

The Big Picture

1 Corinthians 7

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- **PRINCIPLES FOR MARRIED LIFE**

#1: Married believers must not deprive each other of sex.

Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman."² But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.³ The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband.⁴ For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.⁵ Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
1 Corinthians 7:1-5 (English Standard Version)

#2: Christians must avoid divorce; but, if divorced, are not permitted (in most cases) to remarry.

To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband¹¹ (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife.¹² To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.¹³ If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him.¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.¹⁵ But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace.¹⁶ For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 (ESV)

(See Mark 10:3-12; Matthew 19:3-12; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

- **THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE: BELIEVERS ARE TO CONSIDER GOD'S CALLING THEIR MOST IMPORTANT STATUS IN LIFE.**

Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches²⁰Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. 1 Corinthians 7:17, 20 (ESV)

Calling = conversion

The gospel transcends and, therefore, eliminates altogether all social distinctions.

Two Illustrations

Circumcision: *Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. ¹⁹For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God. 1 Corinthians 7:18-19 (ESV)*

Slavery: *Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) ²²For he who was called in the Lord as a bondservant is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a bondservant of Christ. ²³You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men. 1 Corinthians 7:21-23 (ESV)*

- **PRINCIPLES FOR SINGLE LIFE**

(Go to www.lighthousehome.org/searchsermons and search by the following date, 08/26/2012, to find my message, "Quick Start for Single Life," from 1 Corinthians 7:25-40)

#1: Single life is good and best for some Christian adults.

Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. ⁷I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. ⁸To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am. ⁹But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion³⁸So then he who marries his betrothed does well, and he who refrains from marriage will do even better. 1 Corinthians 7:6-9, 38 (ESV)

#2: If single, use wisdom in when you marry and who you marry.

Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. ²⁶I think that in view of the present distress it is good for a person to remain as he is. ²⁷Are you bound to a wife?

*Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman marries, she has not sinned
³⁹A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. ⁴⁰Yet in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I too have the Spirit of God.
1 Corinthians 7:25-28a, 39-40 (ESV)*

#3: Single or married, don't settle down and treat the world as though it will last forever.

*Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that. ²⁹This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, ³⁰and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, ³¹and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.
1 Corinthians 7:28b-31 (ESV)*