



## Living Content as Called

### RECAP

**This week's focus: We can be content in the Lord no matter our relationship status.**

Sex and sexuality have been a common theme in both Chapters 5 and 6 in 1 Corinthians. Chapter 7 is no different. In the face of the 'everything goes' mentality that existed in Corinthian culture in the realm of sex, verse 1 makes it appear as though some Christians jumped to the opposite end of the spectrum and were practicing asceticism. This question in verse 1 sets the stage for the rest of the chapter which is all about sex in marriage and singleness.

In verses 2-5 Paul speaks to the gift of sex within the marital covenant and highlights the fact that the spouses' bodies belong to the other. Paul begins to nudge those who are single (never married and widowed explicitly in verse 8) to embrace their singleness, but, recognizes that not all people have the same self-control he has, in which case he says it is better they marry.

After reminding married folks to not seek divorce or separation, Paul has words of encouragement for those believers who find themselves in a marriage to a non-believer. Paul's main charge to those believers is to stay in the marriage as long as they have a say in it. Who knows, their faithfulness and patience could lead to the salvation of their unbelieving spouse!

Verses 17-24 take an interesting turn as Paul addresses the topics of circumcision and slavery, two topics he addresses in several of his letters. It appears Paul is trying to make one simple message stand out the most by using these two metaphors: each person should remain steadfast in the relational situation they were called to in that specific moment.

From here Paul transitions to addressing the unmarried folks from verses 25-40. And within this section Paul continues to encourage everyone to remain content in the situation they were already in. Married? Stay married. Single? Remain single. And if a single chooses to marry? That's OK too. Within all this Paul suggests that those who are like him (single) are free from certain troubles and anxieties that his married friends encounter. Therefore, he concludes that while there is nothing wrong in being married, the pursuit of the single life might be even "better."

The single's life, while certainly not stress free, is free of the stress that is found when two sinners come together in marriage, and in this, a life lived in undivided devotion to the Lord becomes a bit more attainable.



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### SHARE (5-10 min)

1. Icebreaker Question: What's your favorite romance story or movie? Why is it your favorite?

### STUDY (about 30 min) Read 1 Corinthians 7

2. What stood out to you about the passage or message on Sunday? Is there anything that was unclear, or that you have questions about?
3. Equality in marriage was scandalous in 1<sup>st</sup> century Corinth. After reading 1 Corinthians 7:1-5, what are some practical ways this equality is to look for a biblical marriage?
4. As a group, summarize the 3 different groups of people Paul addresses in verses 8-16, as well as his advice for each group.
5. What is the difference between "missionary dating" (dating a non-believer holding out hope of conversion) versus what Paul describes in verses 12-16?
6. Give some examples from your own life, or lives you've observed, where you've seen "worldly troubles" and "anxieties" that came as a direct result of being married that prevented "undivided devotion to the Lord."
7. Share about a season in life where you longed to be in "different shoes." (ie. Longed to be married while single, or, struggled with the desire of singleness while married). How did you get through that season?
8. What kinds of circumstances can keep us from having a positive mindset regarding our relationship status? How can a new perspective about our relationship status help us walk in contentment? What could contentment look like for you this week?

### SUPPORT (15 min)

Whether married or single, pray for the relationships in your group. Ask God to help you with your attitude and perspective about this season of your life. Pray that He would give you the strength to be content and faithful as you focus on Him.