

The Remedy to Sexual Immorality

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1 Corinthians 7:1-7

OPENING STATEMENTS

1. Please take your Bibles and turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 7
2. We are beginning this wonderful chapter and seeking now to answer questions the Corinthians wrote to the Apostle Paul
3. Paul uses the two words that begin verse one, “Now concerning” in other places to indicate a new topic (7:25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1)
4. Now he responds to questions they previous wrote to him about
5. Notice what he says beginning at verse 1 through verse 7

BIBLE VERSE

1 Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

2 But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.

3 The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

6 But this I say by way of concession, not of command.

7 Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.

INTRODUCTION

1. We just finished chapter 6 where in verses 12-20 Paul confronts the Corinthians old lifestyle of sexual immorality
2. Essentially he told us that sex sin harms, controls, and perverts the body
3. Our bodies are not for sexual immorality but for the Lord and they are the temple of the Holy Spirit

4. Now as we move on to chapter 7, he gives guidelines on singleness and marriage
5. In the first 7 verses that we are considering this morning, he gives **“the Remedy to Sexual Immorality”**
6. Sex is for marriage
7. God created it for a husband and his wife for pleasure and procreation
8. God said to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28 (NASB) God blessed them; and God said to them, **“Be fruitful and multiply**, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”
9. God gave Adam and Eve the responsibility of procreating—having children.
10. Even in Genesis 18:10-12 (NASB), we hear that the sexual union was also for pleasure when we hear Sarah’s response to God saying she would have children. She was 99 years old. He said, “I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. 11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. 12 Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have become old, shall I have **pleasure**, my lord being old also?”
11. There are other reasons for marriage that we will hear today from God’s Word

12. But as we begin, Paul wants the Corinthians to understand that to avoid sexual immorality, you need to marry

1

Marry (vv.1-2)

CELIBACY IS GOOD (V.1)

“It is good for a man not to touch a woman”

1. To “touch a woman” was a common Jewish euphemism for sexual intercourse
2. Proverbs 6:29 (NASB) So is the one who goes in to his neighbor’s wife; whoever touches her will not go unpunished.
3. To “not touch a woman” or to have sexual intercourse refers to being single

MARRIAGE IS BETTER (V.2)

“But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband”

1. Celibacy may be good but it is also tempting
2. Marriage is God’s only solution to sexual immorality “
 1. “Each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband”
 2. “Have” (Gr.echo, pres.act,imp.)
 3. The use of the present tense indicates that each is to be constantly devoted to the other

4. The imperative indicates that this is the only place where is blessed by God
 5. Lenski says, “The two accusatives “his own wife” and “her own husband” clearly point to monogamy and accord with the original divine institution of marriage” (The Interpretation of St. Paul’s First and Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963. Print.)
3. God created sex for marriage but will judge fornicators and adulterers
 1. Hebrews 13:4 (NASB) Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.
 2. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 (NASB) For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.
 4. Sex is not the only purpose for marriage
 1. Marriage is for pleasure – Proverbs 5:18-19 (NASB) Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. 19 As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love.
 2. Marriage is for partnership – Genesis 2:18 (NASB) Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”
 3. Marriage is a picture of the church (Eph.5:23-32)

4. Marriage is for purity – It protects from sexual immorality by meeting the need for physical fulfillment.
5. Marriage is called the “grace of life” in 1 Peter 3:7 (NASB) You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

2

Enjoy Each Another (vv.3-5)

BIBLE VERSE

3 The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

THE HUSBAND AND WIFE HAVE A SEXUAL OBLIGATION TO EACH OTHER (V.3)

1. Both must fulfill their duty to each other
2. God holds all marriage to be sacred
3. He holds sexual relations between a husband and wife to be proper and obligatory

4. Paul makes it clear that physical relations within marriage are not simply a privilege and a pleasure but a responsibility
5. Husbands and wives have a duty to give sexual satisfaction to each other
6. There is no distinction between men and women
7. The husband has no more rights in this regard than the wife

EACH HAS AUTHORITY OVER THE OTHER (V.4)

1. Elsewhere Paul teaches that the husband is the head of the wife (11:3; Eph. 5:23)
2. But here he plainly declares that in respect to the sexuality of husband and wife, there is complete equality
3. Each partner has authority over the body of his or her spouse, and both submit themselves to one another
4. Thus they experience complete mutuality
5. By the marriage covenant, each partner is given the right over the spouse's body for the satisfaction of the other.
(MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. The MacArthur Study Bible. electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.)

STOP DEPRIVING ONE ANOTHER (V.5)

This command may indicate that this kind of deprivation was going on among believers, perhaps reacting to the gross sexual sins of their past and wanting to leave all that behind.

(MacArthur, John, Jr., ed. The MacArthur Study Bible. electronic ed. Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.)

Paul gives only two reasons for temporary abstinence between a husband and wife:

1. It is by agreement for a time
2. They may devote themselves to prayer

Their time is limited “because of a lack of self-control”

If they aren’t careful Satan will tempt them to sexual immorality or adultery if they don’t “come together again.”

QUOTE

After the agreed-upon “time” of abstinence, sexual desires intensify and a spouse becomes more vulnerable to sinful desire.

John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible. electronic ed.
Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997. Print.

3

Be Single (vv.6-7)

BIBLE VERSE

1 Corinthians 7:6 (NASB) But this I say by way of concession, not of command.

BY WAY OF CONCESSION NOT OF COMMAND

A better translation of the Gr. would be “awareness” or “to have a mutual opinion.

1. Paul understood the Lord’s teaching on marriage
2. His teaching was in full agreement

QUOTE

But this I say refers back to what has just been said about marriage. I think Paul was saying that he was aware of the goodness of being single and celibate, yet aware also of the privileges and responsibilities of marriage. His comments were not meant as a command for every believer to be married.

John MacArthur, 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984.
Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

BIBLE VERSE

1 Corinthians 7:7 (NASB) Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.

SINGLENESS IS A GIFT (V.7)

1. Singleness offers opportunities that marriage doesn't
2. When one is single, he can give complete undistracted devotion to the Lord
3. Paul says in v.32 that "One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord"

QUOTE

Obviously, singleness has many practical advantages. It allows much greater freedom in where and how a person serves the Lord. He is freer to move around and to set his own hours and schedule. As Paul points out later in the chapter, married persons have many cares and concerns that the unmarried do not have (vv. 32–34).

Rachel Saint served as a single missionary among the Auca Indians of Ecuador for many years without companionship. She poured out her life and her love to the Indians and found great blessing and fulfillment.

John MacArthur, 1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press, 1984.
Print. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

BIBLE VERSE

Matthew 19:3-11 (NASB) 3 Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?” 4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.” 7 They *said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?” 8 He *said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. 9 And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.” 10 The disciples *said to Him, “If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry.” **11 But He said to them, “Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given.**

MARRIAGE IS A GIFT (V.7)

BIBLE VERSE

Genesis 2:18-25 (NASB) Then the Lord God said, **“It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”** 19 Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. 21 So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. 22 The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. 23 The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” 24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

4

Conclusion

FINAL THOUGHTS...

1. As we have learned this morning, sex is for marriage
2. We are not to give ourselves to fornication or adultery
3. That is never to be named among us (Eph.5:3)

4. If you feel you have the gift of singleness then you are to have a life of celibacy
5. If you cannot control your body then you are to marry and not “burn in your lust”
6. Paul says in verse 9 that “if they do not have self-control, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.”
7. Let’s thank God for His wonderful gifts, whether it is singleness or marriage
8. Our desire is to give Him glory in either
9. If you’re here today and have never given your life to Jesus Christ, I urge you to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ
10. You can do that as we pray
11. Let’s pray