



Pastor Hugh Whitfield Aug. 13, 2025 Pearl Baptist Church

The Cross and Singleness

1 Cor. 7:25-40

1 Cor. 7:25-40 (CSB)

²⁵ Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord, but I do give an opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is faithful. ²⁶ Because of the present distress, I think that it is good for a man to remain as he is. ²⁷ Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸ However, if you do get married, you have not sinned, and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But such people will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.

²⁹ This is what I mean, brothers and sisters: The time is limited, so from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none, ³⁰ those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they didn't own anything, ³¹ and those who use the world as though they did not make full use of it. For this world in its current form is passing away.

³² I want you to be without concerns. The unmarried man is concerned about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. ³³ But the married man is concerned about the things of the world—how he may please his wife— ³⁴ and his interests are divided. The unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But the married woman is concerned about the things of the world—how she may please her husband. ³⁵ I am saying this for your own benefit, not to put a restraint on you, but to promote what is proper and so that you may be devoted to the Lord without distraction.

A. We are here to get CrossFit.

As you know the Church of Corinth was a mess, and the only way Paul was going to get them to clean up their mess was to get them TO THE CROSS. That is, get the people in the church CrossFit.

B. And many of these Corinthians got saved and they brought a lot of baggage with them into the church.

And part of that baggage was their ungodly views and ungodly practices within their present marriage.

C. This caused many of these new Christians to think it might be better start over – get rid of their unsaved husband/wife and get one who is saved.

Some even concluded maybe it would be best to not marry. Stay single. In fact, some believed those who are single are more spiritual than those who are married.

- D. So, the Corinthians, were all over the map about what is God's plan about marriage.

And they wrote out their questions and delivered them to Paul. And his response is found right here in 1 Cor. 7.

The good news is this:

These Corinthian Christians really wanted to know the Jesus Way about marriage.

They were not interested in Rome's Way, the Greek Way, or the World's Way. They really wanted to know God's way about marriage.

And that should be your desire as a follower of Jesus.

- E. In our last message we learned 4 key words when it comes to marriage, divorce, & remarriage:

- Stay
- Don't Stray
- Okay
- Obey

There are times when God will say "okay".

When there's adultery, abandonment or abuse (emotional or physical).

- F. And let me add: Divorce is not the unforgivable sin.

Praise God for His forgiveness

And that's where God gives you the "Okay" to go on with your life and remarry; and remarry in the Lord.

Don't allow your past to define your present and future.

Your present and future is in the arms of a good and gracious God who loves you and wants His best for you.

- G. He's not working a plan for you to pay for your mistakes (of the mistakes of someone else) for the rest of your life. He's not working a plan for you to live in grief and regret.

He's working a plan for you to experience His goodness and grace.

And that goodness and grace may include God sending you the godly man or godly woman that is just right for you.

- H. But the people in Corinth still had questions about marriage; and particularly about those who had never married; their virgin daughters

They wanted to know if their virgin daughters should even consider marriage?

Should their fathers encourage them to marry or not marry?

Should those who are engaged marry or call off the wedding?

- I. And Paul gives a fairly lengthy reply to their question. And guess what he advocates for? SINGLENES.

Stay single.

- J. V. 25 – Notice in verse 25, Paul doesn't have direct teaching from the Lord Jesus on this topic. So he gives his opinion – His sanctified opinion – meaning what he's going to share is of the Lord who is working in Him through the Holy Spirit.

So, what does Paul say?

I'll tell you in a nutshell: "It's better to stay single."

And Paul gives the following 3 reasons for staying single

1. Life is HARD

²⁶ Because of the present distress, I think that it is good for a man to remain as he is. ²⁷ Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

a) Hard times on the OUTSIDE

Ex. Nero – Emperor (54AD-68AD)

Paul wrote letter to Corinth (55AD)

Nero hated the Christians; burned Rome in 64AD and blamed it on the Christians.

Paul knew Christians were coming under fire; And being married in such times of distress, would only make your life harder.

b) Hard times on the INSIDE

²⁸ However, if you do get married, you have not sinned, and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But such people will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.

Paul is saying before you marry, you need to consider the multiple pressures this world can put on your marriage.

(1) Consider your season of life - school

(2) Consider your job – gone all the time

(3) Health concerns – terminal illness

(4) Financial concerns – in debt up to your eyeballs; don't need to bring that burden into your marriage

(5) Theological concerns/denominational

(6) Personality traits/concerns

2. Life is SHORT

²⁹ This is what I mean, brothers and sisters: The time is limited, so from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none, ³⁰ those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they didn't own anything, ³¹ and those who use the world as though they did not make full use of it. For this world in its current form is passing away.

- A. What is Paul saying? He's saying if you're thinking about getting married. Know this: you won't be married long, because LIFE IS SHORT.

Paul wants you to **get your eyes off what is temporal and get your eyes onto what is eternal.**

He doesn't want you to get caught up in getting all you can here, because you are not going to stay here. He wants you to get caught up getting all you can out of Heaven.

- B. Vv. 29-31 – Not telling husbands to neglect their wives. He's not telling you to neglect responsibility, work, and accumulating wealth in this world.

Paul is saying he doesn't want you to live as if that's all that matters.

As if, only your family matters
Only your career matters
Only your money matters
Only your possessions matter

He wants you to live knowing what really matters! Your eternity.

- C. And when eternity matters, you won't indulge in what's temporal.

And why would you, because as Paul says, it's all "passing away."

3. You're Here to LIVE for the Lord

³² I want you to be without concerns. The unmarried man is concerned about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. ³³ But the married man is concerned about the things of the world—how he may please his wife— ³⁴ and his interests are divided.

- A. Being single is a blessing!
Because you can give 100% to the Lord.

"Unmarried" = those who have never married and those who have become Unmarried/divorced.

When you are single or single-again your heart can fully chase after the Lord.
And you have nothing holding you back from serving the Lord.

- B. You can go on mission for the Lord all over the world
You can work 24/7 for the Lord
You can witness full time for the Lord.
You can grow all the time in the Lord.

But you marry, and now you have 2 people to please: the Lord and wife/husband.

C. V. 34

The unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. But the married woman is concerned about the things of the world—how she may please her husband. ³⁵ I am saying this for your own benefit, not to put a restraint on you, but to promote what is proper and so that you may be devoted to the Lord without distraction.

Paul is not making “singleness” the ironclad rule. He’s only saying singleness has big benefits for living for the Lord.

And Paul doesn’t want you to get distracted from what matters most – and that’s loving and living for Jesus.

D. David Jeremiah

Seeking marriage is not wrong, but don’t let that search dominate your life. We must not make finding a marriage partner the supreme goal of our lives by putting all our energies into searching for a mate. We must learn to be in God’s will. A very wise person said, “There is something far worse than single loneliness, and that is marital misery.” Learn contentment, for it is great gain.

If God has a mate for you, He knows how to bring the two of you together. Don’t take things into your own hands.

Wherever you are, whatever your situation, use the time to grow both mentally and spiritually.

³⁶ If any man thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to, if she is getting beyond the usual age for marriage, and he feels he should marry—he can do what he wants. He is not sinning; they can get married. ³⁷ But he who stands firm in his heart (who is under no compulsion, but has control over his own will) and has decided in his heart to keep her as his fiancée, will do well. ³⁸ So, then, he who marries his fiancée does well, but he who does not marry will do better.

³⁹ A wife is bound as long as her husband is living. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to anyone she wants—

only in the Lord. ⁴⁰ But she is happier if she remains as she is, in my opinion. And I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

Application:

- 1) Do as the Lord leads
- 2) Live for the Lord
- 3) Marry one who loves the Lord (more than you)