The active voice of the husband not divorcing his wife seems to be influenced by the passive voice of verse 10, of the wife not being separated from her husband. It seems to suggest that the wife is the offending party here. If the wife "leaves" him, Christ doesn't want him to divorce her, but seek reconciliation. Interestingly enough the husband here is not commanded to not divorce his wife; it's an infinitive mood, not the imperative mood of command. The Lord doesn't want him to divorce his wife, but he's not under a command to not divorce!

If a believing wife leaves a believing husband he is to **seek** reconciliation with her. He's not commanded to avoid divorce; **he's commanded to seek reconciliation** with her instead of divorce. **Reconciliation, not divorce, is what he's to be going for. It may end in divorce, but that's not what he's going for.**

The infinitive brings out the idea of a result. The wife may leave her husband over something with the result that this would lead him to seek divorce proceedings against his wife. His first and foremost goal is to seek reconciliation with her not a divorce. But if all attempts at reconciliation fail, then divorce is usually where it all ends up. So the idea of result comes in; her leaving her husband results in divorce.

L. Non-Believing Wives v.12

"But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away." 1 Corinthians 7:12

1. *"To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord)"* - τοις δε λοιποις εγω λεγω ουχ ο κυριος

The *rest, loipos*, refers to a class of believers not yet addressed. He has addressed **single believers** in the church; **married believers** with problems; **divorce**, the **widows and widowers**; **remarriage** and **believers seeking, or thinking about divorce**.

And now he clarifies that he is giving instructions beyond those commands given by the Lord. There are some things that the Lord has commanded that we're all to follow, then there are those things that Paul, using his apostolic authority, is instructing us to do.

2. *"If any brother has a wife who is not a believer"* - ει τις αδελφος γυναικα εχει απιστον

We now have *ei, if*, with the indicative mood of *echo, to have or hold*, which tells us that we're looking at a first class condition of if, if something is true and it is. The believers in Corinth were having the same problems as believers living today- unbelieving spouses. What does a believer do in this situation?

The word for *unbelieving*, *apistos*, can be taken two ways. One, it can and often does refer to people who have not believed on Christ as their Savior. And two, it can refer to **believers who do not live by faith!** Believers in Christ who are legalistic, who are negative to the Word of God, who are worldly, or who refuse to live the faith rest life can also be classified as unbelieving, *apistos*.

Living by faith means that the believer lives his/her life centered around the Word of God. They study the Word, believe the Word and seek to apply it to life. These are believers who live life in the true filling of the Holy Spirit and in their new natures, undergoing a continual renewing of the new man because of metabolized doctrine.

But there is a category of believers in Christianity who don't. Their approach in Christianity is legalism, morality, religiosity, being a "good person" without the spiritual dynamic. Another category of believers are those who want to be a part of the world system and gratifying their fleshly lusts. Faith and the Word are not a priority to them!

Technically both an unsaved wife and a wife who is non-doctrinal can be in view here. Many Christian women are not positive to the teaching of the Word of God and living the life of faith, but are instead caught up in various religious groups, groups that appeal to their emotions, or groups that are legalistic, or ritualistic and on and on. Technically a believing wife under these circumstances would be *apistos*, an unbelieving wife.

3. "And she is willing to live with him"- και αυτη συνευδοκει οικειν μετ αυτου

Here's the condition, if a believing man is married to a woman who is not a believer in Christ, or a believer who is negative to the Word and faith living, and if she is willing to live with him, he is not allowed to divorce her. It's interesting that the willingness part is put on her, not on him. He decides what he is going to do after she makes the decision.

The word for *willing* is *suneudokeo* which indicates a joint agreement. Obviously she can't be forced to live with him if she doesn't want to. If she wants to stay with him, then he is to let her. This way the marriage is preserved, although it isn't the ideal state we all envision for ourselves.

It's interesting that the word *meta* is used here for with, which has the idea of being in company with, or in a close association with someone. It doesn't convey the idea of close union. If someone wanted to express the idea of an intimate close union between a man and a woman, *sum* would be used. But if someone wanted to express just a close association, or companionship between a man and a woman, then *meta* would be here.

Obviously tenderness, affection, intimacy between the two are not in view here. Rather we have a man and a woman, who are still a husband and wife, living as companions under one roof. Hopefully they are living together on a more or less friendly basis. You say, well that's not any good. Why don't they get a divorce? First of all, it's none of our business what two other people decide to do. If they are both in agreement, that's their business. And secondly the man is trying to follow the biblical pattern in this.

3. “*And a husband must not divorce his wife*”- μη αφιετω αυτην

Me plus the imperative mood is a prohibitive negative forbidding the beginning of an act. The husband is commanded not to divorce his wife. If a believing man is married to an unsaved woman, or a believing woman who is negative to the Word, he is not allowed to divorce her, if he and she agree to staying together.

In the case of the unbeliever often they were unsaved when they got married, then later on he gets saved while she doesn't. She thinks it's a fad, or something that he's going through but will get over it. But when it doesn't disagreements and problems arise. Sometimes it does get to the place of divorce. He is not to divorce her and kick her out in the street if she wants to stay. But if she leaves, then that is a different matter.

M. Non-believing Husbands v.13

“And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.” 1 Corinthians 7:13

1. “*And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer*”- και γυνη ητις εχει ανδρα απιστον

Now Paul directs his instructions to doctrinal women who are married. There is no double standard in the Christian life. Here it deals with a doctrinal Christian woman who is either married to an unsaved husband, or a husband who is negative to the Word. So how did they end up being “*unequally yoked*”?

Paul had already commanded believers not to marry unbelievers, so what we have here is one of three possibilities. One, they were both unsaved when they were married and the wife believed on the Lord as her Savior while the husband didn't. Two, the woman was saved but married an unsaved man, which she wasn't supposed to do. Or three, we have the case of a wife being positive to the Word while her saved husband isn't.

Sometimes you will find that either the husband or the wife will portray themselves as positive to the Word for many years, but really aren't. Then after a period of time their negativity becomes apparent, then you will start to see problems in their marriage. Remember Moses was married for close to forty years before his wife's negativity came out and that ended in a divorce right before he led Israel out of Egypt!

2. “*And he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him*”- και αυτος συνευδοκει οικειν μετ αυτης μη αφιετω αυτον

In both cases there must be agreement. The wife is not to divorce her husband, regardless of whether he is unsaved, or a negative believer, and the same goes for the husband. The path that the saved, or positive spouse, is to take is to desire that the unsaved or negative spouse stays with them, that they don't divorce. And there are good reasons for doing this, although the soap operas might not see it this way.

Of course no one can force someone else to do something against their will, this is where *suneudokeo* comes in, both parties must be willing regarding the arrangement. The saved or doctrinal spouse wants their mate to stay on as an application of Bible Doctrine, but the unsaved or negative spouse must agree to that of their own free will. *Suneudokeo* means that one view the situation and thinks that it is good, or preferable, that the two stay together, so they choose for it.

But *meta* shows that it is more of a **practical arrangement** between the two rather than a close, intimate, personal union. And there are two good reasons why. One, it honors the marriage institution, and two, who knows, maybe they'll change their minds! Often there are also children to consider in this and them growing up in a good local church under the Word of God, and staying together would encourage this idea.

N. The Sanctified Home v.14

“For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”
1 Corinthians 7:14

1. *“For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife”*- ηγιασται γαρ ο ανηρ ο απιστος εν τη γυναικι

The word *hagiazō* has a tremendous depth of meaning to it. It has been translated as sanctified, justified, separated, dedicated and consecrated. It has the idea of being separated from something, the world, to God, for the purpose of service and blessing. It doesn't emphasize the idea of morality or purity, but something that has been set apart from something else for some purpose.

To understand this one has to understand the difference between the **sacred** and the **profane**. The profane would take in the mass of of humanity with all its sinfulness. But outside that mass would stand God and all things belonging to God, the one who is holy, undefiled, sinless; set apart from all the rest, this would be the sacred.

If something belonged to God, or was going to be used by God, or was going to be blessed by God, then it had to be set apart from the rest by God, this is sanctification. Whatever was set apart by God, belonged to God, came under his blessing and protection, and was now to be used by God for his glory and service.

Now when a woman believes on Christ, (or a man), the believing wife is in this passage, God sets her apart from the world system. She now belongs to him and she is no longer a part of the world system. Sanctification has now brought her under the blessing and protection of the Almighty. Her new relationship of being set apart unto a holy God from the mass of sinful humanity now puts her under the rule, authority, blessing, service and protection of God. **Passive sanctification** is what God does for us at salvation. **Active sanctification** is what we do as Christians when we effect a dedicated to God lifestyle, which all Christians are supposed to do.

Now let's say that she is married to an unbeliever, or a believer who is negative to the Word of God, where does she stand in all this? She still has positional sanctification, and the potential for blessings for her are still there as long as she remains faithful to the Word. She does, so God's blessings are upon her and the home. Even if she has a negative husband God will still bless the household because she is in covenant with her husband through marriage. He now stands under the umbrella of God's protection and blessing because he is married to her and because she is a Christian and positive to the Word of God.

2. *“And the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband”*- και ηγιασται η γυνη η απιστος εν τω ανδρι

The same thing applies to a Christian husband, or a husband who is still positive to the Word of God, who is married to either an unbelieving wife, or a wife who is negative to the Word. Because he belongs to the Lord and has been set apart by the Lord from the world system of Satan unto God, he now falls under the blessing and protection of God.

Now if he is married to an unsaved woman, or a woman who is negative to the Word, then she also falls under the blessing protection of the Lord. Why? Not because of her standing with him, and not because of her faith attitude toward the Word, but because she is in legal union with someone who is! Blessing by association. It is his faith in Christ and his positive attitude toward the Word that is the umbrella over the entire household, which she enjoys because she is under the same roof.

This goes back to the idea in verse 12 where a believer can be married to an unbeliever, or a believer who is negative to the Word. What do they do about it? Obviously there will be some friction in the home and many problems due to one of the having a carnal, worldly outlook toward life. Sometimes the situation is so bad that the believing spouse will look at the prospect of divorce.

That's where the Lord tells the believing spouse not to divorce their mate, if they are content, if they are in agreement with staying together. And then in verse 14 he tells them why, because the unbelieving spouse, along with the entire household, has been set apart by God, due to the positive believer, for blessing and protection by God.

3. *“Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy”*- επει αρα τα τεκνα υμων ακαθαρτα εστιν νυν δε αγια εστιν

In the case of either the unbelieving wife or husband being sanctified the perfect passive indicative of *hagiazō* is used which denotes an action that does not need to be repeated. The fact that they are married to a positive believer had set them apart by God for his blessings. This blessing comes under the umbrella of the positive believer for the duration of the union, providing that they continue on in the marriage union. If the negative or unsaved spouse leaves the marriage, then they leave the blessings that would be coming because of the positive spouse. The choice is theirs, but the blessings and protection are conditional. They are free to go and they are free to stay, but blessings don't go with them when they leave.

So the unbelieving or non-doctrinal spouse has been sanctified because of a believing or positive spouse. **The Lord sets aside the entire family to bless because of them.** This happens whether they know it or not, or appreciate it or not. This applies also to any children in the house. Because the Lord has set aside the entire family for blessing, all in the household will be blessed because there is a positive doctrinal believer there.

Being “*unclean*” was the term for the common, the profane, for those in the mass of sinful humanity who were not set apart for worship, service, fellowship and the blessing of Almighty God. There are many children on earth today who are not set apart to this place of special standing where they come under the blessing and protection of Yahweh. If just one of their parents would believe on Christ as their Savior, then they would! **How important it is for all adults to make their peace with God in this matter. It's not just about you it's also about your children!**

It goes back to ancient Israel. If a child was born into a home that enjoyed the covenant blessing and protection of *Yahweh*, then that same blessing would extend to all in the home. So this is one important reason why one wants to see the marriage union continue on; for the sake of the unbelieving spouse and for the sake of the children!

O. Let Them Go v.15

“But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.” 1 Corinthians 7:15

1. “*But if the unbeliever goes*”- ει δε ο απιστος χωριζεται. *Ei*, plus the indicative mood, brings out a first class condition of if; if it's true and it is, telling us that we have an actual condition. The unbelieving spouse leaves the home and marriage.

What we have here is believers married to unbelievers or believers who were negative to the Word of God, as we see today. Sometimes they stayed together; sometimes they didn't. Sometimes it was the unsaved or non-doctrinal mate that left; sometimes it was the saved or doctrinal mate that left.

The procedure that Christians are to follow is that if they are married to an unsaved or non-doctrinal type, is they are to stay together. The saved or doctrinal believer is not to divorce them. But if the unsaved or non-doctrinal spouse leaves you, then let them go. The word here for *leave* is *chorizomai* and it means to separate.

2. “*Let him do so*”- χωριζεσθω

The present passive imperative of *chorizo* is a command to continue an action in progress. The doctrinal believer isn't the one doing it; the non-doctrinal one is. The unsaved or non-doctrinal spouse is leaving them of their own will. **The command for the believer in this instance is to let them go.** We are not to stop them.

The word for separation is used here, not the word for divorce. So it tells us that the saved or doctrinal believer is not only not to fight the concept of divorce, but even if they only want to separate from you, then you are to let them go. You've tried reconciliation with them and they don't want to, so the only option is let them go.

This is not an option, by the way, it really is a command. Some believers love their mates so much, (or have an emotional problem where they think it's love), that they will do anything to keep their mates from leaving them. But the Lord is commanding them, imperative mood, to not hold them back from leaving. Let them go!

Problems arise in the marriage relationship over a period of time due to differing viewpoints. So the doctrinal believer not only does not seek a divorce, (or separation), but they want the marriage to work. But after exhausting their options under the concept of reconciliation, and the other spouse still wants to leave, then let them go!

3. *"A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances"*- ου δεδουλωται ο αδελφος η η αδελφη εν τοις τοιουτοις

"A brother or sister is not bound in these things". If they separate, let them go. If they leave and don't come back, let them go. If they leave and get a divorce, let them go. If they leave and want a divorce, then tell them to get a divorce. If they move out and want you to get a divorce, then sign the papers.

The issue really is, who left the home? The technicality of who fills out the divorce papers is unimportant. If the unsaved or negative believer leaves you, separates from you, abandons or deserts you, then you have to conclude **they don't want to be with you!** So filling out the paperwork is just a minor detail.

There were only two legitimate reasons for terminating a marriage and they were adultery and desertion. But neither the Christian man or the Christian woman are slaves in the matter of marriage. They might have been slaves in the socio-economic world that they lived in, but when it came to marriage they were equals under the marriage contract.

This means that they not only had certain obligations, but they also had certain rights. And here is one area **that they were not bound by the Lord to do**. They did not have to stay married to an unsaved or non doctrinal mate that left them. If their unsaved or non doctrinal mate left them, then they could file for divorce like people do today. They were not bound; they were not obligated to stay married.

Some might want to call it a trial separation, but regardless of whether they abandon you, separate from you, have a trial separation from you, or just flat out leave you; they have fulfilled the meaning of *chorizo*, **they have left you!** And the scriptures command us to "let them go"! They left you, they're gone, they're history, so it's adios. If the unbelieving mate, if the non doctrinal mate leaves you, separates from you, abandons you, then let them go, we're commanded to by the imperative mood of command. For the believing, doctrinal mate is not bound by the Lord in this circumstance.

4. “*God has called us to live in peace*”- εν δε ειρηνη κεκληκεν ημας ο θεος

Now there are two reasons why the believer can let the unbelieving spouse go that have nothing to do with the two legal reasons of adultery and desertion and they are, **one**, we are not in the bound condition of slavery and, **two**, God has called us to peace.

In the case of being bound, one can be bound by the legal obligation of contract, the marriage contract in this case, but the Lord tells us **we are not bound in this matter to keep the marriage going if the negative one departs.**

Concerning the second reason of peace, God has called us to salvation **and to peace**. Peace being more important in primacy than the other things one would hope to find in marriage: love, companionship, affection, sex, conversation, etc.. **As important as all these things are peace is more important!**

If the unbelieving or non doctrinal spouse is willing to live with you, and if the two of you can live together in peace, that is, if the doctrinal believer can live in the peace that God has called him to live in, then stay together.

But if either one of you can't, or if they are unwilling to stay, then let them go. Obviously, if one is forced to stay with you against their will, and there are all kinds of psychological pressures that one could put upon them, such as guilt, fear, etc., to make them stay, then it wouldn't be of their own free will, and coerced volition will result in further strife in the home. So we're commanded to let them go.

The calling of God looks at the action of God's sovereign grace where he chose us to salvation. And in this calling he also called us to a life of peace. If one has an unsaved mate, or a negative mate who is carnal, always lusting, never content, old sin nature controlled, negative to life in the spiritual dynamic, there will be precious little peace in the marriage. So, if they decide to leave you, let them go. We are not under any obligation from the Lord to keep the marriage together.

P. Possibilities v.16

“For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” 1 Corinthians 7:16

1. *“How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband?”*- τι γαρ οιδας γυναι ει τον ανδρα σωσεις

Put as a question there is the possibility of positive spiritual things happening because of the doctrinal spouse staying in the marriage relationship.

It's possible by staying there, Paul says, that she would be a positive witness for her husband to get saved, or turn positive to the Word.

2. “Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?” - η τι οιδας ανερ ει την γυναικα σωσεις

And the same thing applies to the Christian husband, or the doctrinal husband. His wife might turn around to the Lord and Word of God.

Severe disagreement in viewpoint in the marriage union is one of the greatest stressors between two people and it often ends up in divorce down the road. It causes physical problems, financial problems and emotional problems. It can get people to the place where they can barely think or function.

What the positive believer needs is an objective process they can follow, one that has been determined by the Lord and not themselves, (or others), so they can have the confidence that they know they are doing the right thing.

Even though it will still be a difficult time for them, if they follow his procedure step by step, then that will free their mind up so that they can objectively go about their own business and live out the rest of their lives.

So, if you're married to a mate that is not a believer in Christ, or a mate that is “not of the faith”, *apistos*, then God wants you to stay together. Once that mental base is covered in you mind, then it goes back to the negative mate. Are you able to live together in peace? If so, then stay together. Who knows? Maybe they'll come around in time! But if they want to leave, separate, or divorce, then let them go. You are under no further obligation from God. You have done what he wanted you to do, and by following the doctrinal procedure you will have peace of mind, which is what God has called us to.

Y. Instructions For The Virgins v.25

“Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.” 1 Corinthians 7:25

1. “Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord”- περι δε των παρθενων επιταγην κυριου ουκ εχω

Paul now instructs the virgins in the church. The word *parthenon* was used for both men and women and spoke of one who had never had sexual intercourse with someone else.

Command, *epitage*, was the word used of an order passed down from one above you in authority. An order that one had to obey. But Paul is telling them that he hadn't been given any orders from the Lord on this subject.

2. “But I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy”- γνωμην δε διδωμι ως ηληθημενος υπο κυριου πιστος ειναι

The word *gnomi* can be rendered as a decision, judgment, or declaration. But because of the context of verse 26 it lends itself more to the idea of **an opinion expressing itself in**

advice.

Apostles, and the pastors under them, taught the Word of God, they had authority, and they also had their own opinions which they would give out to other believers in the form of advice. When it came to a clear cut doctrinal issue believers had to submit to their authority, which was really submitting to the Lord's authority. While, though, they did not have to follow their advice.

Concerning the virgins in the church, they did not not have to do what Paul is advising; they are free to get married if they want to. But because of Paul's position as an apostle, his personal growth and doctrinal wisdom, he would be giving sound advice to the virgins in the church. They are not bound by the Lord to follow it, even though it may be good advice. In the local church you will find the concepts of doctrine, authority, obedience and the opinions and advice of pastors.

If you ask a doctrinal pastor for his advice or opinion, he'll usually give it to you. You are not bound by the Lord to take it and apply it in your life, but it will be good advice and something that one should seriously consider.

Paul then goes on to establish the fact that he was *faithful*. *Pistos* meant that he was reliable and dependable as a believer, and that meant that **his opinion was a good one and that his advice was reliable. So they could be sure they were getting sound, reliable advice that they could act on.**

You will often find Christians criticizing doctrinal pastors for being opinionated, (as if they never had an opinion). **Of course we have opinions; you can't spend your entire life studying truth and not have one!** If you ask for our opinion, we will give it you; sometimes we'll do it even if you don't ask! And if you ask for our advice, we'll give that to you also. Do you have to follow our advice? No. But you should pray about it.

Paul then goes on to clarify that whatever he has become as a man is due solely to the Lord's mercy. He had been given mercy, the perfect passive participle of *eleeo*; he had received mercy from the Lord, and it was a permanent thing with lasting results.

Mercy has been defined as grace in action. Someone sins and really messes up their life. Grace would forgive their sins, but mercy would be the heart of compassion that would go out and seek to help them in their mess. Paul was one who had received much mercy in his life from the Lord, which had made him a faithful minister of Jesus Christ.

Z. The Present Crisis v.26

"I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be." 1 Corinthians 7:26

1. *"Because of the present crisis"* - νομιζω ουν τουτο καλον υπαρχειν δια την ενεστωσαν αναγκην

Enistemi is not talking about an impending problem, but one that is already upon them. The perfect participle tells us that it had already begun a long time before that, that there was a development in its progression, and that it had come to a completed state that these believers had to live with. Much like what believers in America are faced with today.

But what was the crisis that they were facing in Corinth? The word that is used is *ananke*, and *ananke* refers to that distress of soul that comes about as the result of having to go through something painful that one does not want to go through. It would be nice to avoid it; it would be great to be taken out of it, but sometimes we just have to go through unpleasant, unwanted things because of the Lord's will.

What these believers were experiencing was persecution due to their faith in Christ. Now remember persecution isn't always just about being forced to leave an area, that's usually the thing of last resort. It would bring in the ideas of loss of employment, or inferior jobs or pay, having to go out of business, social ostracism, rejection, legislative persecution where one is denied the freedom to practice one's faith and live by biblical mandates all because one is a believer in Christ.

So what this is telling us is that there are certain times in history, and the history of a nation one is living in, where it is better to be single than to be married. The pressures on married couples, or couples with families is much greater than just on single believers. When you have people that you love, care about and that you are responsible for, it is always harder than when it is just yourself to take care of.

2. *"I think it's good to remain as you are"* - νομιζω ουν τουτο καλον υπαρχειν δια την ενεστωσαν αναγκην οτι καλον ανθρωπω το ουτως ειναι

We jump down to v.26 in our study where it says, *"I think this is good, because of the present difficulty, that it is good for a man so to be."* The word for *man* here, *anthropos*, is to be taken in its generic sense referring to both men and women.

The word for *thinking* in this passage is *nomizo*. *Nomizo* is a more subjective thought process because it is thinking not based on the conclusion of solid facts, but it is not as subjective as *dokeo*, which is a thinking that is totally based upon the thinking, conclusions, viewpoint and opinions of **one's emotions!**

While *nomizo* is somewhat subjective, but not totally. For it is based upon the thinking and conclusions based upon what customarily happens. For example, if you drove into some small town in America you would assume that there would be a police station, fire station, church, post office, etc.. Why? Because it is customary that all towns in America of any size would have these things. So it would be logical to conclude, because of customary practice, that this town would too!

Like the jail that Paul and Silas were in when the big earthquake hit and all the doors in the jail were opened and the bonds of the prisoners were loosed. The jailer thought, assumed, concluded that Paul and Silas had escaped. Why? Because under normal circumstance men would escape. Acts 16: 25-27

So this is the kind of thinking that Paul is employing here. The normal way of looking at things and the conclusions that one would come to under these normal conditions. The situation in Corinth and much of the Roman world was not good. In some places Christians were only tolerated, in some places they were persecuted, and in some places they were killed. So, in view of all that, the customary thinking because of those days would say that it's not a good idea to go out and get married and bring children into that kind of world. A view still echoed today, but people still get married and have children.

AA. Instructions and Comfort v.27

“Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.” 1 Corinthians 7:27

1. “Are you married?”- δεδεσαι γυναικι

The word for *married* here is *deo* and it actually spoke of binding two things together. From there it had a variety of figurative applications. **One**, it could refer to actual imprisonment. **Two**, of the binding of the laws on an individual. **Three**, of the binding nature of contracts on two people. **Four**, of the binding of duty a man is called to. And **five**, the bond that came from tying a man and a woman together in the covenant of marriage.

The perfect passive indicative of *deo* is used here to bring out the idea of the permanence of the union of marriage. Marriage was designed by God for a man and a woman, (have to put that in there because of the evil of the state of California), to enter into as a permanent union that was to last until “death do them part”. Certainly not like the travesty we see going on today.

It also puts the action in the passive voice to show that both the man and the woman have been bound to each other; they received this binding when they entered into the covenant of marriage, which they both did of their own free will. There are many things that we can enter into because of our own decisions and this is one of them.

2. “Do not seek a divorce”- μη ζητει λυσιν

“Bound to a wife?” Do not seek to be loosened.” *Lusis*, from *luo*, was the loosening of the tie that bound the two together in marriage. Actually the two words for marriage and divorce were **tying together** and **loosening the tie**. This will be helpful to us in understanding divorce and remarriage. This is a prohibitive negative commanding them not to divorce.

Even today we use this terminology when people get married. We say, “They tied the knot.” But when they get a divorce we simply say that they divorced. So when marriage is referred to in the NT the word *deo* is used and it says that they are **bound together**, or bound to each other. And when divorce is referred to there is no word for divorce it simply says that they have been **loosed** from each other.

The problem with this generation of people in America is that they don't understand the nature of marriage. They look at it from the standpoint of their feelings, a relationship of "love", sex, affections, emotions, intimacy, communications, etc.. And if they no longer have them in the marriage, the marriage is over.

What they don't see, and refuse to see, is the binding nature of the institution. They are bound to each other, whether they get along or not. They need to grow up, become men and women, get their acts together and stop acting like spoiled little brats! Personally I think that in the majority of these marriages the believers have married Babylonian wives or husbands. Men and women whose hearts are in the Babylonian system and their loyalties lie not with God, their spouse, or their children, but with corporate America!

3. "Are you unmarried?"- λελυσαι απο γυναικος

This is bothersome because it doesn't say, "Are you unmarried", but "Are you loosed from a wife?". This is very clear in the original. It is not dealing with a virgin, or a single person, or an unmarried person. It is dealing with a believer **who has been loosed!**

As we have seen, *luo* means to loosen a bond, the marriage bond, which is only done by divorce. So we are talking about a believer who has been **divorced**. So it should rather be translated, "**Are you divorced?**" The perfect tense of *luo* is used to show the finality of the act and the new condition of now being divorced.

The preposition *apo* looks at the act of one thing separating itself from another thing. A and B are bound together making them AB. Then B separates itself from A making it A and B, that's *apo*. What holds the two together is the bond of marriage. Divorce is the vehicle that unties and separates that bond that holds the two together.

4. "Do not look for a wife."- μη ζητει γυναικα

What we really have in this verse is, "Are you married (bound)? Do not seek a divorce (to be loosed). Are you divorced (loosed)? Do not seek a wife." Seeking a divorce and seeking a wife both have the word *zeteo*.

Zeteo had more in it than just the idea of wanting to be married. It had the idea of seeking after the thing wanted. It did contain the concept of wanting or wishing, a desire for something, but went beyond that to making a decision to have it, then a going after it, or doing things to **pursue** it!

This would certainly shoot down the concept of singles groups, Internet love connections and things along that line. Now I'm sure people will have all kinds of reasons as to why they go to them, but the truth at the bottom of it all, is that they want to find someone to connect with and ultimately marry! But here we see that we are told **not to seek a wife!** This is a prohibitive command where, like the Apostle tells us not to seek a divorce, he also tells us not to seek a wife.

Wanting to be married once again, thinking it would be nice to be married once again, wishing you had a husband or wife once again to spend your life with, **is not the same as actively seeking to be married once again!** Seeking is just that. It starts with a desire, then a decision, then **putting forth the energy to pursue that course of action whereby you can get the thing desired.**

If God wants you to have a mate, then why not faith rest it for him to do the work and bring the two of you together? Us seeking after a wife is **us doing the work**; a different concept than God doing the work. People are going to do, though, what they want to do. If God, though, does the work, and if God tells us not to seek a wife, (or a husband), then why do so many of these churches have these single groups? Sort of like a Christianized version of the dating game.

BB. Comfort For The Remarried v.28

“ But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.” 1 Corinthians 7:28

1. *“But if you do marry, you have not sinned”* - εαν δε και γημης ουχ ημαρτες

The particle *de* connects this passage to the preceding one on divorce, so we know that Paul is talking about divorced believers getting married once again.

Ean plus the subjunctive mood introduces a third class condition of *if*. If you marry, maybe you will and maybe you won't, (the choice is yours), but if you do marry again, then you haven't sinned.

We have the emphatic negative *ouk* used here to absolutely emphasize that the divorced Christian who marries again **has not sinned!** This ought to comfort a lot of Christians, who because of legalism in the churches, bear tremendous guilt over getting married again after going through a divorce.

Remember also that this ties back to verses 15 and 16 concerning an unsaved or negative spouse leaving the marriage. Is the saved or doctrinal spouse bound by God to remain single all their life? No! **They can remarry, and if they do they have not sinned!** What Paul wants is that after getting a divorce, he doesn't want them to seek getting married again. But if they do, they haven't sinned.

There's some thoughts on this. **First** of all, they need to learn to be content in their divorced status. **Second**, they need to learn to live in peace. **Third**, they need to learn to be serving God in their new found status in life. **Fourth**, they are not to be seeking after another spouse. To do so is works and often ends up in getting a believer in a compromising situation, even marrying the wrong person- again! What they need to do is be content as they are, and if it is God's will, and if he has someone for you, then he will bring them to you in his grace and in his time.

2. “*And if a virgin marries, she has not sinned*”- και εαν γημη η παρθενος ουχ ημαρτεν

Paul now addresses the virgins, if she marries, maybe she will and maybe she won't. But if she does, she too has not sinned.

It goes back to being single. It certainly is proper for believers to remain single, regardless of what anyone else has to say in the matter. Being single or getting married is nobody's business but the individual, and both states are fine with the Lord.

3. “*(But those who marry) will face many troubles in this life and I want to spare you this*”- θλιψιν δε τη σαρκι εξουσιν οι τοιουτοι εγω δε υμων φειδομαι

“*Pressures in the flesh*” is how Paul puts this. “*But they (those who marry) will have pressures in the flesh.*”

An ancient writer, Photius, put it this way, “*More easily and with all distress shall we endure if we have no wives and children to carry along with us in persecutions and countless miseries. And, at such times, for those who have domestic cares, there arises the terrible alternative between duty to God and affection to wife and children.*”

Life by itself has pressures and trials going through it as just a single believer in Christ. And all of this is compounded when you have a husband, a wife, or children. Marriage and family, as great as they are, still increase the pressure and stress factor in the believer's life. **And Paul simply wants to eliminate the things in life that would add stress to our lives!** He wants to spare us all the added stress and misery!

But since when did we ever listen to logic? Christians are always accumulating things that complicate their lives. From homes, to cars, to boats, to gadgets, to more things, houses, pets, projects, etc.. And these things, whether we're aware of it or not, **add more pressure to our lives and emotional stress.**

What Paul is doing is applying the K.I.S.S. Formula, “Keep It Simple Stupid”! He has given instructions, commands and doctrinal advice to different categories of believers in the local church according to their marital status with the idea of minimizing stress in their lives. Minimizing stress and factors that complicate our lives is the underlying theme throughout all this passage.

He begins with the single believer; he tells them it is perfectly proper to be single. So, if you're single- stay single! If you want to marry, then that's fine; it is an institution ordained by God. Now that you're married, then he says- stay married! Don't seek a divorce; try to reconcile the situation. But if the unsaved or non doctrinal believer leaves, then let them go! So he says, now you're divorced. If your marital status is divorced- then stay divorced! And don't seek a wife! But if you do get married again, you haven't sinned!

Pastor Mike

