

1 Corinthians pt. 7 v.25-40

REF v. 1 - concerning the things which you wrote to me...the church had questions about marriage, and relationships and as we will see a myriad of other things to include eating certain meats, the work of the holy spirit, Paul's TTPs of ministry, and the resurrection.

So Paul gives counsel to the church. In some instances he gives very direct guidance as the Lord Jesus Christ has instructed.

REF. 7:10 - Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord...

In other instances there appears to be some latitude in behavior, he uses his own experience, discretion, and opinion to give godly counsel - with an eye to the practicality and protection of the saints.

REF. 7:6 - I say this as a concession, not as a commandment & 7:40 - ... according to my judgment.

We still have questions about marriage, relationships, what to eat or not eat, how the holy spirit relates to us, TTPs of ministry, and the resurrection. That is why this book is so precious. That is why teaching the entire counsel of God is so important - that we might be fully equipped for every good work and not carried away with every wind of doctrine sweeping through the landscape.

In chapter 7 Paul's main topic is marriage - which actually sprang out of a larger discussion on sexual immorality among the saints. Those teachings are available online to catch up - and they are important.

Continuing in that vein we will wrap up Paul's counsel to the Corinthian church on marriage relationships.

we start in v. 25 - Now concerning virgins - this is more than our concept of virginity or chastity. Think of the virgin marry - young betrothed to another, promised in marriage but not yet married.

typically referred to young women who were unmarried; their parents' responsibility was to find them a good mate - somebody to take care of them. This will become apparent when we get to verse 38 and Paul writes, "so then he who gives her in marriage does well, but he who does not give her in marriage does better."

*I have no commandment from the Lord yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy has made trustworthy - this a topic with some latitude, it is not cut and dry. There will be those who choose to behave on various ends of the spectrum. Additionally, Paul recognizes his role in counsel - do we?

v.26 - present distress - the church was going through some stuff, internally and externally.

In those times don't people make rash decisions - just because we are believers doesn't make us exempt from that. *deployment weddings.

it is good for a man to remain as he is - cool your jets

v.27 - ref. v24 - remain in the stat you are in - don't over spiritualize this one way or the other.

v.28-31 Steady as she goes -

1. there's grace - if you do marry it's all good, amen and be blessed - ref. 7:2 - nevertheless because of sexual immorality let each man have his own wife and let each woman have her own husband. Don't fall into the trap of overestimating your chastity, virtue, and spiritual prowess - we are weak creatures.

2. the time is short - each day on is a day nearer to the Lord's return - act like it! TURN TO - MATT 25:1-13.

3. When Paul says those who have wives should be as they had none - what does that mean? We can say, oh, certainly he is talking about abandonment. Of course he isn't talking about abandoning our families - we have a wonderful teaching on Husabands love your wives as Christ loved the church in Eph 5. BUT HE IS TALKING ABOUT A DELIBERATE ABANDON OF OUR WORLDY CONCERNS IN FAVOR OF FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST. WE NEED TO Remain singularly focused in your devotion and anticipation of the Lord's return. Before you are a husband you are a

follower of Christ. Before you are a wife you are a follower of Christ. Above all of our relationship statuses (even “it’s complicated”) we are followers of Christ with our eyes fixed on the day when Christ returns for his church. Only with that attitude in our hearts are we of any value as a husband, a wife, a friend, a mom or dad, son or daughter.

4. Throw away our bipolar mindset - those who weep don’t weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they do not possess and all summed up in those who use the world as not misusing - because it is all passing away! Remain steady, keep a steady hand and a steady heart in your affairs and relationships. Otherwise our focus is on the world, on our relationships instead of on the Lord.

v.32-35 - Be without cares

32-33 want you to be without care - to not be entangled in the world - REF MATT 13:22 - “Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches chokes the word, and he becomes unfruitful.”

What happened? The hearer received the word but what happened. First off - the cares of this world AND riches choke the world. The first thing Jesus mentions is the cares of this world -which we see all too often.

People are fired up when they get saved, they heard God’s word - it was glorious, they’re fired up. But then what? I’ve got a family to take care of. I’m beat from working 60 hours a week. I’ve got some things to take care of around the house that I’ve neglected. All things I have said to ignore the

call of the Lord Jesus Christ in my own life when he resurrected my lifeless corpse and called me to follow him. The cares of the world choke out our fire, our growth.

It is Paul's thoughtful counsel and advice that these disciples would be unencumbered by these cares. Harmless at first, well intentioned, sometimes with a spiritual subtext (my family is my first ministry) - if our families are our first ministry then they shouldn't be an obstacle to following Jesus but part of that following. Are we truly dedicated to that or is that just something we say because we know nobody will challenge us on it?

If everybody who said that was truly SERVING (not just being by them) their families we would have some of the most spiritually healthy families ever and you know what - healthy sheep make healthy sheep. Those families would be impacting lives! And that is glorious. We all know one or two families like that, who are just getting after it.

v.35 - for your profit, not as a leash - this is Paul's counsel, let's not be legalistic, allow for grace. VICE - 1 TIM 4:3 "forbidding to marry..." that you may serve the Lord without distractions - REF 2 TIM 2:4 "No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier." Get your mind right - distractions kill, the cares of the world will choke us out.

v.36 - REF Mary & Joseph MATT 1:18 ...After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child

of the Holy Spirit. The Joseph her husband (not married yet), being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. — and the complications that followed even in Christ's ministry. (John 8:41 - we were not born of fornication; we have one Father - God)

Be married - it's biblical - don't fall into sin.

v.37 - having no necessity - that's a gift - REF. 7:7-9 *Bill Menner

v.38 - it's okay Dad, but wouldn't it be cool if your daughter grew up to serve the Lord with a singular focus and tenacity? Man, what a blessing - and don't we know our kids would be blessed by that!? But that's not for everybody.

v.39/40 - the legality of marriage and remarriage - ONLY in the LORD - don't be out bar hopping and missionary dating. Marry in the Lord. And Paul's opinion as one filled with the Spirit is that if the widow could maintain a singular focus on Christ instead of romantic relationships she would be happier in that state.

The take-away - Paul's counsel to us is that our focus should be on the Lord no matter what state we are in. We shouldn't necessarily seek to change our status or feel compelled to do so - remain as you are AND fix the intentions of your heart on following after Christ.