

First Corinthians

VERSE-BY-VERSE

1st Corinthians

59 A.D.

Ephesus

Chapter 7:10-13 | Regulations Concerning Marriage

Verse 10,11-

This is a **command** from Paul (which he received from the Lord) to the married couple. The word **depart** is better translated *separate*.

The original command for marriage was that the two (one man and one woman) should become one flesh.

-Paul reinforces that by saying a married couple is not to *separate*. This is the command.

The husband is not to kick out his wife or leave her, and the wife is not to kick out her husband or leave him.

-Don't let there be a separation from each other.

-The reality is, separation does happen.

-If a wife does separate, she is to **remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband**.

-Reconciliation should always be the goal.

The **husband is not to put away**-divorce (let her go).

-Does not mean that a husband is to hold his wife captive.

-He is to do everything he can to keep a healthy marriage in place.

A couple's marriage can stay together if the believing husband leads his wife in a godly manner. Paul will address the unbelieving husband later.

Verses 12,13-

Paul's exhortation, **I, not the Lord, say**, carries as much weight as if the Lord had spoken the words. All Scripture is inspired, as are Paul's words here. Let's call them his *permissible* opinion.

If a man became a believer (**brother**) and his wife was not a believer and **is willing to live with him** he is not to **divorce her** (separate from her).

Likewise, Paul's *permissible* opinion holds true for the woman believer with an unbelieving husband **willing to live with her**. Don't separate.

Paul was addressing Jews in the Corinth church. For a Jew to believe in Jesus as Messiah, it was blasphemous to the unbeliever. There could be and probably were many who would disown family members for their newfound belief, and this would have undoubtedly carried over into the marriage.

Chapter 7:14-16 | Sanctification in Marriage

Verses 14-16–

We need to be careful of reading into a passage, or making a passage say what we want it to say. A person is not **sanctified**, *or made holy*, merely by association with his or her spouse.

Each individual who believes in Jesus Christ is sanctified based on what Jesus has done on the cross. So what does Paul mean?

Since he is speaking to a mixed audience of Gentiles and Jews (but probably a the larger body were Jews), is he referring to some Jewish tradition? One clue that validates this proposition is his mention of **children unclean, but now they are holy**. That is a wholly Jewish statement; Gentiles would not have an issue with anything clean or unclean.

Even the word **save** (*sozo*, vs. 16) does not have to mean salvation as we understand it. The Greek word **σῶζω** *sozo*, for example can mean *to be made whole*. It can also mean *to save one from suffering*. If we understand nothing else from these verses we can clearly see that the key is: God has called married couples to peace (vs. 15).

Chapter 7:17-20 | Peace in Marriage**Verses 17-20–**

Is Paul saying in verse 17, *while it may not be perfect, be satisfied with your current marital state?*

As the Lord hath called every one. Verse 15 tells us what this calling is, **God hath called us to peace** (vs. 15). You might think your situation is different, that you could never have peace in your marriage; but God has **distributed** peace to every man. It falls on the man in the relationship to understand he has the God-given ability to bring peace into his marriage. And, it is the woman's responsibility to join in with her husband in peace.

Therefore, in marriage God has called every one to peace, **so let him walk**. This is Paul *prescription ordain* for all churches.

Let peace rule.

Once a husband or wife is saved, how shall they then live? **Is any man called**, (verse 18) can we assume that Paul means *called into peace?* (verse 15).

Circumcised and **uncircumcised** refers to Jew and Gentile. To make it known a person was not of Israel; he was referred to as the uncircumcision, (Jew and Gentile are English Bible terms).

This whole idea of circumcision and uncircumcision seems to be put in context in verse 19 when he says, **it is nothing**.

Is Paul saying that the commandments of God are not something that the church is under? It appears he is. Paul spent a year and a half with this church, teaching them. Indeed, he had taught them that believers are not under the Law. Now he is reminding them of that fact: The commandments were for the nation of Israel. The church is free from the ordinances written in the commandments.

Abide in the same calling (a marriage filled with peace) **wherein he was called**. (vs.20), he is repeating the idea that peace is to rule in marriages.

Chapter 7:21-24 | Peace in all things

Verses 21-24–

Abiding (living) in peace does not only apply to marriage: Paul addresses other relationships. **Art thou called being a servant?** The word *being* is added. And here the word called is used to identify a person's name or vocation. Are you *called* a servant? Is that what you are? Or, are you called a slave. **Care not**, don't be concerned about what you are called. **But if thou mayest be made free, use it rather**. But if you can be free, go for it!

If you are called a Christian i.e., **in the Lord** even though you are **a servant**, you are **the Lord's freeman**. You are free in Christ! And if you are free in Christ, then you are **Christ's servant**.

It doesn't matter what your vocation, what your job, what situation you find yourself, your life has been **bought**, paid for, by Christ, don't be enslaved to men. **Abide with God**. (vs. 24).

(vs. 24) So, if you become a believer while you are a servant, or whatever your vocation might be, keep the job, but remember you cannot be owned by men or **become slaves of men**. You are Christ's servant. He **bought** you **at a price**. You are owned by Christ. Remember who your ultimate boss is. No matter what vocation (or relationship) you are in, you can **abide**, or remain in that position **with God**.

Peace is to rule in your home, and peace is to rule in your work.

Chapter 7:25-28 | Contentment in all things

Verses 25-28–

Paul argues for **virgins** (perhaps, virginity or singleness). He doesn't have a command, but if a man can **remain** single, it is okay. Earlier, Paul explained that it was good to marry to keep one from fornication (7:9). So either way, if one is **bound** (married) **to a wife**, don't get divorced. If one is **loosed** (divorced) **from a wife**, don't seek a wife if the temptation of fornication is not an issue.

I think the point of this entire passage is after you are saved, live your life! Don't think you have to make a change in everything you do. Live your life for Christ in whatever state you find yourself. If single, be content in singleness. If married, be content in your marriage.

Chapter 7:29-31 | Use your time wisely in your relationship

Verses 29-31–

The time is short. It has been over 2,000 years since Paul wrote that. What does that show us? Some would say Paul was wrong. When he says **the time is short**, he may be thinking of the return of the Lord, but it could be he is referring to the end of Jewish national life. If the letter of 1st Corinthians was written in A.D. 59, it would only be 11 short years before Jerusalem would be overthrown, and the temple destroyed (A.D. 70).

The age of grace has just come on the scene. Paul had just revealed the mystery that was given to him by the Spirit, that all men and women, Jew or Gentile can be saved and be a part of the body of Christ. This was a significant disruption of Jewish belief. All the prophetic events that had been prophesied before were set aside. The timeline of the kingdom was held in abeyance as the dispensation of grace made its entrance. Paul would have had no knowledge of when the prophetic timeline would come back.

The point Paul seems to be making is, *Don't hold on to the things of this life too tightly.* That is an appropriate word for us today as we see the out-of-control-spiral of our nation and world. We can sense that **the time is short: For the fashion of this world is passing away.**