

Calvary Chapel of El Cajon Women's Bible Studies

1 Corinthians 7:25-40

Lesson 12

Continuing to answer the questions of the Corinthians believers, Paul addresses the benefits and challenges of marriage and singleness seeking to provoke a spirit of contentedness in everyone; a contentedness that is not dependent on the marital state, but on our relationship with our true Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

DAY ONE: Read 1 Corinthians 7:25-40

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 7:25-40 has been divided into four sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 25-28

Verses 29-31

Verses 32-35

Verses 36-40

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

After titling each segment division, record a title for chapter 7.

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 lesson: *God, Jesus (Lord), Spirit, Paul, marry/married, man/husband, wife, and the recipients of the letter.*

New to this lesson: *unmarried, virgin, he* as it refers to a single man

Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 1 Corinthians 7:25-40. Remember, as you mark the words *God, Jesus (Lord), and Paul*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to them. Do the same with any pronouns that refer to words like *husband, wife, or virgin*. 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 makes several declarations concerning singleness in chapter 7. Complete the following chart by filling in Paul's statements (*judgments*).

VERSE	PAUL'S JUDGMENTS
26 (see v.25)	
28	
32	
34	
36	
37	
38	

- a. Summarize why Paul believes as he does.

DAY TWO: Read 1 Corinthians 7:25-28

- As each believer is a member of the body of Christ, it is important that we not only have compassion for the lost, but also compassion for one another. In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul is answering a number of questions presented to him by the believers in Corinth. It would appear by the questions that the Corinthian church was similar to our church today - a mixture of married and single people. Paul begins this section addressing the state of singleness. Why did he feel it was *good* to remain single?
- A *distress* is a necessity imposed either by external circumstances or inward pressures. There was much persecution and pressures on Christians at the time of Paul's writing. What are some of the *distresses* that might make it profitable not to marry today?
- What instruction does Paul give in verse 27?
 - From Paul's position of advocating singleness, a believer could draw the conclusion that to marry was wrong. How does Paul refute that? verses 27 and 28
- The word *bound* means to fasten or to tie with a chain, a rope or a cord. This is where we get the expression "tying the knot". The verb tense is not that the person is binding himself, but a giving of oneself to being *bound*. It is God who is doing the binding. What does Mathew 19:6 say about this?
 - Matthew 19:5 talks about the man *leaving his mother and father and cleaving to his wife*. The word *cleave* means to stick like glue. How should the marriage relationship reflect this kind of cleaving?
 - 1.) What is the husband's/wife's responsibility here?

5. What might Paul have meant when he said, *Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife?* 1 Corinthians 7:27
6. Paul compassionately encouraged singleness to spare them from *trouble in the flesh*. What are some *troubles in the flesh* we might experience in marriage? Note: You only have a little room here ☺.

THIRD DAY: Read 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

1. Paul states in verse 29 that *the time is short*. Commentators believe that Paul could either be referring to his belief that the return of Christ would be very soon or simply that the time to live for Christ was very brief. What do Ephesians 5:15,16 and Colossians 4:5 say about this?
2. In verse 29-31 Paul describes how we should behave in various situations. Complete the following phrases:
 - those who have wives* _____
 - those who weep* _____
 - those who rejoice* _____
 - those who buy* _____
 - those who use this world* _____.
3. *The important thing to remember is that our remaining time is very short, [and so are opportunities for doing the Lord's work]. For that reason those who have wives should stay as free as possible for the Lord...* 1 Corinthians 7:29 TLB. How do Matthew 10:37 and Luke 14:26 relate to this verse?
 - a. Paul states, *those who have wives should be as though they had none*. This might lead us to believe that Paul is suggesting that we neglect our spouses and ignore their needs. How do Ephesians 5:25 and 1 Peter 3:7 balance this statement in 1 Corinthians 7:29b?
 - 1.) In what ways might living in an extreme interpretation of either of these be dangerous?
4. Paul also writes about *weeping* and *rejoicing*. What do the following Scriptures say about these subjects?
 - a. Matthew 5:4
 - b. Luke 6:21b
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 5:16

5. 1 Corinthians 7:31 instructs *those who use this world as not misusing it*. We are not to use the world to excess. We are not to make it a mere matter of indulgence, or to make things of the world the main object or purpose of living. What does 1 John 2:15-17 say about *loving* the things of the world?
 - a. What are some practical examples of *abusing* the things of the world?

DAY FOUR: Read 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

1. From verses 32-34 fill in the following chart:

STATUS	CARES FOR THE THINGS	THAT HE/SHE MAY
v. 32 Unmarried		
v. 33 Married		
v. 34 Unmarried		
v. 34 Married		

- a. List the four reasons why Paul wrote these things. See verses 32 and 35.
 - b. What was **not** the intention of Paul's instructions in verse 32-34? verse 35
2. Paul's concern was that marriage might hinder us from fully serving the Lord. Often in our marriages we can distract our spouse from pursuing the things of the Lord. In what way might our demands to fill our own needs affect their spiritual growth?
 - a. How might we be used to encourage them in their walk with the Lord?
3. Verses 33 and 34 speak of the fact that the married man and woman *care* about how they *may please* their spouse. What are some of the things you do to please your spouse?
4. *I am saying this for your benefit, not to place restrictions on you. I want you to do whatever will help you serve the Lord best, with as few distractions as possible* (1 Corinthians 7:35 NLT). What *distractions* hinder your relationship with the Lord?
5. We have been studying the advantages of singleness. For the singles: What are some of the difficulties that you experience? For the married: What do you think some of the difficulties of singleness might be?
 - a. For the singles: How could the body of Christ encourage you?
 - b. For the married: How do you think you could encourage those who are single?

DAY FIVE: Read 1 Corinthians 7:36-40

1. Some commentators believe the word *virgin* in verse 36 means daughter; others believe it means betrothed. In Paul's time, parents chose the marriage partner for their children. What choice concerning marriage does Paul give in verses 36-38?
 - a. If marriage is the choice, what does Paul say about that choice? verse 38a
2. Consider verse 38 from the standpoint of a father not giving his daughter in marriage and from a betrothed (engaged) person's viewpoint. After studying this chapter, why do you think Paul felt not to marry was the better choice?
3. What does verse 39 say about the permanence of marriage?
4. What is one requirement for a *widow* if she remarries? See verse 39 and 2 Corinthians 6:14.
5. Since a *wife is bound* to her husband as long as he lives, what should her behavior be according to Titus 2:4,5?
 - a. What could be the result if she disobeyed these commands? Titus 2:5b
6. Paul's judgment in verse 40 is that a widow would be *happier* if she remained unmarried. This is not to say that widowhood is not difficult. However, God has provided special care for the widows. How does Deuteronomy 10:18 support this?
 - a. Often the Lord uses His people to accomplish His work. What is the Christian's responsibility towards the widow according to James 1:27?
7. Regardless of the circumstance we may find ourselves in, what are some things we can always be thankful for?

*Contentment is not the fulfillment of what you want,
but the realization of how much you already have.*

- selected

DAY SIX: Review 1 Corinthians 7:25-40

1. With all of this emphasis on the advantages of being single, how do we know that God has ordained and blessed marriage?
 - a. Genesis 2:18
 - b. Genesis 2:24

2. What is the message of 1 Corinthians 7:27?

3. Summarize the general intent of 1 Corinthians 7:25-40.

4. Comment on the following quote: "Marriage is like a cage; one sees the birds outside desperate to get in, and those inside equally desperate to get out". (Michael DeMontaigne 1533-1592).

5. What have you learned in this lesson that you will apply to your particular marital state?

6. How should our life-style be detached from the concerns of the world?

... for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

- Philippians 4:11

Scripture References for Lesson 12

DAY TWO:

Matthew 19:5-6 and 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."

DAY THREE:

Ephes. 5:15-16 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Col. 4:5 Walk in wisdom toward those *who are* outside, redeeming the time.

Matthew 10:37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

Ephes. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, 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.

Matthew 5:4 Blessed *are* those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

Luke 6:21 Blessed *are you* who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed *are you* who weep now, For you shall laugh.

1 Thes. 5:16 Rejoice always,

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For 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. ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

DAY FOUR:

1 Cor. 7:35 I am saying this for your benefit, not to place restrictions on you. I want you to do whatever will help you serve the Lord best, with as few distractions as possible.

DAY FIVE:

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?

Titus 2:4-5 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, [5] to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

Deut. 10:18 He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing.

James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

1 Cor. 7:35 And this I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is seemly, and *to secure* undistracted devotion to the Lord.

DAY SIX:

Genesis 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

Genesis 2:24 For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

Philip. 4:11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: