

SEX, MARRIAGE, AND SINGLENESS

Broken Yet Beloved Message Series Week 6

1 Corinthians 7

October 19, 2025

Pastor Jeff Burkholder

A. How do we navigate through the complexities and challenges of sex in healthy ways that honor God?

By recognizing God intended sex to be a selfless act between a husband and wife. (1 Corinthians 7:1-9; Philippians 2:3-4)

“My mate’s body is God’s gift to me, and my body is God’s gift to my mate. Such gifts should be honored and treated with love, care, and respect. They are also to be enjoyed!”

Daniel L. Akin and James Merrit, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in 1 Corinthians*, B&H Publishing Group, Brentwood, TN, 2023, p. 139.

B. How do we navigate through the complexities and challenges of marriage in healthy ways that honor God?

By persevering in our marriages, even when it’s hard. (1 Corinthians 7:10-16, 29)

“‘Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.’ There is a permanence to marriage that we ignore at great peril to ourselves, our families, and our society.”

Daniel L. Akin and James Merrit, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in 1 Corinthians*, B&H Publishing Group, Brentwood, TN, 2023, p. 142.

C. How do we navigate through the complexities and challenges of being single in healthy ways that honor God?

By using your freedom to serve the Lord.
(1 Corinthians 7:25-35)

“Now Paul is *not* saying that it’s better to be single because then you can *really* please God, as if having a spouse and pleasing God were at odds. In fact, anytime we see a sharp divide between ‘spiritual’ and ‘worldly’ things, it’s because we’re bringing baggage to the text that doesn’t belong there. But what did Paul mean? Think about it this way. One thing that pleases God is when we care for others—and not just our families. And when you’re single, you have a certain freedom to do this that you don’t have when you’re married.”

Stephen Um, *1 Corinthians*, Crossway, Wheaton IL, 2015, pp. 145-146.

D. How do we navigate through the complexities and challenges of both singleness and marriage in healthy ways that honor God?

By looking to find contentment in Christ rather than changing your circumstances. (1 Corinthians 7:17-27; Philippians 4:11-13)

“Both singleness and marriage parade themselves around as ultimate, promising to give you everything your heart desires. But it’s all a charade. And now that Christ has come, the jig is up. They’re both being unmasked for what they really are—good, but not ultimate, not everything. They’ll always let you down. But he will never do that to you. Even when he was staring death square in its dark face, he refused to let you go. He refused to let you down. And when you know a love like that, it gives you a freedom to handle it all, to handle anything that comes your way.”

Stephen Um, *1 Corinthians*, Crossway, Wheaton IL, 2015, p. 148.

A Prayer for Contentment

Oh Lord, You are my shepherd and I should not be in want, but so often I struggle to be content and do want; forgetting that you have graciously provided me with every spiritual blessing in Christ and everything I need for life and godliness.

Thank you for often not giving me what I want because my desires would draw my heart from being satisfied in You.

Help me to be content in You with what You have given me and to not be focused on what my flesh wants or what the world tells me I should have.

Protect me from coveting possessions or people, talent or influence, relationships or prestige.

Keep my heart from being anxious for what I don't have and make me thankful for the numerous gifts that You have already given.

According to Your Word and steadfast love, fill me with the joy and satisfaction of contentment in Christ. Help me learn to be content in any situation like Paul and to quickly reject the idolatry that dwells beneath the surface of my covering.

I ask you to continually bring to mind your faithful provision for all my needs, that Christ died for the sin of coveting, that in Christ I am free to be content and live righteously, and that godliness with contentment is greater gain than pleasing my flesh.

And may I be humbled and changed by the ultimate example of contentment; of Christ becoming poor in order that I could become rich, and being content to go to the cross to fulfill the Father's will to rescue a people for Himself who can be free from discontent and zealous for good works.

A prayer by Kevin Hollaran, kevinhollaran.net, March 14, 2016.

Resources:

Books:

- *Surviving a Spiritual Mismatch in Marriage* by Lee and Leslie Strobel
- *The Meaning of Marriage* by Tim and Kathy Keller
- *Remarriage After Divorce in Today's Church: 3 Views* by Paul Engle and Mark Strauss
- *The Married Guy's Guide to Great Sex* by Clifford and Joyce Penner
- *Enjoy! The Gift of Sexual Pleasure for Women* by Clifford and Joyce Penner

Articles:

- *10 Things You Should Know About Marriage* by Paul David Tripp (crossway.org)
- *Single but not Lonely: Living Well While Unmarried* by John Lee (desiringgod.org)

Podcast:

- *Sick of Singleness and Satisfied by Christ* by John Piper (Ask Pastor John podcast)

Website:

- House on the Rock Family Ministries: hotrfm.org