

I. **Review:** 1Cor 6:18-20; 7:1-5 – FREE TO SERVE; MARRIAGE

A. Flee Sexual Immorality

- i. Don't think you are strong enough to stand against it
- ii. You are not your own – serve God with your body!

B. It is good to be single and also good to be married

- i. If you suffer from sexual temptation it is better to be married
- ii. Some of Paul's advice concerning celibacy was because of the present crisis Corinth was undergoing (1 Co 7:26-28).

C. Marriage is ownership

- i. As Christ loves the church and takes care of it, husbands ought to take care of their wives and love them as their own bodies (Eph 5:28-30).
- ii. Use your sexual relationships to serve your spouse, not to manipulate.

II. **Continuation** – *The One-Flesh Covenant: Marriage*

A. 1Corinthians 7:6-7 (ESV) *Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. (7) I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.*

i. Concession, permission, suggestion...

1. The concession or suggestion was what Paul said in the previous verse concerning withholding fulfilling their conjugal duties for a limited time to pray.
2. This was not something they had to do, just a suggestion.

ii. Gift? What gift?

1. Paul was single.

- a. He wished everyone to be the same as he but understood that depended on whether or not they were gifted in a particular way.

2. Some gifts are miraculous – 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

3. Some gifts are non-miraculous, still distributed today by the Spirit – Romans 12:6-8

4. I believe Paul makes reference to what Jesus says in Matthew 19:11-12:

- a. Jesus talks about *Eunuchs* (**Greek definition**: to have the care of the bed or bedchamber; this being the principal employment of eunuchs in the eastern countries, particularly in the apartments of queens and princesses. These are they whom our Lord says are made eunuchs by men, merely for the above purpose)
- b. Marriage was only able to be received by some, whom Jesus grouped into not belonging to this category of eunuchs:
  - i. Eunuchs from birth who may not need to marry - they don't experience a passion for sexual intimacy
  - ii. Eunuchs by men (castration) – something that was typically done to some slaves in ancient times by the king to protect their harem
  - iii. Eunuchs by decision for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven - they remain celibate for the sake of God's kingdom.

iii. Only those who can accept God's definition of marriage should enter into that covenant.

iv. To understand contextually what Jesus is saying, it is best for us to study this passage in Matthew 19 about marriage:

B. Matthew 19:4-6 (ESV) *He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, (5) and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and*

*his mother and hold fast 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 not man separate."*

**i. He Created Them From the Beginning...**

**1. Man and Woman**

- a. Distinct Gender Roles
- b. One man and one woman make a marriage
- c. Woman was made suitable for the man (Gen 2:18). No other suitable alternatives!

**2. Male Gender Role**

- a. In order to cleave (hold fast) to a wife you must leave mommy and daddy.
- b. The man must be self-sufficient, i.e., not dependent on his parents
- c. The man must cleave (hold onto – Gr: “be glued to”) his wife – they will be one flesh. No longer two, but one.
- d. In His role the male leads and has headship over the woman (1 Co 11:3).
- e. He is not married to a career or to a hobby but to his wife!

**3. Female Gender Role**

- a. The female who marries must be ready to embrace her role as a wife
- b. A woman should love her husband and manage her household, not pursue a career or run after the image of “woman’s lib” (Titus 2:4-5)
- c. The woman is to be in submission to her husband (1 Pe 3:1-2; Titus 2:5).

**4. One Flesh... No longer Two...**

- a. Genesis 2:18 ESV **Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."**

- i. Even though the Spirit had said through Paul “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman”, we see here that God also said “It is not good for the man to be alone.”
- ii. The word "good" in this place "does not mean morally good, but that it is for man's best interests in some circumstances to remain single and in others to marry.

- b. That phrase, “helper fit for him”, which in the King James reads, “help meet for him”, is really translated out of two Hebrew words: “ezer neged”.

- i. Ezer: aid or help

- ii. Neged: a front, that is, part opposite; specifically a counterpart, or mate.

- iii. Let’s suffice to say at this moment that “help meet” also means “helpmate”; meet (neged) meaning suitable mate, amongst the other definitions above. Therefore the wife is to be a suitable helper; a counter-part to her man.

- iv. The man leaves the home to find his counterpart. Not only do they physically fit together (one-flesh), but also they ought to satisfy each other emotionally and intellectually, in ways animals were not able to be Adam's counterparts.

**ii. God Does the Joining**

**1. Marriage is patterned after God’s Covenants**

- a. It is a divine institution. It is not man-made
- b. It is a promise unto death
- c. It brings blessings when honored
- d. It brings curses when dishonored

2. **Man ought not to separate...**
  - a. **This bond is not intended to be broken by any man or man-made institution**
  - b. **There is no earthly authority that can dissolve the marriage bond**
- iii. **Challenges to God's Design**
  1. **Women's Lib**
  2. **Gay Agenda**
  3. **Health Issues**
    - a. **Sick Children**
    - b. **Sick Spouse**
  4. **Societal Pressures**
    - a. **Job Preparedness**
  5. **Economy**
  6. **All these challenge Man's determination to be glued to his wife and the woman's conviction to remain submissive to her husband.**
    - a. **Whatever tries to unglue you will derail God's design.**
      - i. **physically (sexually),**
      - ii. **emotionally (hobbies, jobs, career, friendship) or**
      - iii. **spiritually (to Jesus)**
- iv. **Jesus and the Church**
  1. **Ephesians 5:31-32 ESV "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." (32) This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.**
  2. **The best way to understand the Unity and Oneness of the Marriage is by being bonded to Jesus**
  3. **Christians are in the best position to understand God's design for marriage better than those in the world.**