

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

1 Corinthians 7:1-24

Lesson 11

In this section Paul begins to answer questions raised by the Corinthians in a letter they had written him. The entire chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians deals with marriage and singleness. God has intentions for both. May your study of this lesson produce in you a deep desire to live according to God's intentions in the place of His calling on your life.

DAY ONE: Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-24

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheets and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they were about?

a. 1 Corinthians 7:1-24 has been divided into five sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 1-2

Verses 3-6

Verses 7-9

Verses 10-16

Verses 17-24

How would you title each section? Record your titles on the **Chapter & Paragraph Division Titles Chart** provided with your Observation Worksheet.

2. At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

Used in prior homework lessons: *God, Jesus, Paul, and the recipients of the letter.*

New to this lesson: *man/husband, woman/wife, marry/married, believe/believer, unbeliever, and called*

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 1 Corinthians 7:1-24. Remember, as you mark the words *God, Jesus, and Paul*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to them. You do not need to mark every word that refers them – only those that you feel are significant.

3. Using the chart provided with your Observation Worksheets, add any information you feel is pertinent about the **Author(s)**, the **Recipients, Problems, and Commands**.

4. Paul uses the term *likewise* three times in this section of 1 Corinthians 7. This term links two statements together. It compares one thought with another. Mark the word *likewise* in verses 3, 4, and 22. Record the comparison that Paul was making in each verse. For example, for verse 4, you might write something like: "In the same way that the wife does not have authority over her body, but the husband does, so the husband does not have authority over his body but the wife does."

DAY TWO: Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-6

1. Similar to our own society, the Corinthian culture was contrary to God's plan. The Corinthian believers were confused as to what part the sexual relationship had in their life. Paul begins verse 1 with the statement that *it is good for a man not to touch* (with sexual or impure motives) *a woman*. Nevertheless, what is God's alternative to *sexual immorality*.
2. Why must we avoid *sexual immorality*?
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:9
 - b. Ephesians 5:3
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 4:3
 - d. Add other Scriptures if you desire.
3. Rather than commit sexual immorality, some people have gone to the other extreme and declared sex in any situation to be wrong. What does the Bible say about the sexual relationship within marriage?
 - a. Genesis 2:24
 - b. Hebrews 13:4
4. How does Scripture differ with the philosophy of sex prevalent in the world today?
5. According to 1 Corinthians 7:3, what are the husband and wife to *render* to each other?
6. Verse 4 speaks of the fact that in marriage our bodies are not our own.
 - a. To whom does the wife's body belong?
 - b. To whom does the husband's body belong?
7. How does 1 Corinthians 7:4 correct common problems in marriage? Compare with Ephesians 5:21,22.

8. What can be the result of *depriving* your spouse? verse 5
 - a. In what ways might satan use times of *deprivation* as an opportunity for temptation?
9. For what spiritual purpose does Paul say it is permissible to abstain from sexual relations in marriage? (verse 5)
 - a. According to this verse, what should be the criteria for this decision (who should decide, for how long, etc.)?
10. In verse 6, Paul says he speaks this *by permission and not of commandment*. In light of 2 Timothy 3:16,17, do you think these were Paul's ideas or do you think this is God's will for marriage? Why?

DAY THREE: Read 1 Corinthians 7:7-9

1. *For I wish that all men were even as I myself...* (verse 7). Use 1 Corinthians 7:32 to explain Paul's desire that all men were single even as he was.
2. What does verse 8 say to the *unmarried and widows*?
 - a. In what way does 1 Corinthians 7:34 say singleness could be a spiritual advantage?
 - b. For what other reason did Paul believe being single was preferable:
 - Romans 13:11
 - 1 Corinthians 7:29a
 - 1 Peter 4:7a

Challenge: Explain the meaning of the sentence *But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that*. 1 Corinthians 7:7b
3. What does Paul admonish the single believer to do if they cannot *exercise self control*? Why? verse 9
4. Besides avoiding sexual immorality, what are God's purposes for marriage:
 - a. Genesis 1:28
 - b. Genesis 2:18
 - c. For what other reasons (right or wrong) do people look to marriage?

DAY FOUR: Read 1 Corinthians 7:10-16

1. This section of 1 Corinthians 7 expresses God's intentions for marriage. What command is given to the wife in verse 10?
 - b. What command is given to the husband in verse 11b?
 - c. Who gave these commands?
 - 1.) How do we know this?

Malachi 2:16

Matthew 19:3-9
2. Scripture "allows" the innocent partner to divorce in the case of adultery. However, what is God's higher calling? Matthew 18:21,22
3. If a wife does *depart from her husband*, what does 1 Corinthians 7:11 say she is to do?

Divorce is an easy escape, many think. But...the guilt and loneliness they experience can be even more tragic than living with the problem.

- Billy Graham

4. In the days of the early church many people who were already married were coming to the Lord and found themselves unequally yoked with an unbelieving mate. We are instructed from 2 Corinthians 6:14 not to be *unequally yoked* with unbelievers. These Corinthians were already married and were wondering if they should remain in these "mixed" marriages. According to 1 Corinthians 7:12,13, what is the Christian to do who is married to an unbeliever?
 - a. If the *believer* is **not** pleased to dwell with his/her spouse, what would God have them do?

Challenge: Use Scripture to support your answer.
5. How does the unbelieving spouse benefit from the believer's decision to stay in the marriage? verse 14

Note: *sanctified* in this verse does not mean saved, but is recognizing the spiritual benefits that an unbelieving spouse and children have because of a believing wife or husband.

- a. What might be some of those benefits?
- b. According to 1 Peter 3:1-7, what should depict the behavior of the believing spouse?

6. How do the children of a “mixed” marriage benefit from the parents’ decision to remain in the marriage? verse 14b
7. According to 1 Corinthians 7:15, if the *unbeliever departs* what is the believer to do and why?
 - a. Why do you think Paul stated *but God has called us to peace*?
8. What is God’s ultimate goal for the *unbeliever*? verse 16
 - a. How might remembering God’s goal, help the believing spouse who is in a rough marriage?

DAY FIVE: Read 1 Corinthians 7:17-24

1. What principle is stated in verses 17,20 and 24 for a believer?
2. What is the key word repeated often in verses 17-24?
 - a. What does it mean to be *called*? See 2 Timothy 1:9.
 - b. List in your own words what the following verses state about being *called*:
 - verse 17
 - verse 18
 - verse 20
 - verse 21
 - verse 22
 - verse 24
 - c. According to Whose purpose are we *called*? verse 17
 - d. How should this affect our attitude about our positions in life?
3. Regardless of our position in life, according to verse 19b, what really matters?
 - a. How do the following commands direct our priorities?
 - Micah 6:8
 - Matthew 23:23
 - Luke 10:27

4. Read 1 Corinthians 7:22. How was a slave made *the Lord's freedman*? Also see Romans 6:18.
5. According to Ephesians 6:5-8 and Colossians 3:17, what should our attitude be as we remain in the circumstances in which we were called?

DAY SIX: Review 1 Corinthians 7:1-24

1. We do not know the specific questions that the Corinthians asked Paul. Yet, we can speculate by looking at his answers. Using the replies given by Paul, how would you answer the following questions?
 - a. Why should a person marry?
 - b. What place is the sexual relationship to have outside of marriage?
 - c. What place is the sexual relationship to have in marriage?
 - d. What does one do if she has already departed from her spouse?
 - e. What does a believer do if she has married an unbeliever?
2. How would you advise a friend who is unhappy in her marriage and is considering divorce? Use Scripture to support your answer.
3. What do we know about God's purposes for us? See Psalm 56:9, Isaiah 48:18, and Jeremiah 29:11.
4. Realizing that God has a specific purpose for each one of us, in what way has He spoken to you through this lesson?

*Too often we cling to our storybook dream of living happily ever after.
It will come true, Lord. But, only in the home You are preparing for us.
Until then, give us the maturity to accept and the willingness to wait.*

- Ruth Calkin

Scripture References for Lesson 11

DAY TWO:

1 Cor. 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,

Ephes. 5:3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

1 Thes. 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage *is* honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Ephes. 5:21-22 submitting to one another in the fear of God. ²²Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

2 Tim. 3:16-17 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

DAY THREE:

Romans 13:11 And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed.

1 Cor. 7:29 But this I say, brethren, the time *is* short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,

1 Peter 4:7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

Genesis 1:28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 2:18 And the LORD God said, "*It is* not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

DAY FOUR:

Malachi 2:16 "For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the LORD of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

Matthew 19:3-9 The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?" ⁴And He answered and said to them, "**Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning '*made them male and female,*'** ⁵and said, '*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?*'" ⁶So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." ⁷They

said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" ⁸He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. ⁹And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

Matthew 18:21-22 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."

2 Cor. 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

1 Peter 3:1-7 Wives, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, ²when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear. ³Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel-- ⁴rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. ⁵For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, ⁶as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. ⁷Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

DAY FIVE:

2 Tim. 1:9 who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

Matthew 23:23 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

Luke 10:27 So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.' "

Romans 6:18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Ephes. 6:5-8 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free.

Col. 3:17 And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

DAY SIX:

Psalm 56:9 When I cry out *to You*, Then my enemies will turn back; This I know, because God *is* for me.

Isaiah 48:18 Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.