

# Marriage and Singleness Outline

## *1st Corinthians 7*

- I. The banner over our passage.
  - A. (6:20) **For you were bought with a price therefore, glorify God with your body.**
    - 1. By living His “ideals”—God’s standards.
      - a. **“Be holy for I am holy...”** Purity.
  - B. Our problem? Romans 3:23
  - C. Remember our God is a God of grace—there is forgiveness in our failures.
- II. Corinthian Culture and the church.
  - A. Marriage, the view of women, the roles of men and women, sexual morality, all were the direct opposite of the Christian views.
    - 1. The Corinthian church wrestled with their former pagan culture and their new Christian values.
  - B. Greco-Roman marriage arrangements in the first century.
    - 1. **Contubernium**—slave owner relationship.
    - 2. **Usus**—common law marriage.
    - 3. **Coemptio in Manum**—A father would sell his daughter for profit.
    - 4. **Confarreatio**—Upper class marriage—the only one with a ceremony.
  - C. Corinthian church struggles.
    - 1. Glorifying God with their lives/bodies in such a pagan culture.
    - 2. Perhaps it would be better to never marry to avoid sexual immorality.
    - 3. Perhaps it would be good to divorce your unbelieving spouse—to avoid defilement.
    - 4. So the church writes a letter to the apostle Paul with questions—verse 1
- III. The “questions” and Paul’s answers.
  - A. (v.1) **It is good for a man not to touch a woman** = It is not bad...
    - 1. If you can live life single without having sexual needs, stay single.

2. If you can't live life single without having sexual needs, get married!
    - a. ALL sexual fulfillment is confined in marriage to one person.
  - B. Having sex in marriage does not make you impure—It's God's design.
  - C. Each spouse has a sexual "duty" to each other—to remain pure.
    1. Each spouse has authority over the other's body (v.4).
    2. (v.5) **Do not deprive one another**—could lead to sexual immorality.
  - D. Singleness is a "gift" from God. Marriage is a "gift" from God.
  - E. (v.8) Unmarried (divorced) and widows should stay single—if they have the gift, if not, they should marry.
  - F. (v.10) The married?—should not get divorced—you are 'bound' to one another.
  - G. (v. 12) Should a believing spouse leave her unbelieving spouse?—Not if the unbeliever is willing to remain married.
    1. The unbeliever and children are "sanctified"?
    2. If they want to leave?—let them leave!
- VI. A principle for all of us...*Everyone should remain in the situation in which he or she was called...* (v. 17).
- A. All of us should live out our lives as God has assigned.
- V. The never-married—the virgins (male and female)
- A. Better to remain single (an opinion not a command).
    1. Because of the "present distress".
      - a. Most likely referring to the ending of the age (Luke 21).
- VI. In light of all this.
- A. Marriage and singleness is a gift, they are important in this world BUT they are temporary (vs. 29-31).
  - B. The most important thing is to glorify your Lord!

**“For the form of this world is passing away!”**

**1st Corinthians 7:31**

## Marriage and Singleness Pastoral Notes

### *1st Corinthians 7*

This morning we are picking up where we left off before the Easter break... we are in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians chapter seven... This is a difficult passage... yet it is so straight forward and practical... it is a difficult passage because if you misunderstand even one word you could miss the truth God wants us to know... or even worse... you could be led to living a life in great error...

I've spent much time on getting the words right... I confirmed my conclusions through many reputable seasoned theologians yet there are disagreements in areas...

Also difficult in the sense of difficult to hear and embrace... some may not want to hear what Paul has written... these words may be difficult for you to hear let alone employ into your lives... they may disturb you... they may trouble you... you may have already blown it... you may be about to blow it... and now it is in front of you.

It's about marriage... it's about intimacy within marriage and ONLY in marriage... it's about divorce... it's about singleness... it is a chapter written for everyone in this room this morning... all of you fall into some part of chapter seven... at least some time in your life.

So before we get into it... let's understand a few things... the last verse we looked at a several weeks ago was verse 20 of chapter 6... a vital verse... it truly is the connecting verse between chapter six to what we will see here in chapter 7.

(20) **For you were bought with a price:** Christian... you are not your own... Jesus paid for you by His blood on the cross... He purchased you out of eternal damnation for your sin... He paid the price for you **therefore glorify God in your body.** *Glorify God in your body*.... Hang those words as a banner over everything we will be looking at this morning... Paul's message to us is for us... **to glorify God in all of life but specifically here... IN YOUR BODY.**

We have not been left to figure out that on our own... This book reveals to us God's *ideals* for us... His standards for how we are to live our lives **SO THAT WE MAY GLORIFY HIM**... **To glorify God is to live by His standards... to live lives that please Him**... it is **to be holy for I am holy... to be pure in your life for I am pure... to be unblemished by sin for I am completely without blemish.**

God has designed us... He has created us... He has equipped us for life... and He has revealed to us how all of life works best... following His plans... He designed a man and a woman to have complimentary physical parts... [if you don't know what a woman is I could show you pictures] He has designed and created man and woman to actually interlock into One flesh... it all fits!

And He hasn't left us in the dark as to how to operate within His design.... And if we follow His ideals... operating our lives, including our bodies... the way He designed us... we will glorify Him... Problem?... Romans 3:23... **for ALL have sinned and fallen short of what?... the glory of God.**

Paul says **glorify God in our bodies...** Paul also says we all fall short of this...we all do.

That verse troubles me and comforts me... **it troubles me** that the entire world... all people are so self-ish... so self-centered that we can have this amazing book... God's revelation revealing to us how it all was designed... how it all was designed to work... He even provides us with the power to live it... and yet... we choose to ignore it... refuse it and do things our way.... That should trouble us.

But it also **comforts me**... I am so thankful that that verse **says ALL** have sinned... there's comfort knowing I'm not the only wretch out there... Every one is as messed up as everyone else...and that is comforting!...we're all pathetic.... see... even that is selfish!

All that to say that what we are looking at in chapter seven.... AND all the way to the end of this epistle 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians... are God's ideals... His standards for us to operate in this world... HIS WORLD... glorifying Him.... The fact is... we all fall short of living by His ideals.... These ideals in chapter seven are no exception.... **Remember that our God is a God of grace... there is forgiveness to believers for our failures.**

Chapter seven is long... 40 verses... we could break it down into four or five Sundays... and dive deep into each of the subjects which could be very beneficial... I thought long and hard on what would be the best approach for us to get the truth God through the apostle Paul wants us to get.... I decided to take a more areal shot and see more of the forest than the trees....and do the whole chapter this morning. [Pos. of a marriage seminar or class....].

Again... **Paul's goal here is for us to live pure lives... lives that glorify God...**

What has been true throughout this epistle... we must understand some things about the immediate audience that the apostle Paul was writing to... the Corinthian Church and the culture it exists in... this is especially essential in understanding chapter seven.

We've seen that the Corinthian culture was a pagan culture... the church Paul established in Corinth came out of that pagan culture...they had no concept of godly living let alone what a godly marriage would look like...

Here's a few snapshots of the Corinthian view of marriage...wives and husbands.

- The most important goal for marriage was to make children... procreate. Sexual pleasure and satisfaction often came outside of marriage (as far as the man was concerned).

- Here's a description of the "ideal wife" written in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century... *The ideal wife was one who does not cheat on her spouse, who does not reject his friends, who does not leave behind his gods for foreign religions, and who does not make a public spectacle of herself but manages his household*....expectations of the wife! Husbands not so much.
- Greco-Roman wives were expected to obey their husbands in all things. The husband had the same power over his wife as he did with his children.
- Wives were not allowed to go outdoors except to attend important events, and then only when accompanied by male relatives. (husbands and slaves did all the shopping)
- Women/wives were to remain silent except to address their husbands.
- A wife converting to Christianity was a major problem in a Corinthian marriage...both for the man and the woman...actually, as we will see in the future... it was a problem for all women.
- Divorce was VERY easy by the 1<sup>st</sup> century. A man could divorce his wife for any reason. And did not have to declare it... get this... it was common for Corinthians to be married and divorced 20 times OR MORE! (reveals the value of marriage)
- A word about sexual promiscuity... EVERYTHING was tolerated in the Corinthian culture when it came to sexual practices... none of these were considered as deviant behavior: adultery, homosexuality, cross dressing, polygamy, prostitution.... And other practices I won't describe here!

A word about marriage "arrangements".... There were four marriage situations in Corinth:

1. **Contubernium**—slave owner relationship... slaves were known as "tent companions" {enough!}
2. **Usus**—we would call common law marriage... if two lived together for six years they could be considered as legally married....this was the marriage arrangement for commoners.
3. **Coemptio in Manum**—A father would sell his daughter to a prospective husband to make money.... Didn't matter how the daughter felt about it all!

4. **Confarreatio Con-far-areato**—this is the big one... marriage for the privileged class...the noble class... this is important because this is the marriage situation that began with a ceremony... listen to this....1<sup>st</sup> century Greco-Roman

- The bride's parents paid for the wedding....now I know who to blame.
- There was a "brides maid" and a "groom's man"... this is where all that originated.
- The groom would wait for the bride to walk down the aisle...wearing a veil... everyone would stand... the bride would be the center of attention... sound familiar?...

This would have been odd to a Jew like the apostle Paul.... who was the center of attention in the Jewish wedding?...the brideGROOM.... [we can pinpoint when everything went wrong!]

- Bride and groom would hold hands at an altar and prayed prayers to the gods of Jupiter and Juno... and guess what they exchanged?... rings!

Ancient Roman literature reveals that a man named Aulus Gellius cut up a cadaver and discovered a nerve that ran from the third finger on the left hand directly to the heart...so... the ring should be put on the third finger of the left hand.....

and they celebrated by eating what?.... a cake!... this is how it all started... pagan rituals!... the Roman Catholic church picked up the traditions and now we do it today!...

The important thing to remember for us this morning concerning this passage... is that Marriage was a mess in Corinth... sexual immorality was rampant... the view of women was very, very low....

So this church... the Corinthian church is struggling with that whole idea of glorifying God in their lives... living pure lives... some concluded that you shouldn't get married so as to avoid sexual immorality..... it would be better to remain single...

Others who were married were wondering what they should do to remain pure... some were married before they became Christians and now there are mixed marriages... should they remain married to each other?.... unequally yoked together?

All kinds of questions!.... so what did the church do?.... they wrote Paul a letter with all their questions on how to live the God glorifying Christian life... Paul is in Ephesus and has been away from them for five or so years.... but they write to them their questions....

Chapter seven.... And all the way to the end of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians is Paul answering them.... he's not so much preaching as he is teaching them..... this is why he says in verse 1 **Now concerning the things about which you wrote...**

Referring to the letter of questions he received...important!...what Paul now says is not an exhaustive treatise on marriage, divorce and singleness... Paul is simply answering their questions.... The Bible has much to say on these subjects... it's not all in this chapter.

What did they write?.... Most think what follows was the first question from the Corinthians...(1) **it is good for a man not to touch a woman...**It's like *Jeopardy*... that's the answer so guess the question?!... the question would be *Are normal physical relations between a man and woman wrong?... would that lead to impurity?*

Some in the church concluded that to avoid impurity...one should embrace a form of asceticism.... No one should have sexual relations... even if you are married... "*Don't touch!*"... no surprise at this conclusion... looking around their culture at the wretched sexual practices going on.

Some think that they are Paul's instructions... **It is good for a man not to touch a woman...** [this is why we have to be careful in interpretation]...this is not a mandate for being celibate...

But as in *It's not evil for a man not to touch a woman*... It's "good"... not evil... It's good not bad.... The idea that Paul is not advocating celibacy as better than being married... what he is saying is it is *good* to remain single... **it's NOT BAD to remain single**....it's a "good thing."

**BUT.... (2) because of sexual immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.**

If you can live life without any sexual needs... you don't need a spouse... stay single it's a good thing.... but it is NOT a good thing if you will fall to sexual temptation as a single... so get married... that's a good thing.

One of my commentaries lists six biblical reasons for marriage...if you read the entire Bible, Genesis to Revelation... you can put together a doctrine of marriage that includes six reasons for it.

1. **Procreation**—Genesis 1:28 **Be fruitful and multiply.**
2. **Pleasure**—that's good news!...
3. **Purity**
4. **Provision**—you take a wife in order to protect her and care for her, provide for her.
5. **Partnership**—"It was not good for man to be alone... You need a helper..."
6. **A picture of Christ in the church**—Ephesians 5

All six of those reasons would have been hard for the Corinthian culture to grasp... radical change for that church!..... the third one in the center... is "**purity**"...what Paul is showing us... it is good to stay single... if you can stay pure single.... Stay single... it is good.... But if you can't stay pure....get married!

All... ALL sexual fulfillment is limited to be within marriage...

- Sexual desire is confined in marriage to one person.
- Sexual need is committed to the loving care of your spouse.

**THE WHOLE POINT IS TO GLORIFY GOD IN YOU BODY BY STAYING PURE**... if you are married... having sexual relations with your spouse does not make you impure... it is God's design!...in fact...

### Read verse 3

Sexual relationship between husband and wife is not just ok... each of you have a *duty* to each other!...a duty... **a moral or legal obligation; a responsibility**...why?... because sexual temptation is so, so strong... more than most realize... that any kind of withholding from each other can result in sinful sexual temptation...and practice.

So each have a duty to sexually satisfy each other.. why?..... **to remain pure!**...to glorify God in your body... there are many reasons for the success of the pornography industry... one of them is sexual dissatisfaction between spouses.... There are many reasons for infidelity in marriage.... But one them often is sexual dissatisfaction between spouses.

Each spouse has a “duty” to fulfill each other sexually... in fact it's greater than just “duty”... each of you has **authority OVER each other's body!**

### Read verse 4

Those were radical words back then... in a culture where a woman had no authority over ANYTHING!...in marriage you are to protect your spouse from being sinfully sexually tempted....

(5) **Stop depriving one another...** how often?... how long am I supposed to do this?.... once a month?... **all the time?**.... **ALL THE TIME EXCEPT by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come back again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.**

By agreement... you both are agreeing to pause.... But not for very long!...let's move along!...(7) **Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am...**how is Paul?.... here he is single... meaning he is celibate... abstaining from both marriage and all sexual relations...Paul *wishes* everyone could be as he was... he had no need for sexual relations!.... He could stay single AND be pure...

Paul is obviously single here but most think that Paul had been married... before he became a Christian he was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin...one of the requirements for the Sanhedrin was they had to be married.

Paul probably then was at one time married... most likely his wife died and he is now a widower... some say she might have left him after his conversion... a divorce... probably not....



Whatever... now he no longer NEEDS a wife.... He's celibate.... Important... notice he says (7) I wish that all man were even as I myself am, **However each man has his own gift from God, one this way, and another that.**

Singleness without any need to marry... without any sexual needs is a "gift from God"... it's a gift!..... but should you marry... because you desire to remain pure.... That also is a gift of God... have you considered your marital status...whatever it is to be a gift from God?

Neither one is superior to the other... they are both gifts...next question begins in verse 8.

### **Read verse 8**

Arguments flow as to who the "unmarried" are... getting this wrong would not be good!...some say it refers to simply "single people"...kind of vague... after much study I've concluded that the "unmarried" are the divorced... those who have been married but got a divorce...

Down in verse 11 talking about a wife leaving her husband... divorcing him... she is to remain what?... **unmarried**.... Her new status is "unmarried".... And down in verse 34 Paul makes a distinction between one who is "unmarried" and one who is a virgin.... One who never has been married.

So two previously married individuals are now not married... one by the death of her husband, a widow.... And one through divorce... the unmarried... Paul says **It is good for them if they remain even as I..... single.**

It's good to be single!... if you can stay single and not need a spouse...stay single!...just think about how you can serve the Lord!... think of all the undisturbed time you would have?... look over to verse 32

### **Read verses 32-35**

There is a tension between the world and heaven.....stay single and you can concentrate on pleasing the Lord.....BUT!...this is to widows and the unmarried...divorced.

### **Read verse 9**

So...**It is good to be single**... think of all the time you would have to serve your Lord..... but if you can't be single and not fall to sexual temptation.... Get married....**It is good to be married**...if you've been married...but you lost your spouse... or you are divorced.... Stay single... **that is good!** ...BUT if you might fall to temptation... **get remarried**.... That is better than going through the rest of your life obsessed with passion.... Not able to even think about ministry!

**What about if you are married?**.. any advice Paul?... some in the Corinthian church were wondering if it would be better to get a divorce because since they became a Christian... and

their spouses did not.... The unbelieving spouse might “defile” the believing spouse... the idea of being “unequally yoked”.

So Paul... what do you say?

(10) **But to the married I give instructions, not I but the Lord...** stop there... a couple verses later.. verse 12 Paul says **But to the rest I say, not the Lord...** you can get messed up if you think these mean, one is only Paul’s opinion and you don’t have to take it as God’s word because it says **I say, not the Lord...** But when he says **not I but the Lord...** you’d better listen up.

When Paul says **not I, but the Lord...** what he’s doing is thinking about everything he knows that Jesus said and He refers to that as “*the Lord said this*”.... When He says **I say, not the Lord...** he mentally searched everything he knows regarding what the Lord said and what he is about to share with us is not in the record...

It’s all still the authoritative word of God... Paul had the authority being an apostle... **But to the married I give instructions, not I but the Lord... that the wife should not leave her husband.**

**Read verse 11**

The Lord said all that... where?... Matthew 5... Matthew 19... Mark 10... we can actually clear the divorce question fairly quickly... Matthew 19... the words of Jesus.

**3 Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?” 4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no person is to separate.”...did you get that?... **WHAT GOD JOINED TOGETHER... I thought we put it together!****

**7 They \*said to Him, “Why, then, did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?” 8 He \*said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. In other words... yes... divorce became common but that is NOT the way God designed marriage or wanted it to become... 9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, **except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.**”**

You become ONE flesh in marriage... you are bonded to each other... not only that... but God put the marriage together.... how can you tear that apart?... a truly great book by Glen Scrivener called *The Air We Breathe* comments on Matthew 19.

He says...*according to Jesus, then, sex has two possible meanings. Within marriage,, sex is your body's way of remaking wedding vows: till death do us part. Outside of marriage... sex is taking a sledgehammer to a union forged by God himself. Here is an incredibly high view of sex.*

By the way... do you remember how Jesus's disciples responded to Him after He spoke those words in Matthew 19?... **The disciples said to him, 'if this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry'.**

Paul's instruction to those who are married?... stay married... do not get divorced... God hates divorce...He lists ONE exception for divorce... sexual immorality...sex outside of marriage.

Paul adds to this by answering another question... we can guess the question to be "***should they divorce their unbelieving spouse***" ... they were most likely throwing all kinds of biblical principles in the pot... *do not mix the clean with the unclean... do not be unequally yoked ...do not associate with the heathens for they will defile you...*

Some of you may be married to an unbeliever... easy?

#### **Read verses 12-13**

That answered their question "*should they divorce their unbelieving spouse*" but why?

#### **Read verse 14**

This is interesting...if not astonishing... you stay with your unbelieving spouse because the unbelieving spouse has been *sanctified* through the believing spouse....so...the "unclean" person does NOT defile the "Clean" person... rather the opposite...

This is not saying that the holiness of the Christian spouse gives salvation to the unbelieving spouse... it does mean that God's grace that is being poured out over the believing spouse will flow over to the unbelieving spouse.... All the way to the children.... [used to support infant baptism]

The amazing blessings God makes available to the believer...flows over to the unbeliever "creates a purer, cleaner, lovelier home"

#### **Read verse 15**

Your unbelieving spouse wants to leave... wants a divorce... let him go!...you are no longer bound to that person...the union is broken... and you are free to remarry.... "*well, I'm not going to let him go! I'm going to drive him nuts until he decides to accept Jesus...I'm going to be his greatest nightmare until he falls on his knees and begs Jesus for forgiveness....*

So you both fight for the next twenty years... Paul says... *let him go! God has called us to peace.*

Why does Paul counsel this?

### Read verse 16.

“*Marriage is not an evangelistic tool!*” You can’t save anyone... only God can and does....you’re not going to save your unbelieving spouse by becoming a thorn in his

So... **It is good to be single**... think of all the time you would have to serve your Lord..... but if you can’t be single and not fall to sexual temptation.... Get married.... **It is good to be married**...if you’ve been married...but you lost your spouse... or you are divorced.... Stay single... **that is good!** ...BUT if you might fall to temptation... get remarried.... That is better than going through the rest of your life obsessed with passion....

If you are **married**... stay married... don’t divorce... God joined you together...if you are **married to an unbeliever**... stay with them, don’t divorce them... if they leave... let them leave... stay single and work for the Lord... BUT if you might fall to temptation... get **remarried**.... That is better than going through the rest of your life obsessed with passion

If the purpose of this chapter is to get us to glorify God in our bodies... to live pure lives... the main principle underlying this whole discussion is found in verses 17-24... this is simple and straightforward...

Paul teaches this to all his churches... this is worthy of highlighting...

### Read verse 17

The principle for all of us...*Everyone should remain in the situation in which he or she was called...*

### Read verse 20...24

***All of us should live out our lives as God has assigned...***When we get our salvation... we don’t need to change our social status... we don’t need to get rid of our spouses to get new ones... we are to be content in our life’s circumstances.... You don’t give up your physical relationship with your spouse... ***If you were a Jew and were circumcised... and you find Jesus and make Him your Lord... should you get uncircumcised?***... I can’t even imagine that!...***If you are a slave... and you’ve come to Jesus...stay a slave... it doesn’t matter... [if you can become free do so!] but your status as slave does not have any bearing on who you now belong to... you are the Lord’s!***

Oh!... One other group we have not talked about... what about the always been single group?... the never having been married group.... The never been in a physical relationship group?...

### Read verses 25-26

A virgin can be either a male or female... most of the time female... “*stay as you are*”... don’t get married... it is good to stay as you are... a virgin.....single....**because of this present distress...**

We don’t know exactly what the present distress is...some think it was an intense drought... remaining single during a severe drought might be wise...it might be referring to the coming persecution of the Christians that took place under Domitian around this time...

It also could simply be referring to... and I think it is... the nearness of the end of all things... I think the apostle is looking down the timeline... between the first coming and the impending second coming of Jesus and in light of that....maybe it would be better to remain single....

### **Read verses 27-28**

In the gospel of Luke... Luke talks about the signs of Christ’s return... the last days will be very distressing...

### **Read sections of Luke 21: 10-13 16-17....23**

#### ***Great distress upon the land.***

So in light of all this... “how should we then live?”...Paul helps us with some profound words... let’s close with this... in light of “**the present form of this world is passing**... the eminent return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...how should we live?

[You know the phrase “Live like there is no tomorrow”?... today is the most important thing... eat, drink and be marry.....well... this is exactly the opposite:

### **Read verse 29**

This doesn’t cancel out everything we just said... what this says is that even **marriage is momentary**...it’s over at death!... there is no marriage in the resurrection of our bodies... wives...husbands... YOU ARE SECOND PRIORITIES..... CHRIST IS NUMBER ONE....Our marriages are all about glorifying HIM!

If you have a deeply disappointing spouse.... Don’t be hurt that much...it’s temporary!... a famous C.S. Lewis quote often gets misquoted... “*If you’re married you have two choices... enjoy it or endure it...*” actually he said”

*“The truth is that wherever a man lies with a woman, there, whether they like it or not, a transcendental relation is set up between them which must be eternally enjoyed or eternally endured.”*  
— C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters

Marriage is temporary... it comes to an end.... And then there is the most “never-disappointing life” for eternity....the time is short.

(30) **and those who cry, as though they did not cry...** we all mourn over our great losses... we cry when we are hurt... we cry when we lose our dreams... But we... as Christians... with our hope placed completely in Jesus Christ cry... yes we do... but we cry as though not crying.

**...and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice...**there are thousands of good things that come down from God that stirs our hearts with great joy...delicious food... beautiful days... God's beautiful creation...and someone to share it all with....

But none of those good things can satisfy the soul... not even the best this world has to offer... cannot replace what we were made for... to be glorifiers of our Lord!... **so we rejoice... as though we did not rejoice.**

**...and those who buy...**and we do!... we buy!...we buy as **though they had no goods...** we do not withdraw from the market place... we do business in this world... but all our “getting” and all our “having” in this world are not ultimately important...

All we possess... we possess with a loose grip... we are not here to possess...we are here to store up treasures in heaven!... this world does matter... but it falls short of the ultimate!...John Piper said of this world:

*“It is the stage for living in such a way as to show this world is not our God but that Christ is our God...It is the stage for using the world to show that Christ is more precious than the world.”*

(31) **and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it...** we deal with the world... we must... there is no avoiding it!... we plant gardens and pull the weeds... we wear coats in January...we work hard in our jobs... we struggle to keep things in good repair and all together...

We use the world... but it is not the end... our bodies labor... but our hearts are with Jesus!...why?.... (31b) **For the form of this world is passing away!**