

Honouring God in Body, Spirit and Relationships

Key Text:	1 Corinthians 6-7
Key Verse(s):	“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Corinthians 6:20)

Background to the Study

Chapter 6 continues Paul’s warnings to the Corinthian church, focusing on lawsuits and sexual immorality—two issues damaging their witness. In verses 1–11, Paul rebukes believers for suing each other in secular courts. He argued Christians should resolve disputes among themselves, following Christ’s teaching, just as Jews in Corinth handled their own affairs. But Greek members enjoyed public debate and competition, turning arguments into entertainment. Paul condemned this, urging them to accept being wronged rather than damage the Gospel’s reputation before unbelievers.

The second half of the chapter addresses immorality. Paul reminded them they had been washed, sanctified, and justified in Christ, so they should honour God with their bodies. The popular saying, “**All things are lawful unto me,**” reflected a belief that the soul was good but the body bad—leading some to harshly deny the body’s needs, and others to indulge every desire, thinking it didn’t affect the soul. Paul countered this, warning against practices like temple prostitution, and insisting that bodies belong to the Lord. He urged them to “flee fornication,” knowing temptation’s power and the danger of overestimating one’s ability to resist.

Chapter 7 shifts to answering the Corinthians’ questions about marriage and singleness, in a culture steeped in immorality. Paul affirmed God’s design: marriage between one man and one woman, for life.

v.2: Is sex sinful? No—within marriage.

vv.7–9: Can single Christians marry? Yes, if it’s God’s will.

vv.10–11: If a spouse leaves, don’t divorce; if divorce happens, remain unmarried or reconcile—assuming the marriage was biblically valid.

vv.12–16: Should believers leave unbelieving spouses? No—stay if possible, as the believer’s example may lead to the spouse’s salvation. If the unbeliever leaves, the believer is not condemned, but remarriage is not permitted.

Paul urged contentment in whatever state God called them—married or single, circumcised or not, slave or free—trusting God’s sovereignty.

Further questions included:

vv.25–35: Should an unmarried daughter marry? Paul, giving personal advice due to coming persecution, suggested remaining single but did not forbid marriage.

vv.36–38: Fathers of engaged daughters should decide wisely; either choice is good.

vv.39–40: Marriage vows last until death; widows may remarry “in the Lord.”

In summary, Paul balanced the value of marriage with the freedom and focus of singleness, urging that every area of life be shaped by one’s relationship with Christ.

Testimony from Our Day

More than twelve years ago, my father-in-law planted some tulips in our back garden. Now, my gardening book says tulips love sunshine — but this corner of the garden is in shade about 97% of the time. It also says they need rich, fertile soil — but what my father-in-law didn’t know was that the mound he planted them in used to be a pile of old tyres, just covered with a thin layer of dirt!

By all accounts, these tulips shouldn’t thrive. But every spring, without fail, their bright red and yellow petals burst into life, lighting up that shady corner. They don’t seem to know their surroundings are “less than ideal.”

That’s exactly what Paul was getting at in 1 Corinthians 7:24 — or, in today’s words: **“Bloom where you’re planted.”** The believers in Corinth were surrounded by a culture full of sexual immorality, and some wondered if they needed to completely change their circumstances to live faithfully. Paul’s answer? You can follow Jesus right where you are — whether married or single, circumcised or not, slave or free.

And we see this truth lived out all around us. I think of Ruth, who longed for children but never had any of her own — yet God gave her thousands of “children in the Lord” through her ministry in Africa. I think of Marie, a young mum battling a debilitating illness, whose life still radiates joy and peace. I remember Reuel, a minister who lost almost all speech after a stroke, yet for over twenty-five years still managed to encourage others with his “amen” and his smile. And I think of May and Gert, who prayed for decades for their unbelieving husbands — and saw God answer in His perfect timing.

It’s easy to believe that if our circumstances changed, we could serve God better. But that’s not always His plan. Sometimes His call is to **brighten the corner where you are** — to show the world that no matter what’s going on around you, you can live with joy, peace, and contentment when you belong to Him.

A Closer Look

Question 1	What two points did Paul make regarding settling disputes among Christians? When Christians disagree, how does Paul say we should handle it – and why does it matter for our witness? (I Corinthians 6:1-7)
Question 2	Paul talks about being “one with Christ” – what does that actually look like in everyday life? Discuss the implications of being redeemed and how that affects lifestyle choices. (I Corinthians 6:17-20)
Question 3	What are some real-life ways you can protect your integrity – both before God and in the eyes of others? (I Corinthians 6:1,7,10,11,18,19)
Question 4	In I Corinthians 7, Paul speaks into different life situations. Which ones does he mention, and what’s his main point in each?
Question 5	What Bible doctrine does I Corinthians 7 teach? What guidance does Paul give to married believers, and what’s the reason behind it? (I Corinthians 7:10-11,39-40)
Question 6	Whether you’re married or single, what are some ways you can use your season of life to glorify God?

Take Home

When we truly grasp the incredible price Jesus paid to redeem us, we start to see just how precious our salvation really is. That awareness changes how we live.

When we face situations that could compromise our integrity, the best move is often to step away – to remove ourselves before we get pulled in. Doing this isn’t weakness; it’s a powerful witness to a watching world that Jesus not only saves but also keeps us.

Staying faithful and content where God has placed us isn’t always easy. It takes daily commitment and real courage. But the good news is, we’re not left to do it alone – when we look to God for the grace we need, He will always supply it.