



1 Corinthians

MESSY CHURCH
MIGHTY CHRIST

1 Corinthians 7:7-16

7 I wish that all people were as I am. But each has his own gift from God, one person has this gift, another has that.

8 I say to the unmarried and to widows: It is good for them if they remain as I am. 9 But if they do not have self-control, they should marry, since it is better to marry than to burn with desire. ...

10 To the married I give this command—not I, but the Lord—a wife is not to leave her husband. 11 But if she does leave, she must remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband—and a husband is not to divorce his wife. 12 But I (not the Lord) say to the rest: If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. 13 Also, if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce her husband. ...

14 For the unbelieving husband is made holy by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy by the husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy. **15** But if the unbeliever leaves, let him leave. A brother or a sister is not bound in such cases. God has called you to live in peace. **16** Wife, for all you know, you might save your husband. Husband, for all you know, you might save your wife.

Let each one live his life in the situation the Lord assigned when God called him.

— 1 Corinthians 7:17

MAIN IDEA

In 1 Corinthians 7:7–16, Paul presents two callings—singleness and marriage—so that believers will trust God’s grace and live faithfully where He has assigned them.

THE CALLING TO CONTENTED SINGLENES

(vv. 7-9)

I wish that all people were as I am. But each has his own gift from God, one person has this gift, another has that.

— 1 Corinthians 7:7

“7...each has his own gift from God.”

- Both marriage and singleness are gifts from God. They are not spiritual superpowers, but callings God may assign in particular seasons.
- When Paul speaks of a “gift,” he is normally referring to grace-enabled capacities for faithful living and service.

“Spiritual gifts are meant to build up the body of Christ. Obviously, singles are to strengthen the church too—but not by virtue of being single. Rather, singles do it by exercising their spiritual gifts, just like everyone else.”

— Jayne Clark

8 I say to the unmarried and to widows: It is good for them if they remain as I am. 9 But if they do not have self-control, they should marry, since it is better to marry than to burn with desire.

— 1 Corinthians 7:8-9

THE CALLING TO COVENANT FAITHFULNESS

(vv. 10-16)

Two situations in verses 10-16

- In verses 10-11, it is marriage between two believers.
- In verses 12-16, it is marriage between a believer and an unbeliever.

10 To the married I give this command—not I, but the Lord—a wife is not to leave her husband. 11 But if she does leave, she must remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband—and a husband is not to divorce his wife.

— 1 Corinthians 7:10-11

In that day “to leave” was slang for “divorce.”
Meaning, “to leave” in verse 10 and “divorce” in
verse 11 refer to the same thing.

10 To the married I give this command—not I, but the Lord—a wife is not to leave her husband. 11 But if she does leave, she must remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband—and a husband is not to divorce his wife.

—1 Corinthians 7:10-11

12 But I (not the Lord) say to the rest: If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. 13 Also, if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce her husband.

— 1 Corinthians 7:12-13

14 For the unbelieving husband is made holy by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy by the husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy. ... 16 Wife, for all you know, you might save your husband. Husband, for all you know, you might save your wife.

— 1 Corinthians 7:14, 16

15 But if the unbeliever leaves, let him leave. A brother or a sister is not bound in such cases. God has called you to live in peace.

— 1 Corinthians 7:15

The word for “bound” literally means “enslaved.” So literally, if an unbelieving spouse leaves the marriage covenant—abandons it—the believer who is left behind is no longer enslaved to the marriage covenant.

There may be situations where a spouse so persistently destroys the marriage covenant through abuse, violence, manipulation, or abandonment of marital responsibilities over a long period of time that, even if they still physically remain in the home, what is occurring is a kind of functional abandonment.

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