



FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS

1 Corinthians

B.K. Have it Your Way (not really)

We live in a world that likes to tell us we can have and do whatever we want, but this goes against everything the Bible teaches. The truth is we don't belong to ourselves; we belong to God, and He paid a great price for us. The sooner we understand this truth, the easier it becomes to follow Jesus. Last week, we talked about how our bodies are temples where the Holy Spirit lives. This means we are not our own—we are His. This truth reminds us of the importance of avoiding things that go against God's plan for our bodies and lives.

It's easy to focus on what we want, but following Jesus means shifting our mindset to focus on what *God* wants for us. Not our way, but His way! God is not a cosmic killjoy; He wants us to enjoy life to the fullest.¹

We can only experience this full life when we follow Jesus. In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul addresses topics like marriage, divorce, and remarriage (vv. 10–16). He also speaks about how our circumstances or status—whether married, single, or otherwise—don't change the value or purpose we bring to Christ and His church (vv. 17–24). Paul's message reminds us that whether we're married or single, our focus should always be on faithfully following God and serving Him in whatever situation we're in.

Let's strive to see our relationships, and even our current season of life, as opportunities to honor God and live for His glory.

Ice Breaker

Do you have a favorite famous couple or duo, whether real or fictional?

¹ John 10:10

Day 1— Get It

Read 1 Corinthians 7:1–24.

1. What solution does Paul give in verse 2 to avoid sexual immorality?
2. What does Paul instruct the unmarried and widows to do in verse 8, and what command does he give in verse 9?
3. What principle does Paul state in verse 17 regarding remaining in the situation one was in when called by Christ?
4. How does Paul use the examples of circumcision and slavery to explain his point in verses 18–22?
5. How would you summarize Paul's message in verses 17–24?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: "Marriage is What Brings Us Together Today"

Read 1 Corinthians 7:1–5.

In today's world, people often misunderstand or misuse the gift of sex. Last week, we discussed sexual immorality and how we are constantly tempted by sexual sin day in and day out. Whether we're at school, on TikTok, Instagram, hanging out with friends, watching movies or TV, or doing practically anything, temptation will surround us. The scary part is that **this temptation doesn't stop when you're married**. The distortion that modern culture has brought to sex will persist. Many married couples feel unhappy or unfulfilled in this area, and some even stop being physically close altogether. This shows how easy it is to forget God's design for intimacy and how essential self-control is in every stage of life.

Paul makes it clear in 1 Corinthians 7 that sexual intimacy is a gift from God, meant to be enjoyed and protected **only** within marriage. It's not something to be used as a weapon or a tool for manipulation. Instead, it's a way for husbands and wives to love and serve each other and, more importantly, to honor God.

6. How have you seen sex appeal used as a trap or a weapon?
7. In today's world, a lot of people think that sex is just something natural, like eating or sleeping. How does this way of thinking affect how we see God's plan for marriage and sex?
8. Most of us are still a long way from marriage, but what can we start doing now to ensure that we will have a God-honoring marriage?

Day 3 — Today's Theme: Our Season of Singleness

Read 1 Corinthians 7:6–8.

Our first few verses in this text focused on marriage, but Paul's message isn't just for married people—it's for everyone. He also talks about singleness as a gift from God. In verse 7, he says, *"I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another."*

Singleness, like marriage, is a gift with its own purpose. It's not a waiting room for something better. God doesn't call everyone to get married. **Like marriage, and any other season in life, singleness is a time to focus fully on God and His plan for your life.** Paul encourages those who are single to see this season as an opportunity to serve God wholeheartedly.

Whether you've started dating, haven't thought about it yet, feel like it's far off, or choose never to date, God has an incredible plan for you. The gift of intimacy is incredibly important, and **God asks us to keep it within marriage so it can strengthen that special bond.**

For now, as middle and high school students, the call is to embrace this season of singleness as a student as a gift. Use this time to grow closer to God and live for His glory. Both marriage and singleness are paths to honoring Him, and each has its own blessings and purpose. Let's make the most of our singleness, wherever God calls us to it, for a season or a lifetime.

9. If a middle school or high school student is "dating" someone, based on this passage, would you consider them single?

10. Paul says that singleness is a gift. Do you believe this is true? What does being single allow you to do that relationships cannot?

11. Do you often feel pressured to be in a relationship? What can you do to be content in your singleness?

12. How does Jesus' example as a single person reshape the way you view singleness within Christian life and community?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: Divorce—Do or Do Not

Read 1 Corinthians 7:10–16.

Like sex, divorce is something the world has made to feel normal. It seems like every other day we hear about another celebrity couple getting divorced, and they treat it like it's no big deal—just break up and move on, right? **Wrong!** Many of you have parents who are divorced or at least have friends whose parents are divorced. Paul reminds us in this passage that marriage is a serious bond, not something to be taken lightly. That's why it's so important to carefully consider with whom you choose to pursue a relationship. Both of you need to be rooted, first and foremost, in your relationship with Christ. God designed marriage to be a lifelong covenant. In Matthew 19:6, Jesus says, "*What God has joined together, let no one separate.*" Marriage matters deeply to God, and when we stray from His plan, it can hurt us, our families, and even our communities.²

Paul also explains that being married to someone who doesn't believe in Jesus doesn't make the believing spouse unclean. He talks about both the husband and the wife, showing that God views their marriage as a sacred bond. Instead of the unbelieving spouse "defiling" the believer, Paul says the opposite happens: the holiness of the believing spouse positively impacts the marriage, making it holy and special in God's eyes. However, it's important to note that **this isn't about salvation**—the faith of one spouse doesn't save the other. This is specifically about holiness within the marriage relationship.

What Paul isn't saying is that we should intentionally seek out a spouse who disagrees with us on spiritual matters. Instead, he's emphasizing that if a believer is already married to an unbeliever, the believer is not to divorce his/her spouse because they are an unbeliever. The marriage can still be holy because of the faith and presence of the believing spouse.

13. How does Paul's teaching on marriage and divorce challenge modern cultural views on the permanence of marriage?

14. How do you wrestle with the tension between the world's view surrounding marriage and divorce and the biblical teaching on these matters?

15. How does Paul's teaching about staying committed in marriage guide us in choosing the right person to marry?

² Akin, Dr. Daniel L.; Merritt, James. Exalting Jesus in 1 Corinthians (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary) (pp. 141-142). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

16. How does one spouse's holiness show God's plan for marriage and help in relationships with someone who doesn't believe?

17. God says marriage is permanent, but odds are we know people who've experienced divorce, and you've even seen it closer than you care to admit. What should our attitude and approach be towards those involved with divorce?

Day 5 — Today's Theme: As You Were

Read 1 Corinthians 7:17–24.

When you discover a new passion or have a change of heart, it's easy to let it take over. For example, I've seen guys work in construction for just a few days and suddenly decide they need to change their whole lives—they go out and buy a truck and every power tool they can find. Being a Christian can feel a bit like that too. When we realize the emptiness of life without God and see the mistakes we've made, we might feel like we need to completely overhaul everything about ourselves all at once—but that's not always the case. If we're living a life consumed by sin, we definitely need to flee from that sin, but when it comes to our careers or roles in life, we can stay where we are and serve God there.

Simon Kistemaker explains this idea well:

"When someone becomes a Christian, they don't need to leave everything about their life behind. God has placed each of us where we are for a reason. Some new believers might think the best way to show gratitude for salvation is to become a pastor or missionary. While those are great callings, they're not the only way to honor God. God calls His people to serve Him in every area of life—as Christian fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, employers and employees. Each person should live out their faith in the role God has given them, walking with Him daily." (Exposition, 230)³

This means you don't need to completely abandon your life or career to follow Jesus—you can live for Him right where you are. However, this doesn't mean staying in a life of sin; you should always flee from sin. Instead, **it's about understanding that God can use you wherever you are.** Whether you're a student, a teammate, or a family member, God has a purpose for you in this season of your life. It's about serving Him in the small, everyday moments, no matter where He's placed you.

³ Akin, Dr. Daniel L.; Merritt, James. *Exalting Jesus in 1 Corinthians* (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary) (p. 149). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

- 18. In what ways can remaining in our current situations as Christians demonstrate our faith and commitment to God, according to Paul's teaching?**
- 19. Considering your current station in life, how might you intentionally serve the Lord faithfully in greater ways through your daily decisions and interactions?**
- 20. What does it mean to you to be "bought at a price," and how does this understanding impact your sense of identity and worth in Christ?**
- 21. What are some practical ways you can avoid feeling like you have to live up to the world's ideas of success or failure?**