

An aerial, top-down view of a very large, dense crowd of people. The individuals are packed closely together, filling the entire frame. They are wearing a variety of colorful clothing, including blue, red, white, and yellow. The perspective is from directly above, looking down on the crowd.

Singlehood & The Married Life
COMMITTED TO CHRIST:
CONSECRATED IN EVERY CALLING!

1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-24 ESV

DISCUSSION

1. Regarding Paul's instruction on "mutual responsibilities" within marriage (1 Corinthians 7:3-5) what does it look like to prioritize your spouse's needs (physically, emotionally, spiritually) within your marriage? What's one practical step you can take this week to live this out?

(As a single, how can you apply the principle of mutual responsibility in your closest relationships?)

2. The sermon highlighted singleness as a "particular gift from God" that can enable "undivided devotion to the Lord." For those who are single, how do you actively embrace and utilize this gift for God's glory? For those who are married, how can the church better affirm and empower single members to live out their consecrated calling?

DISCUSSION

3. Paul asserts that our 'ultimate identity and freedom are found in our relationship with Christ, not in our earthly status.' How does this truth challenge worldly measures of success, value, or happiness that you might subconsciously hold?

4. The sermon emphasized finding "circumstantial contentment." In what specific area of your life (marriage, singleness, career, etc.) do you find it most challenging to be content, and how might focusing on your "commitment to Christ" help you reframe your perspective in that area?

DISCUSSION

3. The sermon emphasized finding "circumstantial contentment."
In what specific area of your life (marriage, singleness, career, etc.) do you find it most challenging to be content, and how might focusing on your "commitment to Christ" help you reframe your perspective in that area?

1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-24 ESV

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.

⁶ Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. ⁷ I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. ⁸ To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am. ⁹ But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. ¹⁰ To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband ¹¹ (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?

¹⁷ 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 churches. ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God. ²⁰ Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called.

²¹ Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) ²² For 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. ²³ You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men. ²⁴ So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.

3 TRUTHS

1. Matrimonial Matters:

Prioritising Purity & Partnership (7:2, 3, 5)

2. Solitary States:

Embracing God's Unique Unerring Understanding (7:7, 8)

3. Diverse Devotions:

Called to Contentment & Consecration (7:17-24)

1. MARRIAGE MATTERS:

PRIORITISING PURITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

(1 Corinthians 7:2, 3, 5)

MARRIAGE QUOTES

Those who hope for a happy marriage will do well to remember that in a wedding the 'We' comes before the 'I'.

"I have learned that only two things are necessary to keep one's wife happy. First, let her think she is having her way. And second let her have it." Lyndon Johnson

Women who henpecked their husbands are apt to find them with other chicks.

Success in marriage is not so much a matter of finding the right person as it is being the right person.

1. MATRIMONIAL MATTERS:

Prioritizing Purity & Partnership (v 2, 3, 5)

1. City of Corinth

'Sin city'. 1000 temple prostitutes. Sex as a religion. Plato philosophy.

2. Culture of the Roman Empire

Wives as 'contractors', not 'companions'. Many wives. Sex is secondary.

3. Context of Paul's Message

Answering specific questions raised by the church on relations & marriage.

1. MATRIMONIAL MATTERS:

Prioritizing Purity & Partnership (v 2, 3, 5)

A. Conjugal Communion: Mutual Responsibilities, Marital Restraint

- Sexual fidelity, purity & responsibilities within marriage (v2)
- "Let marriage be held in honour among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous." **Heb. 13:4**
- Mutual consideration and sacrifice, serving each other in the relationship (v3)
- Application: cherish & honour one another; prioritise the marriage, communicate openly, pursue mutual submission, satisfaction & holiness

1. Matrimonial Matters:

Prioritising Purity & Partnership (v 2, 3, 5)

B. Conflict Circumstances: Prayerful Pauses, Purposeful Periods (v5)

- Principle grounded in Matthew 6:33, to seek God & His righteousness
- Prioritizing the disciplines of prayer & solitude to strengthen marriage relationship
- Practise mutual agreement
- **Application: Seek God's purposes to guide our decisions**

2. SOLITARY STATES:
EMBRACING GOD'S UNIQUE UNERRING
UNDERSTANDING
(1 Corinthians 7:7, 8)

2. SOLITARY STATES:

Embracing God's Unique Unerring Understanding (v7, 8)

A. Singularly Significant: Gifted Grace, God-Given Guidance (v7)

- Singlehood is a gift from God (v7)
- Singles in the Bible: Jesus, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, Daniel, etc
- Singles are not 2nd-class citizens
- Singlehood is not a problem to be solved but a position to savour & embrace
- Application: F.R.E.E.D.O.M

Singles, Embrace Your F.R.E.E.D.O.M.!

Focus on the Father's will.

Rooted in rich fellowship.

Empowered for effective ministry.

Expressing your unique gifts.

Devoted without distraction.

Open to God's opportunities.

Mission-minded living.

2. SOLITARY STATES:

Embracing God's Unique Unerring Understanding (v7, 8)

B. Widow's Wisdom: Exercising Endurance, Eternal Enthusiasm (v8)

- Good to remain single (v8)
- No pressure to remarry
- Widow/**er's** faith & wisdom is a source of encouragement to others
- Application: share your God stories

3. DIVERSE DEVOTIONS:
CALLED TO CONTENTMENT & CONSECRATION
(1 Corinthians 7:17-24)

3. DIVERSE DEVOTIONS:

Call to Contentment & Consecration (vv17-24)

A. Circumstantial Contentment: Remaining Righteously, Relying Radically (v17)

- Be contented. Where you are right now is where God wants you to be.
- More on contentment in Philippians 4:11-13
- Illustration: Like a symphony orchestra, each instrument has a role to play
- Question: Are you constantly striving for a different life, or seeking to glorify God where you are?

3. DIVERSE DEVOTIONS:

Call to Contentment & Consecration (vv17-24)

B. Slavery's Sanctification: Freed Fully, Fulfilling Faithfully (v21)

- Are we slaves to something? Be free.
- Only Jesus! Pledge your allegiance to Christ!
- Our identity and freedom is found in our relationship with Christ.
- Our service to God is a high calling
- Make your life count for Christ!

1 CORINTHIANS 7:17 MESSAGE

“And don’t be wishing you were someplace else or with someone else. Where you are right now is God’s place for you. Live and obey and love and believe right there. God, not your marital status, defines your life. Don’t think I’m being harder on you than on the others. I give this same counsel in all the churches.”



The CROSS

CONCLUSION

- Marriage relationship is a call and gift from God.
- Be the person God wants you to be for your spouse.
- Singlehood is a gift of God. Use your position to glorify God.
- **Don't let the past hold you down.**
- God intends for you to respond to His call right where you are, right now. Be contented.
- Live your life to the full, for His glory!