

1 Corinthians

Doctrine and Judgment

Class #5

1 Corinthians 6:12 thru 7:28

John: Doctrine or Judgment? 6:12-20 Doctrine

Verses 9-11 provide context for v.12

9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

You Corinthians say....

12 "All things are lawful for me",

-**Morgan:** The whole trouble can be summarized by saying that the spirit of the city had infected the church. That is always a peril. The Church's business is not to catch the spirit of the age, but to correct it... Some of them had sunk to a low level, and the rest were tolerant of it within the church. That must be remembered.... That is made even clearer in his second letter. There he says very distinctly (xii. 20) of church members, "Many . . . have sinned . . . and repented not of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they committed." That is the Corinthian background that we must bear in mind.

-Can Paul truly say all things are lawful for me?

-Are we under law? **See Rom. 6:14**

-Is **see 1Cor. 9:21** a contradiction?

-how about **see Rom. 7:22, 25**?

Paul counters....

but all things are not helpful to others.

-It is the verb *sumphero*, which means bearing together. Immediately we see that, there is a light shining on this. All things are lawful for me, but I am not living alone. I cannot live alone. No man lives to himself. I have relationships with other people, and there are things which might be perfectly lawful for me, that will not help my fellowship with my fellow Christian.

-What may be perfectly right for Paul may be absolutely impossible for Paul for the sake of others.

You Corinthians say....

"All things are lawful for me",

Paul counters

but I (from others to himself) will not be brought under the power (authority and rulership, thus bondage) of anything.

-Is he attacking their theology or is he stating his own theology?

-Or were they taking a Pauline teaching and taking it to a sinful extreme?

-Being in Christ qualifies what Christ in me would actually do as I am in Christ.

-**Fee:** What we have here, then, is a crisis of “authority” of another kind—over their “freedom to act as they pleased” without restraint. For Paul that is not freedom at all, but a form of bondage worse than before.

13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it (*stomach*) and them (*foods*).

-**MacArthur:** Food and the stomach were created by God for each other. Their relationship is purely biological. It is likely the Corinthians were using this truth as an analogy to justify sexual immorality. The Greek text says literally, “The foods the belly, the belly the foods.” Perhaps this was popular proverb meant to celebrate the idea that “Sex is no different from eating: the stomach was made for food, and the body was made for sex.”

Three Truths Regarding our bodies

#1-Now or But (*connecting to v.13*) the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

-The operative word here is ‘for’-‘for’ His use

-We are His, He bought us and proved that His purchase price was accepted when He was raised from the dead...

.....14 And God both raised up the Lord and will (*future tense*) also raise us up by His power.

-Our bodies are designed not only to serve in this life but in the life to come. They will be changed bodies, resurrected bodies, glorified bodies, heavenly bodies—but they will still be our own bodies

-The heavenly purposes for our bodies do not begin at our resurrection but at our faith in His resurrection, which is the capstone to His purchase of us at the cross!

#2-15 Do you not know that your (*all of you of the Church at Corinth*) bodies are members of Christ (*even now, not just at the resurrection*)?

-Not only ‘for’ Him but a part ‘of’ Him!

-When did this happen? At or Baptism of the Holy Spirit. **See 1Cor. 12:13**

-When we believed, we were placed into His body.

-This does not happen at our resurrection but when we believed in His resurrection

-Eph. 1:22-23

22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

v.15 cont. ... Shall I then take the members of Christ’s *body* and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” Gen. 2:24

17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *unit with Him*.

-So this body of Christ is not physical here, but it is just as real-it is spirit!

Therefore because of the great truths of 15-17 ...

18 Keep on Fleeing sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

-**MacArthur:** Because sexual intimacy is the deepest uniting of two persons, its misuse corrupts on the deepest human level. That is not a psychological analysis but a divinely revealed fact. Sexual immorality is far more destructive than alcohol, far more destructive than drugs, far more destructive than crime.

#3-19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

- The church building temple is not the only Temple Place of the Holy Spirit, it is literally wherever our physical bodies are!
- The exact and direct opposite of demonic possession is the divine possession by God's Spirit in our bodies as believers.
- Jesus referred to His Body as a temple, (the same word for temple here) in **John 2:19-21**
 19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
 20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"
 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

And we no longer own ourselves

20 For you were bought (*redeemed, agorazo*) at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

-Redeemed out of Corinth to be His church. The church of God, not the church of Corinth

-In **Rev. 5:9** the Twenty Four 'Bought' Elders sing:

*And you have redeemed us to God by Your blood
 Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,*

Joey: Doctrine or Judgment? 7:1-9

Doctrine

7:1 Now concerning (*'peri de'*, marks a transition to a new subject) the things of which you wrote to me:

- he did not immediately fake up the subjects on which they had written. He first devoted six chapters to other subjects before dealing with those they had named.
- They were troubled by certain conditions of life. The four chapters (vii-xi) may be summarized. The first subject concerned marriage (vii). The next concerned things sacrificed to idols (viii-xi. 1). The third subject concerned women (xi. 2-16), and the last was concerning the Lord's Supper (xi. 17-34a).
- Thruout this chapter Paul states His authority for his answers but states that they will not find anything in the Gospels to base his commands on.
- Note in this seventh chapter certain statements regarding sourcing and authority
- 1-Verse 6, "But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment."
- 2-Verse 10, "I give charge, yet not I, but the Lord."
- 3-Verse 12, "But to the rest say I, not the Lord."
- 4-Verse 25, "Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give my judgment."
- 5-Then at the end of verse 40, "After my judgment; and I think that I also have the Spirit of God."
- That does not invalidate the apostolic teaching, but he is careful to show the difference between the things directly spoken of the Lord, and the things which may be deduced, and which he deduces as having been granted him, as he says, believing as he does, that he has the mind of the Spirit.

v.1 cont. ... It is good (not better) for a man 'not to touch' a woman.

-So what was the question?

-“Is it better to remain unmarried?”

-Or: “What do you think of the teaching that says God is forbidding marriage due to our marriage to Christ? (see 1Tim. 4:1-3)

-**MacArthur** on: 'not to touch' ... 'To touch' a woman was a common Jewish euphemism for sexual intercourse. The phrase is used in that sense in passages such as Gen. 20:6; Ruth 2:9; and Prov. 6:29.

-**Fee** on the Greek culture meaning of 'not to touch a woman': the linguistic evidence and the universal understanding of it in the early church. The idiom "to touch a woman" occurs nine times in Greek antiquity, ranging across six centuries and a variety of writers, and in every other instance, without ambiguity it refers to having sexual intercourse.

-We remember that remarkable passage in the teaching of our Lord (Matt. xix), showing that celibacy may be a very fine thing under certain conditions. They had come to Him with certain questions, and He said, "All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs, which were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."

2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immoralities (that is actually going on!),

-**Pillar:** The best choice of referent is to notice the appearance of the term ... not only in chapter 6 but also chapter 5; "sexual immoralities" in 7:2 refers to the sins which Paul has already spoken against in the section, namely, incest and prostitution (both using terms cognate to "sexual immorality" in 7:2), along with adultery and homosexual behavior (using three other terms in the same broad semantic field.

v.2 cont. ... let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

-**Pillar:** Paul's discussion reflects the uniform biblical stance on sex. Fundamentally, in the Bible there are only two types of sex: sex within marriage and sexual immorality, porneia. 1 Corinthians 7:2 makes it inescapably clear that while there may be a number of types of the latter, the only valid alternative to them is the former.

-**Pillar:** Certainly the notion that sexual relations within marriage ought to act as a check on immorality is reflected in Paul's Jewish inheritance: for example, "Drink water from your own cistern ... rejoice in the wife of your youth... Why should you be infatuated, my son, with a loose woman?" (Prov. 5:15, 18, 20); "Be on your guard against the spirit of immorality ... take for yourself a wife" (Testament of Levi 9:9-10); and: "Beware, my son, of all immorality. First of all take a wife from among the descendants of your father" (Tob. 4:12)

-This biblical and Jewish perspective is remarkably different from the Roman view that men were to take wives in order to have legal heirs, while sexual pleasure, if it was to be sought at all, would typically be found outside the marriage.

-Is this the sum total of Paul's views on marriage? NO! "We must avoid the misconception that 1 Corinthians 7 provides something like a complete Pauline teaching concerning marriage." Marriage was many things in Paul's thinking. Ephesians 5, for instance, contains a more lofty estimation: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church..." And he would have agreed with Hebrews 13:4: "Marriage should be honored by all." In fact, vv. 4-5 are not actually lewd, but offer a profound definition of marriage as the total giving of yourself to your spouse.

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

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

-Vs. 3-4 view a balanced equality with equal claims and rights to both genders in the marriage bed

-Married people should not get in the habit of refraining from enjoying sexual relations for extended periods "because of the danger that one of the partners might be tempted outside the marriage into fornication."

-On Power or Authority here: Simply put, married men and women are obligated to have sex with their partners. To press his point Paul uses the language of submission to authority and of debt or robbery in vv. 4 and 5 respectively. The "authority" of which he speaks is that of a master who owns the body of his slave, a thought never far from the passage (see 6:19-20; 7:21-23).

-For this principle under the Law, see Ex. 21:10-11

5 Do not deprive (withhold from what is rightfully theirs) one another except with mutual consent for a time (season),

-What if one does not feel like it?

-**Timothy and Kathy Keller** said this:

And when we stopped trying to perform and just started trying to simply love one another in sex, things started to move ahead. We stopped worrying about our performance. And we stopped worrying about what we were getting and started to say, "Well, what can we do just to give something to the other?"

This concept also has implications for a typical problem that many couples experience in their marital relationship—namely, that one person wants sex more often than the other. If your main purpose in sex is giving pleasure, not getting pleasure, then a person who doesn't have as much of a sex drive physically can give to the other person as a gift. This is a legitimate act of love, and it shouldn't be denigrated by saying, "Oh, no, no. Unless you're going to be all passionate, don't do it." **Do it as a gift.**"

-The reasons for not having intimacy are spiritual reasons and forbidding intimacy is a spiritual sin **v.5 cont. ... in order that you may give yourselves to fasting * and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control that would come with abstinence.**

* Corrupt Greek texts do not have 'fasting'

-this makes little sense without fasting. Prayer generally is done with fasting, so why add fasting? Because we are talking about a protracted period of time-days not just an hour or two.

-This indicates that Satan observes from the outside our activities and adjusts his tactics and temptations accordingly!

6 But I say this as a concession (regards being single or married), not as a commandment.

-Both are good and one is not putting yourself into a second class citizen of the Kingdom status under the other.... HOWEVER from my point of view being single is preferred and he explains but with certain caveats.

Judgment

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

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

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

John: Doctrine or Judgment? 7:10-16

Doctrine....

7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord:

-This is speaking to couples under the Lord, not unevenly yoked couples which are addressed in vs. 12-16

-**Fee:** This is one of the rare instances in Paul's extant letters when he appeals directly to the teaching of Jesus (cf. 9:14; 11:23; 1 Tim. 5:18), which fact means neither that Paul lacks authority nor that Jesus does not ordinarily count as authority for him. The clue is to be found in v. 12, where in contrast to this parenthetical insertion he says, "I, not the Lord." Christ is always Paul's ultimate authority. When he has no direct command, he still speaks as one who is trustworthy (v. 25) because he has the Spirit of God (v.40)

-The Lord commanded: See Mark 10:11 and Matt. 19:9, Matt. 5:32

v.10 cont. A wife is not to depart or separate herself from her husband.

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

- Prox. Ten times in the Scriptures we have reference to the husband divorcing his wife.
- BUT only about one to two times do we read of the wife divorcing her husband and this is one is a separation, and not a final divorce.
- Fee:** What needs to be noted is that such an action by a woman was generally not allowed among the Jews. Divorce was the man's prerogative, and for almost any reason whatsoever. That is the issue Jesus was addressing. But women could, and did, divorce their husbands in the Greco-Roman world, although for obvious socio-economic reasons it was not common for them to do so.

12 But to the rest I, not the Lord, say:

- This is a situation not addressed by Jesus in the Gospels

If any brother *in Christ* has a wife who does not believe (*adj. ...who would be described as a non-believer*), and she is willing to live with him, let him (*command form*) not divorce her.

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

Why? And this goes back to higher versus lesser purposes

14 For the unbelieving husband is (*perf. ... has been and is being*) sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is (*perf. ... has been and is being*) sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy (*adj. ...set apart unto the Lord as His*).

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

-**MacArthur:** If the unbelieving husband or wife cannot tolerate the spouse's faith and desires to be free from the union, it is better that the marriage be dissolved in order to preserve the peace of His child. Fighting, turmoil, bickering, criticism, and frustration disrupt the harmony and peace that God wants His children to have. Again, it is a concession.

-“If possible,” Paul says in Romans, “so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men” (12:18). But when an unbeliever wants out of a marriage, the peace no longer depends on the Christian.

Main reason to stay with the willing unbeliever

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

-You don't! But be assured of this: The believer should let God follow that spouse's soul with the message of salvation, and use whomever He will to take up the call to faith in the unbelieving spouse.

Joey: Doctrine or Judgment? 7:17-24

Doctrine

17 But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk.

-God in His all knowing sovereignty knew and knows your personal circumstances surrounding your salvation.

-He knows and has ordained the time and the place of your salvation

-and he knows the personal circumstances: social, economic and relational situations of your state at salvation.

-He says to you and I start there. Be patient wait upon Him before making drastic changes!

-**MacArthur:** All human institutions and forms of government are imperfect; some are obviously corrupt, cruel, and unjust. But what are Christians, individually or collectively, to do about wrongs and abuses in civil systems and social practices?

First Corinthians 7:17–24 is not a full treatise on that subject, but it plainly teaches the basic principle by which Christians should look at and respond to the civil and social conditions in which they live. The principle is this: Christians should willingly accept the situation into which God has placed them and be

content to serve Him there. It is a principle against which human nature rebels, and Paul states it three times in these 8 verses, so that his readers could not miss his point.

-As we change while on the inside of a bad circumstance we may become agents of change or agents of true freedom for others.

-Christ's mission was "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10), and that is the mission of His church. When Christianity becomes closely identified with a social movement, the message of the gospel is in danger of being lost.

-When it is faithfully followed, however, biblical Christianity cannot help having radical effects on every person, institution, and practice around it. But the primary purpose of the gospel is to change people, not change society. But changed people eventually change society, at least around them.

v.17 cont. ... And so I ordain in all the churches.

-So this unlike long or short hair in chapter 11:10-16 is not a local ordinance but church wide.

Paul in 18-23 gives examples of what he means in v.17

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

-These truly are come as you are and where you are and how you are verses.

Why?

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

20 Let each one remain (*abide*) in the same calling in which he was called.

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

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

-In Christ we are free while being a slave

-Here is another call to be 'content' in the circumstances we find ourselves.

v.22 cont. ... Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave (*doulos, denoting relationship and ownership*).

-And while we may be a freeman and not a slave we are truly Christ's slave!

23 You were bought (*agorazo, redeemed*) at a price; do not become slaves of men.

24 Brethren, let each one remain or abide with God (*meaning He is where you are*) in that *state* in which he was called.

John: Doctrine or Judgment? 7:25-28

Doctrine

25 Now concerning virgins (*feminine, unmarried maiden*):

-The first question had to do with celibacy versus marriage

-The second question here has to do with unmarried daughters

Vs. 25 cont. ... I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment (*gnome, opinion*) as one whom the Lord in His mercy (*undeserved kindness*) *has made trustworthy or faithful*.

-judgment or opinion is used again at the close of this question in v.40 with the same word for judgment or opinion with the added weight of having the Spirit of God not just experiencing the mercy of God and being found faithful.

Before Answering he lays down a general principle

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

27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you *already loosed* (*released, divorced*) from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

28 But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned.

Nevertheless, such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you *some of that* (*due to the present distress that it is better to remain single*).

-Morgan: What is all this about? First of all, the fact that marriage is perfectly proper, and that celibacy is perfectly proper. There must be no attempt to dissolve the marriage relationship in the interest of the Kingdom of God. But, according to his thought of the present distress, if someone, a man or a maiden, had not entered into the marriage relationship it may be better for them to remain celibate. That was his view. That was his thought. That was his conviction at the time (*of the present distress*).

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1 Corinthians 6:12 thru Chapter 7:28

John:

12 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power (*authority and rulership*) of any.

13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!

16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh."

17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Joey:

In vs. 1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me:

In the 1st 6 chapters, Paul was dealing with the problems that were present in this church. Division, sexual immorality and suing each other before non-believers.

The Corinthians had written Paul asking questions on certain subjects. Starting in Chapter 7 and ending in Chapter 11. This is a transition chapter. Paul is going to answer those questions starting with the subject matter of marriage.

If we read, just this section of scripture, would it tell us everything we need to know about the doctrine of marriage?

Of course not! We have to read other scriptures that provide us with more information about marriage. I say that because here the Apostle Paul is answering specific questions that the Corinthians had asked him.

He's going to talk to a variety of people

- The married, unmarried, Christian couples, mixed couples where one of the spouses is an unbeliever, singles, parents of singles and widows

1st 9 verses deal with marriage and intimacy

7:1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me:

It is good for a man not to sexually touch a woman *outside of marriage*

What was the question?

- “Is it better to be married than not to be married?”

Some of the Corinthians might have believed that sex was bad or unspiritual because of the immorality that was running rampant in Corinth or that you could be more “spiritual” by abstaining from sex altogether, even in marriage.

Some believers thought that being single and celibate was more spiritual than being married. They were confused with all the mixed messages in their culture

So, these believers had questions...

“What do we do now that we are believers? Should we stay together as husband and wife if we are both Christians? Should we get divorced if our spouse is an unbeliever? Should we become, or remain, single?”

- Paul is going to bring complete clarity to all these questions

Marriage and Sexual intimacy within marriage

2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality (any sexual activity outside biblical marriage), **let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.**

One man and one women who are married are to enjoy sexual intimacy inside the commitment of marriage.

What’s up with all the guys that had multiply wives in the OT?

- It never works out well for them ☺ nor the wives as well
 - God didn't create multiple wives for Adam; he created Eve

God created marriage, so it’s good. God also gave us sexual desire, so it’s not bad. It’s a God given fire within us. It’s holy when it’s between your **own wife and own husband**. To be mortified before marriage.... satisfied within marriage.

Proverbs 5:15-19 What Solomon says about the husband and wife relationship
Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.16 Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets?17 Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you.18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth.19 As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love.

Many of these believers had come out of very immoral lifestyles. Paul instructed these men and women that had not been given the gift of celibacy from God that they should go ahead and marry.

- Then they would be able to fulfill their sexual desires in the God-honoring institution of marriage.

What sexual intimacy should look like...It’s a command and not optional

3 Let the husband render (give back to...owe or obligated – a responsibility) to his wife the affection (goodwill or benevolence) **due** her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

There is no distinction between men and women. The husband has no more rights in this regard than the wife.

- A culture of male domination
- Paul stressed equality of men and women in their rights as marriage partners to give and receive from each other.
- Married couples are sexually indebted to each other. There is a responsibility. This is not talking about granting your spouse a favor, but Paul is saying that this is something that you owe one another with the right godly attitude.

Practical application of vs 3.

#1 need of a man is ...sex

#2 need of a man is ...sex

#3 need of a man is...sex and maybe some food afterwards

#1 need of a women is security = physical, emotional and spiritual security
part of the physical security is affection

- Physical touch not leading to sex
 - Men are scratching their head like...what's the purpose in that?

#2 conversation

- How they get emotional connection

If that is what it looks like, then this is what it doesn't look like...

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

The wrong attitude:

1. What's is yours is mine and what is mine is mine
 2. you're not meeting my needs, so I'm not meeting your needs
- Sex is not a weapon we yield against each other through manipulation
 - If you're a good boy ...I'll give you a treat
 - If you give me what I want...I'll give you affection.
 - Women use sex to get love
 - Men give love to get sex

- Sex is a responsibility that should be used to care for one another, not a bargaining chip we use to get what we want
 - We don't force or refuse each other through manipulation
 - It can create bitterness in your spouse

The right attitude:

- Giving not getting... Mutual edification not selfishness
- Sex is a gift that you give to each other where both partners are to respect the sexual needs of the other.

The only exception is both mutual and temporary...

5 Do not deprive (withhold from what is rightfully theirs...command) **one another except with consent for a time** (season), **that you may give yourselves** (be unoccupied) **to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.**

present tense imperative, “Stop depriving one another.” The verb “to deprive” is the same verb translated “to cheat” in 6:7–8 in the discussion of lawsuits

- Bad doctrine lead to bad life application
 - Married couples were depriving because they had been taught incorrect information. Paul is correcting their bad doctrine

In other words, don't cheat each other or rob each other of God's blessing unless it's for **this** purpose:

that you may give yourselves (be unoccupied) **to fasting and prayer; and come together again**

Do not withhold sexual intimacy from one another unless there is mutual agreement to set aside a time for spiritual purposes.”

You both agree to abstain from sex in order that you may devote yourselves to be occupied in prayer or fasting only for a limited time. When your time of prayer or fasting is over... come together again sexually.

- When you get done with a food fast? You start eating again because you have a healthy appetite
 - Same idea here... There is another appetite that God has given us in marriage. It's a good thing!
 - How much time? 40 days and 40 nights
 - The husband probably isn't going to make it 😊
 - The wife may not either

so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Married couples are to resume their normal physical sexual relationship, so they aren't tempted to fulfill their God-given sexual desires in forbidden ways.

- Don't give Satan room or an advantage in this area
 - He'll jump at the opportunity

It's interesting...

Before you're married, what does Satan try to do?

- Get you into bed as much as possible with many people as possible

After you get married, what does Satan try to do?

- He wants to try to keep you out of bed with your spouse

What if you don't feel like it?

Timothy and Kathy Keller said this: The meaning of Marriage

And when we stopped trying to perform and just started trying to simply love one another in sex, things started to move ahead. We stopped worrying about our performance. And we stopped worrying about what we were getting and started to say, "Well, what can we do just to give something to the other?"

This concept also has implications for a typical problem that many couples experience in their marital relationship—namely, that one person wants sex more often than the other. If your main purpose in sex is giving pleasure, not getting pleasure, then a person who doesn't have as much of a sex drive physically can give to the other person as a gift. This is a legitimate act of love, and it shouldn't be denigrated by saying, "Oh, no, no. Unless you're going to be all passionate, don't do it." **Do it as a gift.**

The emphasis is on giving, on "I owe you" instead of "you owe me."

6 But I say this as a concession not as a commandment. Hard verse to interpret because what is Paul tying this statement back to

If he is tying it back to.... being single or married

Both are good and one is not putting yourself into a second-class citizen of the Kingdom status under the other.... HOWEVER, from my point of view being single is preferred and he explains but with certain caveats.

If he is tying in back to *mutually consenting to abstain from sex for prayer and fasting*...my view since vs. 5 starts out with a command

God does not command or even recommend abstaining from sex within marriage, but it can be done for a brief time for a specific spiritual reason.

- If you do it, then vs 5 is what it should look like for your protection

Paul speaks to the unmarried...the single person

7 For I wish that all men were even as I myself.

- Celibate
 - Gift of singleness

Paul considered the unmarried state preferable. Why?

There are advantages to remaining single, while serving the Lord

- More about this in verses 32 – 35
- You don't have a divided heart. A wife and kids...divided time
- You are free to fully serve the Lord wherever He calls you.
 - No logistics to worry about
- Can you imagine a spouse sharing in all the horrible things that Paul went through?
 - A husband has an instinct to protect his wife
 - Having my wife go through those agonies would be extremely difficult

But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

God gives grace to some to remain unmarried whereas He definitely calls others to the married state.

- Not everyone has the gift of singleness
 - I didn't...I had a desire to get married because I didn't want to burn for the rest of my life.

8 But I say to the **unmarried and to the widows: *in a practical matter***

It is good for them if they remain even as I am; *single and entirely devoted to the Lord* 9 but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry (command). For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

If they lack the power of **self-control** in the unmarried state, and **God brings the right person** they are permitted to **marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.** *that you cannot stand up against it.*

- This passionate burning implies the danger of falling into sexual sin.

Sexual pressure is not the best motive for getting married, but it is better to marry the right person than to “burn with passion.” Some in Corinth taught that all sex was wrong, so engaged couples may have been deciding not to get married. In this passage, Paul was telling couples who wanted to marry that they should not frustrate their normal sexual drives by avoiding marriage. This does not mean, however, that people who have trouble controlling themselves should marry the first person who comes along. It is better to deal with the pressure of desire than to deal with an unhappy marriage.

Now, Paul addressed married couples, where both partners are believers.

John:

7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from *her* husband.

The Corinthian Christians wondered if it might be more spiritual to be single, and if they should break up existing marriages for the cause of greater holiness. Paul answers their question straight from the heart of the Lord: absolutely not! **Guzik**

- When marriages are having difficulties...since this is God’s heart, we always lean towards counseling people in this direction.
- God is bigger than the current problems. John and I have seen Him do amazing things through couples are willing to submit to the final authority of God’s Word.
- God hates divorce...See Malachi 2:16
 - He sees the damage that divorce brings
 - How do you pull apart one flesh...it gets messy!
 - Glue two pieces of paper together and try to separate them back to their previous state
 - Parts of one piece still remains on the other

Jesus taught about divorce during his time on earth (see Matthew 5:31–32; 19:3–9; Mark 10:2–12; Luke 16:18),

saying that married people were not meant to be divorced. While divorce was permitted as a concession, it was not God's plan for married people.

Is a divorced person free to remarry if they divorced for a non-biblical reason?
11 But even if she does depart (leave or separate), **let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband.** (command) **And a husband is not to divorce his wife.**

Apparently, it was possible in the Greco-Roman culture for a wife to leave her husband (in Jewish culture, divorce laws focused on the husband separating from his wife). If a woman has already separated from her husband, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. She does not have the option to marry another man. In the same way, the husband must not divorce his wife. The only biblical grounds for divorce are adultery and the exception Paul lays out in vs. 15 – Abandonment from a non-believing spouse

Paul speaks to the couple that has a spouse that is not a believer...

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

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

Because of their desire to serve Christ, some people in the Corinthian church thought they ought to divorce their pagan spouses and marry Christians, but Paul upheld the marriage commitment. God's ideal is for marriages to stay together—even when one spouse is not a believer.

Why?

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified (a moral influence; not salvation) **by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.**

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

- If the unbelieving spouse by their own choice (not being driven away because if they leave I'm free, so I'm going to be as mean as possible) to leave and there is no opportunity for reconciliation, allow them to go.
 - **God has called us to peace.**

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

- Hang in there even though it is tough. You could be the instrument that brings your unsaved spouse to a personal relationship to Christ.

Joey:

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

Paul says, this is a universal principle that I teach in all the churches.

- Live as you are called or bloom where you God has planted you

That was another problem facing the Corinthian church. Discontentment...

- Some believers wanted to change their marital status—from single to married, from married to single, or from an unbelieving partner to a believing one. Some were slaves and wanted to be free. They had misinterpreted, and often abused, the truth of Christian freedom—taking it to mean freedom to do as they pleased, instead of freedom to do as God pleased.

The principle is this: Christians should willingly accept the situation into which God has placed them and be content to serve Him there, but we often rebel against that principle. Paul states it three times in these 8 verses, so that his readers could not miss his point.

- We should not be preoccupied with changing our outward circumstances unless those outward circumstances are sinful.

18 Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. (command) Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised. (command)

- God saved gentiles, while they were gentiles. God doesn't want Gentiles to become Jews. Gentiles is who they were before they got saved. Gentiles is who they are now that they are saved.
- The same applies to the Jews. God changes our eternal position; not our distinctions. Distinctions aren't what is important

Here may be the bigger question facing the Corinthians

- How does my status in Christ impact my station in life?
 - Does a new start in Christ go beyond just a new heart?

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Wrong attitude:

What's new Lord?

- I drive the same beater car
- Go to the same boring dead-end job
- Work for the same unappreciative boss and make minimum wage

If God gave me a brand-new start spiritually, wouldn't it make sense that He would give me a brand-new start physically, relationally, vocationally or even financially?

- All things are new right? Where's the new part for me in some of these other areas Lord?

You're missing the point...Your lot in life (current circumstance) is not what really matters

So, what does?

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

Christ changes us from the inside and He calls people from all walks of life.

- The Corinthians were focused on changing their circumstance outwardly. For example, they wanted to change marriage partners. They might even need to try to change jobs (unless the job was dishonoring to God).
- Instead, we are to accept whatever situation the Lord has put you in and continue on as you were when God first called you because God will use you in whatever condition He planted you.
 - Inner change matters. We should focus on keeping the commandments of God, desiring to conform our heart and will in obedience to Him.

20 Let each one remain (abide - command) in the same calling in which he was called.

- God may not change your physical circumstances right now, because He might be using your physical circumstances to change you on the inside

1st Timothy 6:6

Godliness with contentment is great gain

You can do God's work and demonstrate your faith anywhere. If you became a Christian after marriage, and your spouse is not a believer, remember that you don't have to be married to a Christian to live for Christ. Don't assume that you are in the wrong place or are stuck with the wrong person. You may be just where God wants you

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

In our flesh, don't our concerns revolve around the elimination of our problems / pains?

- We ask for and pray for evacuation plans to get us out of what is uncomfortable or unpleasant for us

I am beginning to understand that faith is not the way around pain, it is the way through pain. Faith doesn't get rid of the opposition, it invites it over for dinner. Faith doesn't give you the winning point at the last second, it ties the game and sends you into overtime. Faith doesn't give you the solution, it forces you to find it. Faith doesn't teach you at the moment, it teaches you in retrospect. Faith doesn't provide a net to fall into as your fingers are about to give way as you hang suspended over a cliff, faith gives your fingers the strength to hold on just a little while longer. In other words, faith doesn't do anything when it's doing something in you

- quote by Mike Yaconelli

- The point: Don't ask God to bail you out your trials when He is using those trials to build your faith

Slavery was common throughout the Roman Empire, so many of the believers in Corinth were slaves when the Lord called them.

Slaves should not feel that because they became Christians they could no longer serve as slaves in that culture because they deserved freedom now that they were saved.

Unfortunately, they might have to keep living as slaves, but they should serve Christ wholeheartedly in their position.

- Joseph is a great example of this
 - Did Joseph serve God wholeheartedly in every position God planted him?
 - To his earthly father, steward over Potiphar's house, in prison and elevated to 2nd in command in Egypt
 - Did being wholeheartedly faithful in service to The Lord prepare Joseph for greater works?
 - Nations were saved because of it.

Also, the Corinthians were free to seek to better themselves, for Paul says, if you get a chance to be free, take it.

- Nothing wrong with seeking to better yourself, but don't miss what God's trying to teach you or change you where He has you now.
 - My Kansas experience while working for MCI
 - God uses the rough places to smooth out the edges

Paul was content to be in jail and to serve the Lord as long as he was jailed. He carried on much of his ministry from a jail cell. But when he was freed he left jail.

- He wasn't a prisoner of the Romans...Paul said that he was a prisoner of Christ Jesus

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

In other words, In Christ...we are free while being a slave in service to Him!

Because we are free from the power of sin in our lives (SEE: Romans 6:18, 22). These slaves had been made free. In the same way, if a person was free when the Lord called him, he was now a slave of Christ.

23 You were bought at an *incalculable price* by the precious blood of Christ

See Galatians 2:20 and 1st Peter 1:19

do not become slaves of men. (command)

- This is true not only in regard to literal slavery, but spiritually also.

- We are never to put ourselves under the inappropriate control or influence of others.

The application...

24 Brethren, let each one remain (abide – a command) with God in that *state* in which he was called.

Whether we are married or unmarried, circumcised or uncircumcised, slave or free...We can seek God's best by being used right where He has us.

John:

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

Not thus sayeth the Lord, but I'm giving you my advice and my heart though what I've seen and experienced.

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

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

- Remain where you are called...if you are married, don't entertain divorce
- If you are single...don't put all your energy into seeking a spouse
 - It will distract you from seeking The Lord
 - If He has marriage for you...wait on Him and let Him bring the right one to you

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