

- I) V17-24 INTRO: But as God has distributed **to each one**, as the Lord has called **AS WE'VE SEEN**
Paul has been answering questions concerning **marriage**
WHAT PROMPTED THIS
- II) In the Corinthian church, questions concerning marriage were forming
The opinions included whether it was **better** to be married, or **worse**
- III) He has already said it is good to remain single
He wished that all men were even as he was: single and free to serve
Even so, he knew that each person has a gifting from God: not all are celibates
- IV) **By design**, marriage is intended to meet the need for physical intimacy
Because drives are part of our human nature, marriage is the place to meet them
- V) From there, he went on to speak of the **spiritual** reality of marriage
Some were married to unbelievers and wondered if they should divorce
These kinds of arrangements create a very difficult marriage relationship
- VI) It was difficult, and some wondered if they should divorce and marry a believer
Paul gave the conditions for such a thing
HE SAID
- VII) If the unbeliever desires to **remain married**, the believer is not to divorce
If on the other hand they desire to divorce, Paul said this was permissible
This was because God has called us to live in peace with others
THIS IS WHERE WE PICK UP OUR STUDY
- VIII) He had just said if the unbeliever initiates divorce, to not contest it (V15)
This is because God has not intended for marriages like this to be combative
The believer is not creating the discord, it is coming from the unsaved mate
- IX) Paul deals with this later but now encourages them to be satisfied **where they are**
If they were called while married, they were not to seek divorce
He will apply this to other conditions in a moment
- X) V17 But as **God has distributed** to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so **Distributed** speaks of whatever God has chosen to impart
Whatever may be the circumstances of each person whether single, married, or deserted **because of Jesus**, let them walk in it without seeking a change.

- I) This is in reference to being content in your state of life
Phil 4:11, 13 Not that I speak in respect to need: for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content... *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*
- II) Wiersbe: Real contentment must come from within. You and I can't change or control the world **around** us, but **we can** change and control the world **within** us.
- III) It is the presence of God in our lives that makes us satisfied
You say, "If I had a little more, I should be very satisfied." You make a mistake. If you are not content with what you have, you would not be satisfied if it were doubled.
Pr 27:20 Hell and Destruction are never full; so **the eyes of man** are never satisfied
- IV) Whether single or married, our desire should be to find our contentment in Him
- V) V17 But as God has **distributed** to each one, as the Lord has called each one, so God has imparted His grace to us in whatever situation we are in
Because of this, we should make it our aim to glorify Him
- VI) You do not know if you can influence the unbeliever to be saved
Because of this, do not give up easily or quickly
The key is serving Jesus in whatever circumstances you find yourself in
HE BEGINS
- VII) V18-19: Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised
If you are a Jewish believer, don't try to become like a Gentile
If you are a Gentile believer, don't try to become Jewish
- VIII) Jewish believers need not violate their consciences
Gentiles do not need circumcision
HIS POINT
- IX) As gentile believers, you need not be circumcised
As Jewish believers, you need not be embarrassed by the fact that you are
- X) What matters is your relationship to Christ
Gal 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation
Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh

- I) V19 What matters is the keeping of the commandments of God
Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision determines your relationship to God
What matters is your relationship to God through Jesus
- II) What is the most important commandment
Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved (Jn 3:16)
Ac 4:12 Salvation exists in no one else, for **there is no other name** under heaven
given to men by which we must be saved
- III) The most important command God gives is for us to trust in Jesus, as Savior
Jn 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, **believe also in Me**
- IV) V20 Let each one remain in **the same calling** in which he was called
Learn to serve Jesus exactly where you are
Do not be looking around constantly for something better: remain content in Him
- V) This would be what we are to do individually
As a Christian, remain firmly committed to Jesus, in whatever situation you are in
- VI) V21 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be
Are you presently a slave? Serve Christ in that situation
- VII) Up to half of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves
Many lived under sorrowful conditions and were no more than verbal, living tools
BRIEFLY
- VIII) Paul taught **revolution** through **regeneration**
Christianity destroyed slavery by changing three elements of Roman life
- IX) **First**: Christianity taught that master's and slaves were related, in Jesus Christ
Philemon 16 (Onesimus is) no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as **a dear brother**. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as **a brother in the Lord**
- X) **Second**: Christianity taught slave owner's to have proper attitudes towards slaves
They were to treat them with respect and even give them proper compensation
Col 4:1 Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you
know that you also have a Master in heaven

- I) **Third:** Faith in Jesus gave slaves dignity: They were not human tools, or animals
Their service was to God, and not to their masters
Col 3:22-24 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence **for the Lord**. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as **working for the Lord**, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance **from the Lord** as a reward. **It is the Lord Christ you are serving.**
- II) Paul is saying: Even under these conditions, you are in a place God can bless
Even so: If you can receive your freedom, then by all means, do so
- III) V22 For he who is called in the Lord while a slave **is the Lord's freedman** Likewise
If he is a slave, he should remember he is free in Jesus
Lu 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to
proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim **liberty to the captives** and
recovering of sight to the blind, to set a liberty those who are oppressed
Ro 6:22 you have been **set free** from sin and have become **slaves of God**, (and)
the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.
- IV) Peter said people are slaves to whatever has mastered them (2 Pe 2:19)
Jesus has mastered him, and he now is a slave to Jesus, belonging to Him
Ro 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called an apostle having been set apart for
the gospel of God
- V) Freedom is more than liberty: it is the condition of a human heart
HOW DID HE BECOME CHRIST'S SLAVE
- VI) V23 You were **bought at a price**; do not become slaves of men
Jesus redeemed us, and the price of redemption was His blood
- VII) The NT uses a word that is translated redeemed that speaks of being bought
It speaks of purchasing out of the marketplace of sin
Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and
to open the seals thereof: for You were slain, and **have redeemed** us to God by Your
blood out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation
- VIII) Jesus bought you out of the marketplace of sin, and you are His slave
Jn 8:36 If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed

- I) V23 Do not become slaves of men
Do not think that you are only servants to men: you are servants of God
- II) You are a slave of men if you value men over Jesus
Remember, part of their problem was identifying with Paul, Cephas, or Apollos
- III) V24 Leach one remain with God in that calling in which he was called
Do not be looking to constantly change your situation hoping to improve it
It is in the place of stability that you hear the voice of the Lord most clearly
- IV) V25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment from the Lord yet I give
Jesus gave no *specific* teaching concerning unmarried Christians
With this in mind, Paul addresses the value of being unmarried
- V) V26 I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress that it is
What is he referring to when he speaks of the **present distress** (calamity)
- VI) **First**: It can be general distress created by the world's system, making life difficult
It is hard for one to live a devoted life for Jesus but is much more difficult for two
- VII) **Second**: It may speak of persecution
It is hard when you are hurt, but is much worse when your loved ones are
Christianity often leads to suffering in the lives of its followers (Moses Paulose)
- VIII) QUOTE: Never did the church so much prosper and so truly thrive as when she was baptized in blood. The ship of the church never sails so gloriously along as when the bloody spray of her martyrs falls on her deck. We must suffer and we must die, if we are ever to conquer this world for Christ.
- IX) V27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed (free)
Are you committed in marriage? Remain married and serve Jesus
Are you loosed (unmarried)? Live for Jesus and don't seek after a wife
- X) V28 But even if you do marry you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries
I am not saying it is a sin to marry: it is simply easier to serve if you are not
- XI) Marriage brings with it priorities and distractions, including children

- I) V29 But this I say brethren the time is short so that from now on even those
Under all circumstances, live sold-out lives for Jesus: **The time is short**
Eph. 5:16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.
1 Pet. 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore, be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.
- II) V30 those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as those
Because the times are so difficult, keep your eyes on your heavenly reward
Do not become overly concerned with the circumstances you find yourself in
- III) V30 those who buy as though they did not possess
Do not become overly dependent on the things that you own
The things you own, though giving pleasure, are at best only temporary
- IV) V31 those who **use this world** as not misusing it For the form of this world is
Do not become over dependent on the things you can properly own
- V) Don't become slaves to your possessions
They are all temporary, going out of fashion
SUMMARIZATION
- VI) To those who are married: Keep seeking kingdom first, not self-satisfaction
To live a blessed life under trying pressure, seek the kingdom first, together
Keep Jesus your first love, and all other relationships second
- VII) **Second**: Live moderate, balanced, and sober lives
1 Th 5:8 But let us, who are of the day, *be sober*, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.
- VIII) **Third**: Those who buy as though they did not possess
Remember that what you buy is not a lasting possession, but only temporary
Mt 6:31-33 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- IX) **Fourth**: Remember, the form of this world is passing away
We should not live as if we are going to miss the world when we are in heaven

I) The **form** of this world is passing away

Schema: fashion, manner of life, way of doing things: It is impermanent

1 Jn 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

II) None of these things are necessarily bad, but **they can** derail your walk with Jesus
Keep things in the proper perspective

Heb. 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you"