

1 CORINTHIANS, Chapter 7 – Principles of Marriage; Keep Your Marriage Vows; Live as You Are Called; To the Unmarried and Widows;

OBSERVATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – **Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221**; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: www.ptwente.com Click on “Latest Studies” on the right side. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

<p><u>Chapter Seven</u> Principles of Marriage; Keep Your Marriage Vows; Live as You Are Called; To the Unmarried and Widows;</p> <p>After making mention of his concern for them, we come now to the second section of Paul’s letter to the church at Corinth, where he will give answers to them regarding six specific questions that they had apparently asked of him: Chapter 7 deals with marriage Chapters 8-10 with Christian liberty Chapter 11 with church conduct Chapters 12-14 with spiritual gifts Chapter 15 with the resurrection of the dead Chapter 16 with giving and offering</p> <p>Up to this point, Paul had laid groundwork for what we will be given in Chapter 7. Chapter Seven is very clear and very direct. He has been dealing with the sins reported to be known in the Corinthian congregation. Now he takes up the questions about which they had written to him: marriage (<i>1Cor. 7:1, 1Cor. 7:25</i>), food offered to idols (<i>1Cor. 8:1</i>), spiritual gifts (<i>1Cor. 12:1</i>), the resurrection of the dead (<i>1Cor. 15:1</i>), and the missionary offering for the Jews (<i>1Cor. 16:1</i>).</p> <p>As you study <i>1Cor. 7:1-40</i>, please keep in mind that Paul is replying to definite questions. He is not spelling out a complete “theology of marriage” in one chapter. It is necessary to consider as well what the rest of the Bible has to say about this important subject.</p>	<p>Some liberal critics have accused Paul of being against both marriage and women. These accusations are not true, of course. Nor is it true that in <i>1Cor. 7:6, 1Cor. 7:8, 1Cor. 7:12</i>, and <i>1Cor. 7:25</i> Paul is disclaiming divine inspiration for what he wrote. <u>Rather, he is referring to what Jesus taught on marriage and divorce, when He was on earth (Mat. 5:31-32; Mat. 19:1-12; Mar. 10:1-12; Luke 16:18).</u> Paul had to answer some questions <u>that Jesus never discussed; but when a question arose that the Lord had dealt with, Paul referred to His words.</u> <u>Instead of disclaiming inspiration, Paul claimed that what he wrote was equal in authority to what Christ taught.</u></p> <p>Paul explained God’s will concerning Christian marriage, and he addressed his counsel to three different groups of believers. Christians Married to Christians (1Cor. 7:1-11) Christians Married to Non-Christians (1Cor. 7:12-24) Unmarried Christians (1Cor. 7:25-40)</p> <p>It can be noted that Paul does not view singleness as a liability or a position to be avoided, but with the gifting of celibacy, is equally favored by the Lord as to those who are married!</p>	<p><u>HYMN # 149 – When I Survey The Wondrous Cross – Billy Graham Crusade Choir</u></p> <p><i>When I survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.</i></p> <p><i>Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God! All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.</i></p> <p><i>Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all. Demands my soul, my life, my all. Thou has my soul, my life, my all!</i></p>
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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1 CORINTHIANS, Chapter 7 – Principles of Marriage; Issues of family; of sexuality; of marriage and of singleness

1Co 7:1 Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch (have sexual relations with) *a woman.*

1Co 7:2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

1Co 7:3 Let the husband render (apodidōmi - pay back, give (again), repay, perform, yield) to his wife the (sexual) affection due (good will) her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

1Co 7:4 The wife does not have authority (power) over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

1Co 7:5 Do not deprive (defrauding, stealing) one another except with (mutual) consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1Co 7:6 But I say this as a concession (permission), not as a commandment.

1Co 7:7 For I wish that all men were even as I myself (celibate and unmarried). But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

1Co 7:8 But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am;

vs. 1-2 Paul will later explain that certain people have a gift whereby they don't have the inclination or need for intimacy. However, Paul says for everyone else, marriage is the way to avoid the entire realm of immorality. (*Gen. 2:23; Prov. 1:22*)

vs. 3-4 Due to the fact that when two people get married their bodies are no longer their own, the husband is to give his wife the intimacy she desires, and likewise the wife to the husband.

v. 5 Contrary to the wisdom of the world, which prescribes separation for ailing marriages, the principle of the Word is that, rather than moving out to find oneself, to discover what one wants, or to determine what's wrong, husbands and wives are to give themselves to each other because intimacy binds people uniquely.

v. 6 Chapter 7 is a most interesting chapter for many reasons—not the least of which is that throughout his discussion on marriage, we'll see Paul offering his personal opinion quite freely. Paul's example shows us there's a place for us to share our opinions—as long as people understand the difference between our personal persuasion and the Word of God.

v. 7 Although he was single at this point, there are two strong indications that Paul had been married previously. Rabbis taught that God's edict to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28) was a commandment given to all holy or godly men. Therefore, they said whoever didn't marry and have children violated the commandment. And, concerning the law, Paul was blameless (Philippians 3:6). Secondly, Paul was most likely a member of the Sanhedrin. To be a member of this seventy-member body, one had to be married because the Jews believed that he who was married was more prone to mercy. What happened to Paul's wife? Some suggest she died. History, however, weighs in on the side of the premise that his wife left him when he converted to Christianity. *has his own gift...* Jesus said some are born without a need or desire to be married. Others—for example those who were in charge of a king's harem—were involuntarily made that way

v. 8 If you are at a place where you can live by yourself, Paul says, “Good for you. I wish all men were like that—living in single-mindedness and in freedom.”

v. 1 Here we are told in effect, that singleness is good. That it is good (celibacy) not to touch a woman. How does that apply to you?

v. 2 Now here is a good thing! Marriage is good also, that it is good for each man to have sexual expression, without sin, with his own wife and each woman to have her own husband. **God's ordained sexual drive is to be carried out within marriage -a man with his own wife and a woman with her own husband. Sexual desire is to mortified until marriage and then satisfied within the marriage bed. Heb. 13:3**

v. 3 In this sexual context in a marriage relationship, neither the husband or the wife **is to hold back affection to the other**. It is wrong for a husband or wife to withhold to the other spouse the due benevolence.

v. 4 Not only are spouses just to render affection to each other, but they actually **are to have authority over the other's body** If you're married, does this sound like the way it is in our own marriage?

v. 5 Not only to render affection to your spouse and have authority of each other's body, but the Bible says **we're not to deprive one another, except with mutual consent only, for an agreed upon, period of time**. Deprivation will cause tremendous marriage problems. Do you practice the sin of depriving your spouse? **Each partner has the concern for and the responsibility of satisfying their own spouse's desire.**

v. 6 God is not commanding or recommending such abstinence from sex within marriage; but **it can be done with mutual consent** for a brief time for a specific spiritual reason

v. 7 Although Paul apparently was unmarried when he wrote this letter, **he probably had been married** at one time. Notice that singleness, that is celibacy, is referred to as a gift from God. If a person has that gift and remains single, we're not to look down on them! **Without that gift, it seems that marriage is better**, than trying to always live in singleness without that gift. Can you recognize that gift? **Do you have the gift of singleness?**

v. 8 If singleness is a place where you can live by yourself, Paul says, "Good for you. I wish all men were like that—living in single-mindedness and in freedom."

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1Co 7:9 but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry (once and for all) than to burn (constantly) with passion.

Keep Your Marriage Vows;

1Co 7:10 Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.

1Co 7:11 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.

1Co 7:12 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.

1Co 7:13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

1Co 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife (an unequally yoked marriage), and the unbelieving wife is sanctified (set apart, a Godliness – not “saved”) by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

1Co 7:15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.

1Co 7:16 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?

Live as You Are Called;

1Co 7:17 But as God has distributed to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches.

v. 9 Although Paul enjoyed his single state, he knew it was better for someone to get married than to burn with passion. And such would be the normal pattern for the vast majority.

v. 10 Now and this is as the Lord commands, wives, do not leave your husbands. Period. Marriage is like a violin—it doesn’t work without strings. But even when the music stops, the strings are still attached.

v. 11 After saying under no circumstance should a wife leave her husband, why does Paul give instruction to the wife who leaves? Because he’s realistic. Although leaving is against the heart of the Lord and the command of God, Paul knew the frailty of the flesh. *1 Corinthians 7:11 (b) ...let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.*

vs. 12-13 Again, giving his opinion, Paul says a person who gets saved is not to divorce or drive away his unbelieving spouse

v. 14 The unbelieving husband or wife is sanctified by the believing spouse. This doesn’t mean the unbeliever is saved, but rather that he or she is sanctified, set apart, blessed simply because they’re linked to a believer. When an believer leaves the one sided marriage, all the powerful and priceless Godly influence that is brought into that marriage is lost!

v. 15 Because God has called us to peace, if a man is blatantly mistreating his wife, I don’t tell her to tough it out. No, I say, “God has called you to get out.” Having said that, however, we are not to use the argument of peace as an excuse to walk out of a marriage we feel is less than perfect. This is a loophole Christians use all too readily, one that ought to be closed tightly. Short of physical abuse or abject negligence, even if your marriage is tough and full of heartache, my word to you is to stay. If you travel to enough counselors, you’ll find one who tells you to leave—but be careful. Far too many marriages break up due to a failure to take into account the full counsel of God.

vs. 16-17 You never know what the next year, month, or day holds. Stick with the calling of God for your life, whatever that may be

v. 9 It’s better to be married (once and for all) **if you don’t have the gift of celibacy**, but sexual desire is not the primary reason for being married.

v. 10 Here, **this is the LORD’s commandment.**, Christian women who are married are not to depart from their own husbands.

v. 11 Although leaving is against the heart of the Lord and the command of God, according to this passage, the wife who leaves her husband has only two options: to remain unmarried or to return to her husband. Most marriage problems are Lordship problems! There should be three of you in a good marriage and neither the wife or the husband is the Lord!

v. 12 rest... **unbelievers.** For husbands who are believers, Paul is giving his opinion that the believing husband is not to divorce an unbelieving wife, so long as she is willing to live him.

v. 13 This is the reverse of the previous verse, the believing wife is not to divorce an unbelieving husband, so long as he is willing to live her.

v. 14 **For (the reason)** the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife and visa versa. Sanctified, in this context, does not mean that the unbelieving spouse is saved just by being married to a Christian. It simply means that they are set apart for a special working in their lives by the Holy Spirit, by virtue of being so close to someone who is a Christian. The presence of a believing spouse does good for the unbelieving spouse, as well as for the children- used to be emphasized in USA.

v. 15 Paul has counseled that the Christian partner should do what they can to keep the marriage together. But if the unbelieving spouse refuses to be married, then the marriage can be broken; but this isn’t to be initiated or sought by the believer. The believer is never to use the belief to drive the unbelieving spouse away.

v. 16 This section with hope, because many Christian who are married to unbelievers are discouraged. They should know that with faith and patience, they can look for God to work in their present circumstances.

v. 17 Regardless of what your station is (married, single, divorced, widowed, remarried, whatever), God can work in your life. Instead of thinking that you can or will walk for the Lord when your station changes, **walk for the Lord in the place you are at right now.** Don’t wait for any changes.

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INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

1Co 7:18 Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised.
*1Co 7:19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, **but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.***
1Co 7:20 Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.
1Co 7:21 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it.
1Co 7:22 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.
1Co 7:23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.
1Co 7:24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.

To the Unmarried and Widows:

1Co 7:25 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.
1Co 7:26 I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress—that it is good for a man to remain as he is:
1Co 7:27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.
1Co 7:28 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.
1Co 7:29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,

vs.18-20 Not only as it relates to your marriage situation, but in every area—be who you are. Paul says, “If you’re called as a Jew, then be a believing Jew. If you’re called as a Gentile, be a believing Gentile.”

v. 21 If you’re a slave, don’t try to escape. But if you’re set free, go for it,” says Paul. Again, he’s saying, “Just be yourself, doing all things for God’s glory in a spirit of contentment.”

v. 22 The dynamic of Christianity is that the slave is free in Christ, while the free man is a slave to Him (Romans 1:1).

v. 23-24 Today’s major sports teams pay millions of dollars for their star players. One can be sure that they will take very good care of him. They make sure the players have the finest trainers, dieticians, and health care available. Why? Because their investment is was significant. But the money that is paid here on earth is nothing compared to the blood of Christ paid for you. Therefore, He’s going to see to it that you are tended well, that whatever comes into your life or goes on in your life is according to His plan and for your good.

vs. 25-26 Again offering his opinion, Paul reiterates that the single state allows one to be singularly committed to the kingdom.

v. 27 If you’re married, stay married, says Paul. If you’re single, don’t strive to find a wife.

v. 28 Because they consist of two imperfect people, every marriage has days of struggle and difficulty. Therefore, if yours does, don’t think you’re alone, off the wall, or out to lunch. Paul says matrimony inevitably brings its own challenges.

v. 29 “Time is short,” Paul says. Whether the Lord comes back for us today—or whether we live out full lives, time is rapidly coming to a close because we’re getting older and the Lord’s coming is nearer. Three obstacles are given that that could keep us from investing in the things of eternity. *Wives.* The first potential pitfall is in the area of relationships. There are people who miss out on being engaged in the kingdom because they’re caught up in family relationships. We need to get outside of ourselves, saying, “We’re engaged in something bigger than ourselves—it’s called eternity.” Seek first the kingdom, Mom and Dad—and watch everything else fall into place.

vs. 18-20 If you were circumcised when you became a Christian, fine. If you were not circumcised, then fine, as well. Those things do not matter. What matters is serving the Lord right where we are at right now. Circumcision is being used as an example. Even as being circumcised or uncircumcised is irrelevant, so is your current marital state. Being married is nothing and unmarried is nothing, **but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.**

vs. 21-24 This is an example from the practice of slavery. Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it: A slave can please God as a slave. But if you can be made free, rather use it: In saying that a slave can please God.. If he has the opportunity, he should take advantage of it. We never to put ourselves under the inappropriate control or influence of others. Let each one remain with God in that calling in which he was called.

vs. 25-26 Regarding marriage among Christians. Paul’s advice is that marriage isn’t bad in the sight of God, and singleness has its advantages. Now as to the unmarried, referred to as virgins, I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment. It is good for a man to remain as he is. Paul, in speaking to the never-married men, recommends they remain as he is - that is, either remaining single or remaining married certainly with respect to the persecution that was beginning to occur. It would be a great burden to have a wife or a family for someone committed to standing strong for the Lord.

v. 27 If bound to a wife, do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife: Paul is echoing the same principle laid down in 1Co_7:17-24 : God can use us right where we are, and we should not be so quick to change our station in life.

vs. 28 If you do marry, you have not sinned: Paul certainly will not forbid marriage; yet he tells those who will get married, nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you. Paul felt, especially for himself, that the greater advantages were found in being single, yet he knows that each one has his own gift from God (1Co_7:7). Paul is never implying that being married or single is more spiritual than the other state; this was the big error of the Corinthian Christians.

vs. 29-31 Paul warns against putting roots down too deep in a world that is passing away. Indeed, the time is short: True to the heart of Paul and the teaching of Jesus, all Christians in all ages are told to be ready and anticipate His return..

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INTERPRETATION

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1Co 7:30 those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, 1Co 7:31 and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.

1Co 7:32 But I want you to be without care (free from anxieties). He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. 1Co 7:33 But he who is married cares about the things of the world—how he may please his wife. 1Co 7:34 There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please her husband. 1Co 7:35 And this I say for your own profit, not that I may put a leash on you, but for what is proper, and that you may serve the Lord without distraction.

1Co 7:36 But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry.

vs. 30-31 The second obstacle to keeping eternity’s values in view is in the **area of emotions**. Too much focus on themselves, analyzing why they’re depressed or why they’re discouraged. Paul’s remedy is simple: Weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15). In other words, get involved with how others are doing. The Lord will use you, and you’ll be set free if you get your eyes off yourself. *Possess.....* Finally, we see **possessions** as the **third obstacle** to seeing the big picture of the kingdom. He who is caught up in his investment portfolio or in the fashion of this world will be too busy, too preoccupied to engage in ministry. Yes, we should be wise stewards—but our possessions should not preoccupy us. Tithing is so important and giving so freeing because every time you put money in the offering, you’re giving away a part of your stinginess, shortsightedness, and selfishness. The way to freedom is to forget about yourself and seek first the kingdom. This applies to marriage, to emotions, to possessions. Time is short! Be about the work of eternity..

vs. 32-33 If you are married, you will inevitably find yourself caring for your spouse—and that’s the way it should be. But it will distract you nonetheless from the freedom you would have enjoyed had you remained in a single state.

v. 34 . The woman who is married has an obligation to please her husband. The single sister, on the other hand, has the opportunity to be about pleasing the Lord singularly.

v. 35 There is a woman in Scripture who models this very effectively. Her name is Anna, she realized she had an opportunity to serve the Lord without distraction. She was given special revelation, for she recognized that which only one other man—a man named Simeon—knew. She knew the Babe in the arms of Mary and Joseph was not an ordinary Child. For any who have been widowed or divorced, follow the example of Anna: Look for the Lord. Pray to the Lord. Walk with the Lord.

v. 36 After talking about the freedom found in the single state, in his day of arranged marriages, Paul goes on to talk to fathers about their unmarried daughters, saying that if their daughters desired to marry, that was acceptable.

vs. 29-31 (cont.) It means that we will not live as if our earthly family was all that mattered, but also live with an eye to eternity, not indulging the feelings and things of this world. Weeping, rejoicing, and having possessions must not get in the way of following hard after Jesus.

v. 32 Jesus said that the cares of this world can choke out the Word of God, making it unfruitful. The unmarried have the potential to please God with less distraction. When a person doesn’t have family responsibilities, they are more “free” to serve God. This was the main reason Paul considered the unmarried state preferable for himself.

v. 33 This is how it should be for the married person. There is something wrong if a married man does not care for how he may please his wife, and something is wrong if a married woman does not care about how she may please her husband.

v. 34 Though Paul insists he does not want his teaching here to be regarded as a noose around anyone’s neck, this has happened in the church. Roman Catholics insist on celibacy for all its clergy, even if they are not gifted to be so. Many Protestant groups will not ordain or trust the single.

v. 35 *without distraction*: For Paul, being unmarried meant fewer distractions in his service of God. Tragically, many modern single Christians singleness a terrible distraction! Instead, they should regard their present unmarried state as a special opportunity to please God.

vs. 36-37 Paul deals with another question from the Corinthians. Should I arrange a marriage for my daughter? But if any man thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, if she is past the flower of youth, and thus it must be, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry. Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.

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INTERPRETATION

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1Co 7:37 Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.

1Co 7:38 So then he who gives her in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better.

1Co 7:39 A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

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

vs. 37-38 On the other hand, Paul says that the father who can guide his daughter into living as a single woman, devoting herself to the Lord, does a good thing.

vs. 39-40 Clarifying the questions presented to him, Paul tells the Corinthian believers that a wife is bound to her husband until death separates them. After that, she is at liberty to marry anyone she wishes as long as he's a believer and the Lord so directs. Some have read 1 Corinthians 7 and come to the conclusion that, because he speaks so highly of the single state, Paul has a problem with marriage. But that happens because they fail to take into account Paul's full counsel—for in his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul elevates marriage to a place of utmost glory when he uses it as an illustration for no less a relationship than that of Christ and His church. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. *Ephesians 5:25–27* The way a husband lays down his life for his wife, and the way a wife submits to her husband is a powerful illustration seen on every street in every neighborhood. Many people aren't into going to church. The Lord brings the church to them through the illustration of marriage wherein people see how much He loves the church and how the church submits to Him. It's an awesome responsibility for all who are married. Unbelievers don't need to see perfection in our marriages—just something remarkably different from what they see in society. Here in 1 Corinthians 7, Paul says singleness has its own unique beauty, its own important role to play in the body. The single state is not to be looked down upon, dreaded, or merely endured. Those who are called to a single life or who find themselves in a single state fulfill a very real function: to serve the Lord with spontaneity and without distraction. Marriage is a picture, but, in a sense, singleness can be the reality—for it is the single person uniquely who can say, “I am married to You, Lord. You are my Husband, my Love, my best Friend. And I will be devoted to you single-heartedly for as long as You have me in this state.” Whether single or married, widowed or divorced—be content wherever God has

v. 38 Let him do what he wishes. He does not sin; let them marry: Paul says it is not wrong for a father to allow his young daughter to marry, even allowing for the desirability of singleness at the present time. However, because singleness has its benefits, Paul will recommend it, not only to individuals, but also to fathers in regard to the marrying off of their daughters. He who gives her in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better.

v. 39 A final reminder regarding the remarriage of widows. Paul reaffirms that marriage is a commitment for life. Yes, a widow has the right to remarry (if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married). But a Christian widow, like any Christian, is really only free to remarry another Christian (only in the Lord).

v. 40 At the same time, Paul believes such a widow is happier if she remains as she is - that is, if she remains single. Essentially, Paul wants the widow not to remarry without carefully considering that God might be calling her to celibacy. If so gifted, the unmarried state can be superior because it offers a person more opportunity to serve God.