

MARRIAGE, SINGLENESS, AND THE QUESTION OF SEX

1 Corinthians 7:1-9

GOD CREATED MARRIAGE BETWEEN A HUSBAND AND WIFE AND IT IS GOOD

- *“Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him.’ ...21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. 22 Then the Lord God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man....24 This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:18-24)*
- **In a world full of statements like “my truth” and “Well, I believe/think...”, it is imperative that we as Christians understand God’s truth regarding marriage and sex.**
- **Marriage is God-designed and therefore it is good, BUT marriage is not a command and thus not for everyone.**

GOD CREATED SEX TO BE BETWEEN A HUSBAND AND A WIFE AND IT IS GOOD

- *“Now in response to the matters you wrote about: ‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’ 2 But because sexual immorality is so common, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman should have sexual relations with her own husband. 3 A husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise a wife to her husband. 4 A wife does not have the right over her own body, but her husband does. In the same way, a husband does not have the right over his own body, but his wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another—except when you agree for a time, to devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again; otherwise, Satan may tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” (1 Corinthians 7:1-5)*
- **The hyper-sexualization of the Corinthian culture, and our culture today, has diminished and distorted the beauty of sex within a God-blessed marriage.**
- **Sex is not a husband’s privilege and a wife’s “duty”; Sex is designed to be a mutually beautiful and intimate act between both the husband and wife that creates oneness.**

SINGLENESS, COUPLED WITH A GENUINE DESIRE FOR ABSTINENCE TO FOCUS SOLELY ON SERVING GOD, IS A SPIRITUAL GIFT FOR SOME, BUT NOT A COMMAND FROM GOD FOR ALL

- *“I say this as a concession, not as a command. 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.” (1 Corinthians 7:6-9)

- **Because we know the Bible does not contradict itself, we must not see Paul’s desire for people to be single as he was as a command.**
- **Some people, like the Apostle Paul, are gifted by God to live single and not have a “burning desire” for sex, so that they can focus solely on serving the Lord.**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Observation:

- What instructions does Paul give to husbands and wives regarding sexual intimacy in verses 3–5? (Note any emphasis on mutuality or shared responsibility.)
- What limits or conditions does Paul place on temporary abstinence within marriage, and why does he give those instructions?
- According to verses 6–9, how does Paul distinguish between a command and a concession, and what does he say about singleness and marriage?

Understanding:

- Why is it important to affirm that marriage and sex are good gifts from God, especially in a culture that either idolizes or distorts them?
- Paul emphasizes mutual authority and responsibility in marriage. How does this challenge cultural or even church-based misunderstandings about power and roles in marriage?
- Paul says singleness can be a gift, not a requirement. How does this help us avoid either idolizing marriage or undervaluing singleness in the church?
- For married believers:
 - How can intentional care for marital intimacy serve not just the relationship, but also spiritual health and faithfulness?
- For single believers:
- What does it look like to pursue holiness, contentment, and purpose in singleness without feeling “less than” or incomplete?
- Paul’s guiding concern is self-control and devotion to the Lord. What practical boundaries or habits help believers live faithfully in their current season of life?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?