

Making the Most of Your UnMarried and/or Married Life!

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The King and His Glory / Marriage; Divorce certificate / 1 Corinthians 7

In 1 Corinthians 7, the Apostle Paul gives the church at Corinth three essential directives for flourishing in life and ministry while nurturing the hope of heaven within us.

Pre-sermon Comments

[Ephesians 2:19-22](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being joined together, is growing into a holy sanctuary in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

[Ephesians 2:1-2](#) (LSB) ¹ And you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience,

Review

[Matthew 5:31-32](#) (LSB) ³¹ "Now it was said, 'WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE'; ³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Marriage and Divorce

[Matthew 19:8-9](#) (LSB) ⁸ He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. ⁹ "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

What about Spousal Abuse, etc?

[James 1:2-4](#) (LSB) ² Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance. ⁴ And let perseverance have *its* perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Always seek wisdom from above

[James 1:5-8](#) (LSB) ⁵ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

⁶ But he must ask in faith, doubting nothing,

for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ *being* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

[James 3:15](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ This wisdom is not coming down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

Mental illness, criminal conviction, and drug abuse?

What about cruelty?

[James 1:27](#) (LSB) ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before *our* God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep oneself unstained by the world.

[James 2:15-16](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that?

[James 2:17](#) (LSB) ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead by itself.

Proposition and Outline

In [1 Corinthians 7](#), the Apostle Paul gives the church at Corinth three essential directives for flourishing in life and ministry while nurturing the hope of heaven within us. You must cultivate:

1. Happiness in your Married Life
 - a. Your marriage must be sanctified
 - b. Your marriage must be selfless
 - c. Your marriage will be secure
2. Helpfulness in your UnMarried Life
 - a. Your singleness is good
 - b. Your singleness is a gift
 - c. Your singleness must be guarded
3. Holiness in your Unmarried and Married Life

Background to [1 Corinthians 7](#)

[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be equipped, having been thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Paul's teaching is inspired, it is in no way inferior, it is in every sense binding and authoritative on us, but not all of it comes specifically and directly from Jesus.

You Must Cultivate Happiness (Joy) in your Married Life

[1 Corinthians 7:1](#) (LSB) ¹ Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

Your marriage must be sanctified

[1 Corinthians 7:2](#) (LSB) ² But because of sexual immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.

Your marriage must be selfless

[1 Corinthians 7:3-4](#) (LSB) ³ The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, 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 also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*.

[1 Corinthians 7:5](#) (LSB) ⁵ Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Your marriage will be secure

[Ephesians 6:16](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ In addition to all, having taken up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one,

You Must Cultivate Helpfulness (Usefulness) in your UnMarried Life

Your singleness is good in Christ.

[1 Corinthians 7:6-7](#) (LSB) ⁶ But this I say as a concession, not as a command. ⁷ Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one this way, and another that.

[1 Corinthians 9:5](#) (LSB) ⁵ Do we not have authority to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?

[1 Corinthians 7:8](#) (LSB) ⁸ But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I.

[1 Corinthians 7:32-35](#) (LSB) ³² But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the

Lord.³³ But one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife,³⁴ and *his interests* have been divided. The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband.³⁵ Now this I say for your own benefit, not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote propriety and undistracted devotion to the Lord.

[1 Corinthians 7:9](#) (LSB)⁹ But if they do not have self-control, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn *with passion*.

Your singleness is a gift from Christ

[1 Corinthians 7:7](#) (LSB)⁷ Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one this way, and another that.

Your singleness must be guarded

[Romans 12:1-2](#) (LSB)¹ Therefore I exhort you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—living, holy, *and* pleasing to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship.² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may approve what the will of God is, that which is good and pleasing and perfect.

You Must Cultivate Holiness in your Unmarried and Married Life

[1 Corinthians 7:10-14](#) (LSB)¹⁰ But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband

Paul reiterates the Lord's teaching

¹¹ (but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife.

[1 Corinthians 7:12-13](#) (LSB)¹² But to the rest I say, not the Lord,

Paul expands upon the Lord's teaching under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit

¹² But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her. ¹³ And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, **and he consents to live with her,** she must not divorce her husband.

[2 Corinthians 6:14](#) (LSB) ¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

[1 Cor 7:14](#) (LSB) For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband. For otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.

[1 Corinthians 7:15](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave. The brother or the sister is not enslaved in such cases, but God has called us to peace.

[Romans 7:2](#) (LSB) ² For the married woman has been bound by law to her husband while he is living, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

[Matthew 5:31-32](#) (LSB) ³¹ "Now it was said, 'WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE'; ³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

[1 Corinthians 7:16](#) (LSB) 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?

[Ephesians 4:1](#) (LSB) ¹ Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, exhort you to walk worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

[1 Corinthians 7:17-24](#) (LSB) ¹⁷ Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the

churches.¹⁸ Was any man called *when he was already* circumcised? He is not to become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised.¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but *what matters* is the keeping of the commandments of God.²⁰ Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called.²¹ Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it. But if you are able also to become free, rather do that.²² For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman. Likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.²³ You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.²⁴ Brothers, each one is to remain with God in that *condition* in which he was called.

Conclusion:

[2 Corinthians 5:19-20](#) (LSB)¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their transgressions against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.²⁰ So then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as God is pleading through us. We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

[John 3:16](#) (LSB)¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Communion

[Luke 22:1-20](#) (LSB)¹ Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was drawing near.² And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they were afraid of the people.³ And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, who belonged to the number of the twelve.⁴ And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them.⁵ And they were glad and agreed to give him money.⁶ So he consented, and *began* seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd.⁷ Then came the *first day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.*⁸ And Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it."⁹ And they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare

it?”¹⁰ And He said to them, “Behold, after you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house that he enters.¹¹ “And you shall say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?””¹² “And he will show you a large, furnished upper room; prepare it there.”¹³ And they left and found *everything* just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover.¹⁴ And when the hour had come, He reclined *at the table*, and the apostles with Him.¹⁵ And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;¹⁶ for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”¹⁷ And when He had taken a cup *and* given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves.¹⁸ “For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes.”¹⁹ And when He had taken *some bread and* given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.”²⁰ And in the same way *He took* the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

Application Questions

1. How does the cultural context of Corinth, as outlined in the sermon, impact your understanding of Paul's teachings on marriage and singleness in [1 Corinthians 7](#)?
2. In what ways can we cultivate happiness in our married life, according to the sermon? How can we ensure our marriages are sanctified and selfless?
3. The sermon suggests that singleness is good in Christ. How can single individuals make the most of their singleness for the glory of God?
4. What precautions should single individuals take to guard their singleness and avoid falling into sin or discontentment?
5. How does the concept of holiness apply to both married and unmarried individuals, as discussed in the sermon? How can we strive for holiness in our relationships and life choices?

6. Reflecting on the teachings of Paul in [1 Corinthians 7](#), what practical steps can you take to honor God in your current relationship status, whether married or unmarried?
7. The sermon mentions scenarios where separation or divorce may be necessary due to issues like cruelty or drug abuse. How can we navigate such challenging situations while seeking to uphold biblical principles of marriage and peace?
8. According to the sermon, what role does faith play in maintaining relationships, particularly when one spouse is an unbeliever? How can believers influence their unbelieving spouses for Christ?
9. Paul emphasizes the importance of remaining faithful to God's calling in our lives, regardless of our marital status or circumstances. How can we apply this principle to our own lives amidst the complexities of marriage and singleness?
10. In conclusion, how can we ensure that our pursuit of happiness, helpfulness, and holiness aligns with God's Word and leads us closer to Him in every aspect of our lives?

A Gospel Tract

God

Created and owns everything

[Gen 1:1](#)—*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*

[Psalm 24:1](#)—*The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.*

Is Perfectly Holy

[1 John 1:5](#)—*This is the message we heard from Him and announce to you that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.*

[Matt 5:48](#)—*Therefore you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Requires perfect obedience to His Law

[James 2:10](#)—*for whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.*

Man

Has broken God's law

[Rom 3:10,23](#)—*there is none righteous, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Will pay the eternal penalty for his sin

[Rom. 6:23](#)—*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*

Cannot save himself by his good works

[Titus 3:5](#)—*He saved us not based on works which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*

Christ

Came to earth both as God and sinless man

[Col 2:9](#)—*For in Him the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form*

Demonstrated God's love by dying on the cross to pay sin's penalty

[Rom 5:8](#)—*But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*

[2 Cor 5:21](#)—*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

Rose from the grave and is alive today

[1 Cor 15:4](#)—*And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*

Sinners

Must repent of all that dishonors God

[Isa 55:7](#)—*Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*

[Luke 9:23](#)—*if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.*

Must believe in Christ as Lord and Savior

[Rom 10:9](#)—*that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.*

Will you repent and believe in Christ?

[Acts 17:30](#)—*therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance God is declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.*

If the Holy Spirit has laid anything on your heart in the preaching of this sermon, please contact one of the leaders or speak to a mature Christian to answer your questions. I can be contacted at brandon.phillips@gracegainesville.org.