

1 Corinthians 7 (Part 2): 17-31, 36-40

Living For Eternity

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1 Corinthians chapter 7. Now you might remember from last time that when we started 1 Corinthians chapter 7, we read the first portion of the verses and then I actually took a chunk of verses from down at the end of the chapter and I included those in our study. If we skip over some verses today, it's because we covered them last week.

Okay in conjunction with what Paul was saying concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage that we dealt with last week. Always a wonderful subject, and if you missed it you can listen to it online, but anyway, we're going to begin here in verse 17, and as I said, we're going to try to get through the whole chapter but let me just begin reading through verse 24 and then we'll pray. It says,

“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. ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision but keeping the commandments of God.

²⁰ Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. ²¹ Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) ²² 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. ²³ You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men. ²⁴ So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.” (ESV)

Stop there and let's pray. Heavenly Father, open our hearts to what the apostle Paul is saying here. Help us to really grasp this and the rest of the comments that he makes through the remainder of this chapter, so that we can really assimilate the information, and not just assimilate it in a knowledge sort of a way, but Lord, in a practical sort of a way as well, so that we can apply these things to our lives.

Use the Word as we continue to study through it, as You are so wonderful at doing. Use the Word in our lives to equip us and strengthen us and fill us and teach us. We pray that you would guide and direct our hearts through Jesus Christ, our Savior, amen.

All right, we've read these first few verses. What is the Apostle Paul saying here? But let me just start by saying that when people first come to Christ, when they first put their faith in Jesus and make Him Lord of their lives, they usually find themselves in the midst of a whole lot of changes going on in their lives.

I don't know if you remember when you first came to the Lord. I certainly do. When I first started walking with Jesus in any sort of a significant and genuine sort of a way and I was 25 years old. I remember a lot of things going on in my life that had to change, and that's pretty typical with brand new believers.

These changes that we make are typically inspired, directed by the Holy Spirit as He says. I mean, we come to the Lord and He starts just talking to us about our lives, and how we've been living our lives, and how we've been living our married life. And how we've been using our money, and how we've been, da da da da. And the Lord just speaks to our hearts and starts putting things in order where they've been chaotic and out of order.

The Holy Spirit just gently begins to do that work of changing our lives to be more in the order of His Word. And usually Christians are fairly excited to see those changes take place because they've recognized that the disorder that they'd been walking in before coming to Christ was a very real ball and chain, in their lives and they realized that wow, this is good, this is good that these changes are taking place.

That's not what the apostle Paul's talking about here. Those things I've all just been mentioning to you all those changes that a believer goes through as God is putting things in order in their life. Those aren't the things that Paul is talking about when he says wherever you were when he called you, whatever you were, when you got saved, stay there.

Paul's talking about something else right here. He's talking about the changes that sometimes take place when people come to Christ that are not directed by the Holy Spirit. Instead, they're the byproduct of other influences. Sometimes in their zeal, new believers have such a desire to make a break from the past.

Do you guys remember, some of you guys who really lived, openly whacked out lives before Christ. You came to Jesus, and it was so profound in the sense

of finding Him, and finding His truth, and finding wisdom in His Word that you just, you knew that I just really need to make a break from the kind of life that I've been living. And sometimes in our zeal, and frankly lack of wisdom in those early years of walking with Jesus we can make a break with things that we shouldn't make a break from.

In fact, I have personally dealt with people, and I think this is what Paul is generating Paul's comments here. I've seen people who have even considered getting out of their marriage because they came to Christ and their spouse was still an unbeliever and they literally saw that as part of the ball and chain that was part of their old life.

And it's like, my spouse is still snorting cocaine like I used to and really making it hard for me to want to go to church and saying all kinds of derogatory things about me now that I'm a Christian and whatever. I think I need to get out of this relationship. I think I need to get out of this marriage. This marriage is dragging me down in terms of my walk with the Lord.

Now, those are the kinds of things that the apostle Paul is remarking here about, as far as when we get saved, staying in those areas, and he actually says it 3 times. Look with me again in these verses. He says it first in verse 17, and you can see that he says the exact same thing. He repeats it over and over. He says, *"only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him and to which God has called him."*

In case you didn't get that, he says again in verse 20. Look in verse 20. *"Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called."* And then in verse 24, he says again, *"So brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God."*

Now, again, I want to reiterate, Paul's not talking about sin. Okay? He's not talking about the sinful condition that somebody was in when they were called because in those situations, Paul would agree with Jesus that you need to make a radical departure from those areas of your life and stuff.

But what about those areas that are not sinful in and of themselves? In that case, Paul's message is, stay put in the position of life that you were in when God saved you. Stay there. Don't feel like you've got to make all kinds of quick changes when you come to Jesus. Just stay put and walk with the Lord.

Now, here's the question we always have to ask whenever we see Paul saying something to us in the Word. It's a fine question to ask. And the question is,

why? Why are you saying this, Paul? Why are you telling me to stay put in some of these areas?

Well, there's a very good reason for it, and the reason is, as a follower of Christ, and this is something we forget sometimes, we are now under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Our lives are now under His Lordship. Our lives are now under His direction. Our lives are now under His leading, right?

And it's important that we understand that because a new Christian has to resist the temptation to direct their own life to bring changes into their life that are truly self-directed, self-motivated, and are not being directed by the Holy Spirit, because the Christian life is not about you changing your life.

In case, a lot of people think that's the case. I'll start coming to church, when I, once I get my life in order, good luck, how's that working for you? That's not what the Christian life is about. It's not about changing your life. The Christian life is about submitting your life to the work of the Holy Spirit, that He might do that changing. Right. And do you see that with a new believer, it is vitally important that they understand that, listen, this is not your job.

Don't just start living your life in Christ as if you are in charge and you need to make all these changes. God is going to make these changes and new believers really need to establish this precedent in their lives where they recognize it's the Lordship of Jesus that is in the lead here, not me. And the reason this is such an important message for new believers you see is because up to this point, they've been Lord of their own lives.

They've been making their call. They've been living life as they saw fit. That's what's got them into trouble in the first place. They're living according to the sinful nature. They're living according to the flesh. They're living according to how I feel, right? Now we come to Jesus, and what happens? Well, a lot of these things are old habits that are really, really hard to break, and we still are very feeling oriented people and even as Christians, we've got to get over that.

We're never told to follow our feelings. We're supposed to be following the Lord. Yeah, but pastor Paul, I just feel like - I don't care! Well, I mean, I care, but you know what I mean I care, but don't that but your feelings are not the Lord of your life. Jesus is the Lord of your life and eventually Christians have got to make that change where I am now under new management.

I used to be under my own management. Now I have submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and I need to start listening to Him and being directed by Him,

and that's why Paul's saying this. And I think that there were people in his day as well, who were thinking of getting out of areas of their life that they perhaps should have stayed in, because the Lord wanted to work in the midst of that.

One of the most important Bible passages for new Christians. Let me put this up on the screen for you. You guys all know it trust in the Lord with all of your heart Proverbs 3:5.

Proverbs 3:5 (ESV)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, (And what does it say though? It goes on to say? and lean not or) and do not lean on your own understanding. ”

See, as a new believer that one hits us between the eyes, doesn't it? Because up to the point of walking with Jesus, it's been all my understanding. I lived my life according to my understanding of what I thought was good, what I thought was bad, what I thought was right, what I thought was wrong. Suddenly now I'm in this relationship with God where I'm no longer told to direct the course of my life according to what I think.

I am to, instead, trust in the Lord with all of my heart. I am not to lean upon what I know and what I think is best, I'm to lean upon Him. Yes, this is an important verse for new believers, but let me just say, if you're a new believer, this isn't like you get this thing dialed in and then you're done. Proverbs 3:5 is something that we spend the rest of our Christian lives dialing in.

We spend the rest of our Christian lives learning to walk out and learning to deal with, you know what I mean? So, you see what Paul is warning against here in 1 Corinthians seven is the attitude of new believers that sets out to change the landscape of their lives in their own power and according to their own wisdom, rather than waiting on the Lord. That's hard, isn't it?

Somebody comes to the Lord, and they're married to an unbeliever. They come to Christ their spouse doesn't and now it's like, my home is still the mess that it used to be, even though God's cleaning me up and God's doing a work in my heart, my home is still a mess because my spouse is still living the old life and we're still seeing some of the old people come over and bring some of the old stuff with them and all the baggage. And they want to move on and they want to live for Jesus and they want to be the, washed in the blood born again Christian, that God has called them to be.

And yet there's this thing, and sometimes it's a marriage that seems to be getting in the way. I just want to move on with Jesus. I can just hear people saying that. Pastor Paul, just, I just want to move on with the Lord and this person's dragging me down. I get it. I really do. Problem is, if you decide to do something about that, you have basically just set a precedent in your early Christian life of not waiting on the Lord, but stepping out in your own ability, and in your own wisdom to do what you think is best.

Guys, that's not a good precedent to set for your early Christian life. It's not. It's like we have to, at some point, Lord, I just, I need to learn to be patient. I need to learn to wait on you. I need to learn to trust in you and know that you are the Lord of my life, and here's the other thing that new Christians don't always think about.

Maybe God wants to work in that situation that I want to personally get out of. You know, there's a situation that I'm just anxious to move beyond. In fact, I've seen Christians, new Christians, they're like, they want to, many times they'll want to like get out of their job situation right away because where I work, there's just filled with unbelievers.

You're always going to be around unbelievers, and, but yet they're like, I just really want to get out of this job. There's, I get it. I really do. I get it. Did you stop to consider that God wants to work through you in that job situation or in the job place? Maybe God wants to use you to shine your new light of Christ in that area. See, that's the thing we don't often consider as believers. God has a purpose sometimes.

In verse 21, notice this, Paul says, "*Were you a bondservant when called?*" And a bond servant, your Bible may say slave. Again, don't think of slavery in the terms that we understand slavery necessarily today, or as it was practiced early in the history of our country.

Slavery in the East was, and the Middle East was more of a byproduct of debt. We've talked about this before. Typically, when you got into debt, you became a slave if you couldn't pay off that debt. And a bondservant was someone who had chosen willingly to be a slave for life, and here are people in the early church who have become bondservants slaves for life to their master and then they come to Jesus and they're like, what have I done? What have I done?

I made myself this bondservant for life with this human being and I'm not to be the slave of any man. I am a servant of Jesus, and so Paul writes and he says, so were you a bondservant when you came to know Christ as your Savior?

He's like, hey, don't worry about it. Don't worry about it. That's what he actually says. When he says, don't be concerned, he says, and it's parenthetically here in the ESV. It says, well, if you can gain your freedom, okay, great. Go for it. But if you can't listen, you're still just as much a servant of Jesus Christ and it doesn't mean that your situation, and this is the point.

Okay, so, if you hear anything else about this is the thing to hear. Regardless of the situation, you're in, you're not limiting God. That's, I think, what we as Christians struggle with. I feel like my situation, my situation in life is just limiting God, my marriage. I look at these other Christians who are both believers and I think how much they can do for God.

And I look at my own life and maybe I'm unequally yoked, for example, I'm married to an unbeliever and it's God, do you really want me to live? Of course, God doesn't want me to live this way. It's like trying to roll on a two-wheel cart with one of the wheels broken, and this isn't right. This isn't good. I'm not being effective for the Lord, and I need to get rid of this limp in my life so that I can start to run with those who are running.

And we forget that God, you and I have limitations, God does not have limitations. You guys with me? God does not have limitations, and when you and I take our lives and our situations and our circumstances, whatever they may be, and again, we're not talking about sin here. We're talking about other situations when we take those and when we give them to the Lord and say, Lord, I give this to you.

I give this to you to use it. For your purpose, for your glory, for your kingdom. Oh, stand back, and watch and see what the Lord will begin to do. That's what I mean when I say, wait on the Lord, trust in Him, give your stuff to Him, give your circumstances to Him, let Him work through them. Don't feel like the responsibility is on your shoulders to make something out of what you've got. That's His job to make something out of what you've got.

So you're basically just to say, you say, hey God, this is the time in life when you called me to you. This is the, you knew that I would be in this situation when you brought me to a saving knowledge of you and I see that this situation I'm in is not perfect. The job I've got is not perfect. The marriage I've got is not perfect. My financial situation is not perfect because maybe I got myself into all kinds of debt.

Or this situation is far from perfect. Lord, I give these to you. I give these to you that you might use them that you might be glorified, that you might, and you

just say, Lord, here are my limitations. Boom. Now I give them to the one who is unlimited. I give them to the one who has no limitations, and I pray that you would use it. There are several letters that the apostle Paul wrote that we call the prison epistles, and the reason we call them that is because Paul wrote them from prison.

And when he wrote to the church in Philippi, you can tell that Paul heard from them previously, that they were very concerned about his incarceration. Here's the apostle Paul, who traveled around and told a lot of people about Jesus, started a lot of churches, but now he's cooling his heels in prison, and they're probably praying and thinking to themselves, poor Paul.

He's sitting there in prison, and he can't do what God's called him to do. He's so limited. He's so limited, so, Paul writes to the Philippians. Check this out. This is great. He says, listen,

Philippians 1:12-14 (ESV)

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

I want you (guys) to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has (actually) served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and (in fact) to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. (It's all because of Jesus) And (as a result) most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Isn't that crazy? Paul writes and he says, I know you guys are all upset and you're worried and thinking, here I am in prison and the Gospel has now been greatly hindered. Let me just tell you something about God. He's never greatly hindered and even by the terrible circumstances that I am in otherwise considered terrible. Let me explain to you, this has actually advanced the Gospel. Isn't that amazing?

So you take what you have and, I'm sure that there were probably times when Paul felt like I just want to get out of here and go do the work of the Gospel but you give your circumstances to Him, even if that's a jail cell. And whatever jail cell, figuratively, you may see yourself in. You give that to Him. You let Him do His work.

You're going to find out that even in the midst of whatever you consider to be a jail cell or a limitation in your life, God will use it to advance the Gospel, to advance the kingdom. Even in the midst of those sorts of circumstances. I just think that is one of the coolest things. All right, let's keep reading verse 25,

“Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, (And what that means is there was no previous revelation in God’s Word related to this) but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy.”

Stop there for just a moment. Let me set this up for you a little bit. First of all, your Bible, if you're reading a different translation than the one I am this morning, your Bible may have a different word than betrothed. Your Bible may say, virgin and that's the more common word where it says now concerning the virgin or concerning virgins, it might say.

And the fact of the matter is the word virgin is closer. Well, that is what the original Greek means. It is the word virgin. But you have to understand something about biblical translation. Just because it's closer to the original Greek doesn't mean it's more understandable to you and I. Do you get that? In other words, the Greek word may very well be virgin, but virgin in English might mean something very different to you and I than what Paul meant it to mean.

And back in that day, the word virgin, actually was used to describe many different stations of a woman's life, many different positions and that sort of thing. And in this case, it referred to a woman who was betrothed, engaged, but not yet married. Okay. So, we don't use that word today to describe an engaged woman. Paul did. That's why I said the more accurate Greek word may not be the most accurate word to use because you are an English-speaking American audience and you have your own understanding of what these words mean, and sometimes, it's okay.

There's your quick lesson in biblical interpretation. But apparently this was a hot topic in Corinth, this whole issue of people who were engaged, what are they supposed to do? You remember last week we talked about how there were some Corinthians who were overreacting to the sexual immorality and the things going on in Corinth, so they were suggesting people should never have physical relations between men and women, ever.

The only way we could possibly shine our light for Christ and be different from the culture was by just abstaining, completely, and Paul had to moderate that position, and we saw that last week. He had to say, well, no, marriage is part of

God's original plan, and part of marriage is physical intimacy and there's nothing wrong with that, and it's a beautiful thing within the context of marriage, and every man should have his own wife and every wife, her own husband. If that's their need, and then he talked also about singleness, and we dealt with all that last week.

But again, this is another issue related to what they thought was best and we don't know exactly what they were saying about engaged women. Remember how, when we started the Book of 1 Corinthians, I told you this is like trying to figure out a one-way conversation. You walk into a room, somebody's on the phone and you're sitting there and you're trying to pretend like you're not listening, but you really are, and you're trying to figure out what they're saying based on one side of the conversation.

Well, again, Paul got a letter from the Corinthians, and we didn't, we don't have that letter. We can't read that letter. We don't know exactly what their question was, but there was some question about married women and whether or not guys should go through with the marriage or not. And so, we have to do our best to figure out what the question was based on Paul's response. And in verse 26, his response is, look with me there.

“I think that in view of the present distress (please take note of those two words. We're going to come back to them) it is good for a person to remain as he is.”

What's Paul saying? Well, we talked about this last week. In Paul's opinion, if you could remain unmarried, if you were a single person, and you could stay single, Paul thought that was better off to do so, predicated upon the ministry, because you're freer. Single people are freer to do more in the ministry because they don't have to be concerned about the needs and responsibilities related to marriage.

But he also made it clear that if you wanted to get married, that wasn't a problem, and it wasn't a sin. I think there were some people in Corinth that were hinting, if not outright saying that getting married was a sin in this day and time or whatever we live in or something like that. If they weren't saying it, they were inferring it because several times Paul said it's not a sin to get married, but he does say in verse 26, and I want to bring back now these two words.

If you look again in verse 26, he says *“in view of the present distress.”* Did you catch that? That phrase? Now that probably refers to persecution. Things may be going on politically in the Roman Empire. We don't know everything that

was going on. We don't know what kind of hardships the believers were struggling with at that particular time, but whatever it was, Paul called it a present distress, and he says, in view of that present distress, or in other words, in view of the difficulties that we are dealing with in life right now, personally, and he's saying, this is my opinion. that, if you can stay single, it's probably better to do so as it relates to your ministry in the kingdom of God. I think it's a fairly wise choice, but he goes on to say, verse 27,

“Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸ But if you do marry, (don't worry about it) you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman (there's that word virgin again, if a betrothed woman) marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry (they're going to enter into) worldly troubles, and (frankly, I'd like to)...spare you of that.”

And then he goes on to explain what he means by that. Look at verse 29.

“This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, (And I'll explain that in a minute, guys, so don't get excited) ³⁰ and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, ³¹ and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. (And then he says this, look, very important) For the present form of this world is passing away.”

And that is the key to what Paul's saying. He's not giving married people permission to act as if they're single. He's saying simply this, live your life as if the world is really truly passing away. That's not the way we typically live our lives, is it? We typically live our lives as if the world is going to go on, just the way it has, and just the way it is going on, forever.

And our lives are just going to go on, and we know we're going to come to the end of our life, but we live our lives in this world as if there really is no eternity. And we live the temporal existence of our lives as if there is no eternal existence that awaits us. That's the point of what Paul is saying here. And he's not trying to illegitimize anything that he's mentioned, like marriage and buying and selling and rejoicing. He's not casting any kind of a disparaging light on those things.

But all the things that he mentions there are directed toward this earthly life, right? It's all part of just like living life on the earth and he's saying, live your life as if this world will come to an end and all the things in it. Understand that

they're temporal and live as if they are really temporary. Now, please don't misunderstand what Paul's saying here.

He knew that people had to live and work, and mommies have to change diapers and raise kids and people have to wash things and plant things and pick things, and you've got to live, you've got to go to the store, you've got to buy clothes, you've got to, there's things you've got to do. Paul understands that. He's not saying don't do those things, but at the same time, he's concerned for believers who have invested themselves so deeply in the things of this life that they have become literally their reason for living.

My reason for living is getting up and going to work. I love my job. I am so excited about it, and I love the money I make, and I love buying things, and I'm, this is life for me. This literally becomes everything to me. Right? Or maybe a relationship you're in. You live for that relationship. It is everything to you and it is the very reason you breathe.

And Paul would say you're invested in the wrong things. You've invested yourself in temporal things. Yes, even relationships of that kind are temporal. Stop living for temporary things. That's the point of what he's saying. You know, Paul said a similar thing when he wrote to Timothy. In 2 Timothy, chapter 2, it says,

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (ESV)

Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.”

Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (And then he says this) No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. (which of course is his commanding officer)

But I want you to notice the key word in this passage. It's in the middle line. Do you see it? It's the word entangled. He doesn't say, don't be involved in civilian affairs, does he? He says, don't become entangled in civilian affairs. In other words, that place where what we do in this life is so all encompassing that anything related to God and serving God has taken a backseat now. It's second or third or 10th in our life behind these other things that have taken this place of importance.

If that happens people, we've become entangled. Again, he's not telling you that, you don't ever do anything related to life to sit around and, let's all go up on our roof and just wait for the rapture. Don't go to work. He's not saying that. He

knows you have to live your life. Don't become entangled in the things of this life to the point where they are the very reason for your existence and where they begin to just subtly push Jesus farther and farther into the distant past of your focal attention in your life.

Now, as we go on, you'll notice that we've come up to like verse 32, right? But we skipped. Well, we covered those last week. We covered up to verse 35 last week as part of that message, so skip down to verse 36. I don't typically take verses out of order, but I did in this case because it was connected. Verse 36, however, says,

“If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed, if his passions are strong, and it has to be, (well fine) let him do as he wishes: let them marry—it is no sin.”

Notice he says again, it is no sin. That's a repeat. of several comments of the very same ilk. And so, it makes me think that there were people that were trying to infer that it might be a sin. But he says,

“³⁷...whoever is firmly established in his heart, being under no necessity but having his desire under control, and has determined this in his heart, to keep her as his betrothed, he will do well. ³⁸ So then he who marries his betrothed does well... and he who refrains from marriage will do even better.”

And if you have to hear a rephrasing of what Paul is saying here, I mean, this is what he wrote earlier in the chapter. *Whether you choose to be married or stay single, they're both acceptable in God's eyes.* Paul felt that it was better to stay single if you could, but some people can't, and that's why he says in verse 37, look again in verse 37, he says,

“But whoever is (look at this) firmly established (and determined to do this) in his heart, being under no necessity but having his desire under control, and has determined this in his heart...”

See, first of all. It has to be a firm commitment not to marry. And then secondly, he says if they've got their desire under control, remember we talked about that your desire has to be under control. You have to have self-control related to being single or it's not going to work. You're going to say, I'm single, and then you're going to sin. But it needs to be something directed by the Lord. And we talked about last week, singleness is actually a gift. There's the gift of singleness. Not very many of us have it. Then he ends the chapter by saying, verse 39,

“A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes...”

What is that a restatement of? Marriage is temporary. Marriage is for this life. And when this life comes to an end, with either one or both, the marriage is over. Right? That's why if one person dies, she's free to remarry. There's no adultery going on. We all know this. This is simple. But we forget to apply the implications of what he's saying. Marriage is temporary. It's a temporal thing. That's why he said earlier, let the man who is married live like he's not married.

Or the man with the wife live like he doesn't have. He's not saying don't take care of your wife, don't love your wife, don't be a married man. It's temporary. He's saying don't make that the focal point of your life where that's all you live for, because it's, that's living on a temporary basis. That's living your life for temporal things.

Look what he ends this verse with though. After he says the woman, if her husband passes away, she's free to remarry, sure. But look at the last few words, *“only in the Lord.”* Only in the Lord. In other words, if she marries again, needs to be a believer. She needs to marry a believer. Do you guys remember last week? Paul said, if you're a believer and you're married to an unbeliever, don't divorce that person just because they're an unbeliever.

If they want to leave you, that's a different situation altogether. Let them go, because God's called us to be free. But, if they're more than willing to stay married to you, do not divorce them simply because they haven't come to Christ. That's what Paul said about believers married to unbelievers, but he also didn't want believers to knowingly marry an unbeliever. In the next letter that we look at, 2 Corinthians, you guys know this, Paul is going to call that the state of being unequally yoked with an unbeliever.

And that was something that we are never to do. Parents who have small kids, get this through your kids' heads. Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. Okay? It's something that as parents we're supposed to teach our kids. You will save them from incredible heartache if this gets through their heart and their mind. Getting back to the widow who wants to remarry, Paul says, that's fine, but then he adds in verse 40, look with me there,

“Yet in my judgment she is happier if she remains as she is. (And again, this is the device, the advice that Paul gave in term predicated upon ministry and also predicated upon the present distress that they were dealing with in Corinth. And he says) And I think that I too have the Spirit of God.”

And I think that last comment is more than likely the result of people saying from Corinth that some of these other people who were giving their advice, which Paul didn't particularly think was good advice. They were claiming to be operating by the Spirit and saying that they were bragging about the fact that they were being led by the Spirit and their advice to them about these things, and so Paul says, I think I have the Spirit of God too.

It sounds a little bit snarky, but I don't think that's his intention. I think Paul's just simply saying, I have the Spirit of the Lord ministering through my heart as well. That's where we're going to stop. I sincerely hope that over the last two weeks we have made 1 Corinthians chapter 7 a bit more understandable as it relates to what Paul is saying in this chapter. It can be one of those chapters that is fairly easily misunderstood if we're not really connected with what the apostle is saying and why he's saying it.