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Christ Bible Church			Adult Bible Class Calendar Fall 2022		
Date			Lesson Portion of 1 Corinthians		
1	September	18	Paul's Mission to the Corinthians		
2	September	25	1 Corinthians 1:1-17		
3	October	2	1 Corinthians 1:18-31		
4	October	9	1 Corinthians 2:1-16		
5	October	16	1 Corinthians 3:1-17		
6	October	23	1 Corinthians 3:18-4:21		
7	October	30	1 Corinthians 5:1-13		
8	November	6	1 Corinthians 6:1-20		
9	November	13	1 Corinthians 7:1-24		
10	November	20	1 Corinthians 7:25-40		

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1 Corinthians 7:1-24

Concerning Marriage and Related Questions

3

Outline of 1 Corinthians

- I. Introduction (1:1-9).
 - A. Salutation (1:1-3).
 - B. Thanksgiving (1:4-9).
- II. Response to Received Reliable Oral Reports from the Corinthians (1:10-6:20).
 - A. The Problem of Factionalism within the Church (1:10-4:21).
 - B. The Problem of Incestuous Immorality within the Church (5:1-13).
 - C. The Problem of Civil Litigations within the Church (6:1-11).
 - D. The Problem of Sexual Immorality within the Church (6:12-20).
- III. Response to a Letter from the Corinthians (7:1-16:4)
 - A. Concerning Marriage and Related Questions (7:1-40).
 - 1. Marriage and Singleness: A General Principle (7:1-7).
 - 2. Marriage and Singleness: Advice in Particular Cases (7:8-24).

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- II. Response to Received Reliable Oral Reports from the Corinthians (1:10-6:20).
- III. Response to a Letter from the Corinthians (7:1-16:4)
 - A. Concerning Marriage and Related Questions (7:1-40).
 - 1. Marriage and Singleness: A General Principle (7:1-7).
 - 2. Marriage and Singleness: Advice in Particular Cases (7:8-24).
 - a. To Singles and Widows (7:8-9).
 - b. To Married Christian Couples (7:10-11).
 - c. To Married Couples, One A Christian (7:12-16).
 - d. To Anyone Converted in a Set Station in Life (7:17-24).

5

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.

Transition

6

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

- Other sins committed with the body—drunkenness, gluttony, suicide—employ external tools.
- Sexual sin is committed with one's own body itself.
- Sexual sin entails a deep psycho-physical union with another person, profoundly shaping and affecting both.

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

- 6:19—Paul appeals to the sanctity of the human body—a temple of the Holy Spirit.
- 3:16—We are members of the church, God's holy temple.

7

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body.

- We are not autonomous.
- We belong to God who formed us—we are God's creatures.
- We belong to God who redeemed us—we are purchased by Christ's sacrifice.
- We are no longer slaves to sin.



8

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you? **You are not your own**, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.



THE TRANSITION TO ADMONITIONS CONCERNING MARRIAGE

Transition

9

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise, the wife to her husband. **For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.** Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Now, as a concession, not a command, I say this. 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.

10

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

- The opening words of this chapter make it clear that Paul is answering questions put to him in a letter from the Corinthians, likely carried to him by Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (16:17).
- He probably has that letter lying before him as he writes his reply.
- His words, “Now concerning. . .” form **natural breaks** among the various topics as he introduces them in the remainder of the letter.
- Paul has already touched upon two enticing errors—libertinism and asceticism—and two slogans: “Everything is permissible for me” (6:1) and “Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy both” (6:13).
- The ascetics’ slogan: “It is good for a man not to touch a woman” (7:1).
- Implicit in Paul’s responses is Genesis 2:18—“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’”

11

Paul’s Responses to Questions from the Corinthians

Now concerning . . .

- Marriage, singleness, divorce (7:1).
- Virginitly (7:25).
- Food offered to idols (8:1).
- The spiritual ones and gifts (12:1).
- The collection for the church at Jerusalem (16:1).
- Apollos (16:12).
- **Take note that “resurrection” (15:1) is introduced differently, suggesting that Paul includes this corrective on his own, a corrective he fully anticipates in 6:14.**



12

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

- The ESV translates 7:1—“It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.”
- This makes explicit Paul’s euphemism—“It is good for a man not to touch a woman.”
- Paul agrees in principle that it is suitable for a man to remain celibate and unmarried.
- Though Paul seems to be single, he does not impose singleness on others. He knows that God instituted marriage not only for the propagation of humans but also for human pleasure.
- “It is not good that a man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18).
- Therefore, in 7:2-5, Paul challenges both ascetics and libertines concerning marriage and sexual relations.

13

Euphemism in 1 Corinthians 7:1-7

- The ESV translates 7:1—“It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.”
- This makes explicit Paul’s euphemism—“It is good for a man not to touch a woman.”

The propriety of euphemism.

- Euphemism – pleasant speech.
- Euphemism is a form of understatement for effect.
 - To soften bluntness—“she passed away” instead of “she died.”
 - To veil what is sacred—“Adam knew Eve,” “Mary was with child.” “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.”
- We should **NOT** use euphemisms when speaking of sin and immorality. Speak plainly. Do **not** say:
 - “They slept together.” [Sleep was the one thing they did not do.]
 - “His actions are inappropriate.” [What? Is his behavior ill-mannered?]

14

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

- 7:2 qualifies his statement in 7:1.
- Paul enforces fidelity (7:2)—“But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.”
- Implicit in this are prohibitions against *polygamy* and *polyandry* and the enforcement of *monogamy*.
- Paul is not merely requiring fidelity to one’s spouse. He is also saying that marriage is a sacred relationship in which sexual desires are to be satisfied.
- He designs 7:2 to correct Corinthians both who are inclined toward ascetic abstention and who are inclined toward libertine indulgence, those he addresses in chapter 6.
- He is not saying that marriage serves only to protect against sexual immorality. Satisfaction in marriage, which God blesses, diminishes finding satisfaction in ways God forbids.

15



1 Corinthians 7:1-7



- 7:3-4—“The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise, the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.”
- Again, the ESV makes explicit Paul’s implied meaning. The NIV is more subtle: “The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.”
- Responsibility, not rights, is to govern husband and wife because neither has rights over their own bodies in the marriage union.
- When we marry, we relinquish exclusive rights to our own bodies. One’s body belongs to one’s spouse.

16

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

- 7:5-6—“Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”
- Paul’s admonition addresses two groups:
 - Libertines, who think of abstinence as excessive.
 - Ascetics, who think abstinence in marriage is piety.
- Concerning abstinence, he states four important provisions:
 - Abstinence must be agreed on mutually. No bribing. No manipulation.
 - Abstinence must be “for a limited time.”
 - Abstinence should be for the purpose of “devoting yourselves to prayer.”

17

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

Paul’s apostolic instruction may seem absurd to heirs of the “sexual revolution” and “without reasonableness” to pious ascetics.

- Libertines, who regard their bodies as their own property, consider the sexual activities of their bodies morally irrelevant and view their bodies as having little relevance concerning either the Holy Spirit (cf. 6:19) or Satan (7:5).
- Pious ascetics, on the other hand, tend to regard sexual activity itself as bordering on evil and sin, necessary only for propagation. For these pietists, Paul’s careful instructions to Christian husbands and wives seem shockingly uninhibited.
- Now, in 7:8-24, Paul begins to apply the general principle to different cases—Marriage and Singleness.

18

1 Corinthians 7:8-16

To the unmarried and the widows, I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

To the married, I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife.

To the rest, I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases, the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?

19

1 Corinthians 7:8-9

- Whether Paul ever married, we can only guess. As a voting member of the Sanhedrin, he was likely married (Acts 26:10).
- When he wrote 1 Corinthians, he was single.
- Paul's personal preference and advice favor singleness, but singleness that is sexually undefiled.
- Paul's counsel for the unmarried and widows to remain unmarried unless "they cannot exercise self-control." This is an application of the "general principle" he lays out in 7:1-5.
 - Singleness is good, but people whose sexual desires burn should marry.
 - The word Paul uses here, "to be aflame with passion," does not refer to bursting into flames of lustful acts.
 - He does not speak of actual sexual acts but of inward desire that seeks satisfaction in marriage alone.

20

1 Corinthians 7:10-11

- Paul's advice to remain single was his own opinion.
- Now Paul summarizes a command from the Lord Jesus.
 - To the married, I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife.
 - "Separate" and "divorce" are synonyms. Paul is not talking about a period of separation before divorce.
 - He does not mention Jesus' exception clause—"except for sexual immorality." Why?
 - Paul seems to be addressing a situation of unwarranted divorce.
 - He is functioning as a responsible pastor from a distance addressing the sinfulness of divorce and remarriage without addressing every scenario.
- Paul clarifies that the Lord Jesus is the source of this directive, whereas he is the source of the previous advice to remain single.

Paul's directions on divorce? DON'T! The Lord forbids it. Don't even allow yourself the luxury of entertaining the possibility.

21

1 Corinthians 7:12-16

- Paul applies his principle from 7:1-5 to other cases on which Jesus did not speak.
- He addresses what was likely a common problem in Corinth, where the gospel was being received among first-generation converts.
 - New loyalty, a new way of life, new standards of conduct, new priorities, and new desires put a strain on a marriage to a non-Christian.
 - Paul understands the difficulties but insists that a Christian must not sever the marital bond.
 - To the rest, I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him.

22

1 Corinthians 7:12-16

- For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. Two reasons for his instructions:
- Two reasons for this apostolic directive:
 - The consecrating effect of marriage.

“The clue to the problem is to be found in the fact that Paul is still dealing with the antipathy felt by at least some in Corinth to sex and marriage in general. If marriage between Christians may be permitted, they argue, mixed marriages at least must be forbidden, for the Christian partner will be defiled by the non-Christian, and the children issuing from the marriage will be unclean. Paul answers that the truth is the reverse of what is suggested. The Christian partner has the effect of sanctifying the relationship (which, on his part, is the divine institution of marriage), and his partner in it. ‘The godliness of the one does more to ‘sanctify’ the marriage than the ungodliness of the other to make it unclean” (John Calvin).
 - The status of the children. The consecrating influence a Christian parent has on the children is reason enough to persevere in a mixed marriage.

23

1 Corinthians 7:12-16

- But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases, the brother or sister is not enslaved. God has called you to peace. For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?
- Paul is no fool. He recognizes that when the end comes, one cannot insist that an unbelieving spouse stays against one’s will. He offers two comments.
 - The breach of a marriage is not to be initiated by a Christian.
 - The possibility of converting one’s spouse is beyond the control of a Christian. “How do you know whether you will save your spouse?” Paul is offering consolation to the Christian spouse who is deserted by an unbeliever.

Peter expresses this hope: “Wives . . . Be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the Word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives” (1 Peter 3:1-2).

24

Each one should remain in whatever
one's situation was when called by
Christ.

Paul's Apostolic Rule

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

25

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches. Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God. Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) For he who was called in the Lord as a bondservant is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise, he who was free when called is a bondservant of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men. So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.

26

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

- When Christ called you—
 - If you were married, then remain married, even if your spouse is not yet a Christian.
 - If you were unmarried, don't get married now just because you are a Christian.
 - Two illustrative uses of the apostolic rule for Christian converts:
 - Religious-cultural status—circumcision or uncircumcision:
 - Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but keeping the commandments of God.
 - Social-cultural status—slavery:
 - Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) For he who was called in the Lord as a bondservant is a freedman of the Lord. Likewise, he who was free when called is a bondservant of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men.

27

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

What is the apostle's point?

- So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.
- Paul insists that the Corinthians cease upsetting social relationships under the guise of the gospel.
- Christ called you! Your status (married, unmarried), your employment (vocation), and your relationships are all infused with new significance by Christ's gospel, but you must retain your station in life.
- God who called you also appointed your station in life.
- Each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and in which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches."

28

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches. So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.

- This apostolic rule means that we must not make the mistake of creating a false distinction: “Christian vocation” versus “secular vocation.”
- Such thinking is **not** Christian.
- God providentially places individuals vocationally where his redeeming call comes to them.
- The rule: We all must embrace Christian contentment with God’s providential appointments for us, along with Christian dissatisfaction with the status quo that leads to diligence and improvement.
- Discontentment and unwise counsel have induced many new adult converts to disrupt their vocations and family’s stability to pursue Christian ministry—attend seminary, accept a ministry position, and then crash.

29

1 Timothy 6:6-8

Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

Christian Contentment

30



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