

1 Corinthians 7:17-40

Married
(1-16)

1 Corinthians Chapter 7

Change
in Status
(17-24)

stay in place
circumcision
stay in place
slaves, free
stay in place

keep
command-
ments

Un-
married
(25-40)

good to
remain
counsel
(advice)

crisis
marry?
time short
how to act
passing away
marry?

shown mercy
distracted
undivided
devotion
Spirit of God

Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts. Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you – although if you can gain your freedom, do so. For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord's freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings. Brothers and sisters, each person, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

1 Co 7:17-24 (NIV)

Paul's Rule

**each believer to remain in the situation
they were in when God called them**

Fate - No

Loving God - Yes...

freedom to choose

desires a personal relationship

Examples

**circumcision - neither circumcision nor
uncircumcision matter**

slaves - Lord's freed persons

free - slaves (doulos) of the Lord

Bought with a price

Saviour and Lord

He gets first place

Our Situation

- things of the world are temporary
- focus on the eternal things of God

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.. Col 3:17 (NIV)

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Matt 6:33 (NIV).

Concerning the Unmarried

**- switch from a command (rule) to
counsel (advice)**

**judgment from one who is trustworthy
and I think that I too have the Spirit of
God.**

have to make your own decisions

Now about virgins: I have no command from the Lord, but I give a judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. Because of the present crisis, I think that it is good for a man to remain as he is. Are you pledged to a woman? Do not seek to be released. Are you free from such a commitment? Do not look for a wife. But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they do not; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs — how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world — how he can please his wife — and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world — how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.

1 Co 7:25-35 (NIV)

Time Crunch

remain as is

- because of the present crisis
- time is running short

and you know very well that the day of the
Lord will come like a thief in the night.

1 Th 5:2 (NIV)

time to get started!

Trouble with Married Life

From now on those who:

- have wives should live as if they do not
- mourn, as if they did not
- are happy, as if they were not
- buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep
- use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them

**consider everything from
God's eternal perspective**

If anyone is worried that he might not be acting honorably toward the virgin he is engaged to, and if his passions are too strong and he feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married. But the man who has settled the matter in his own mind, who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will, and who has made up his mind not to marry the virgin — this man also does the right thing. So then, he who marries the virgin does right, but he who does not marry her does better.” 1 Co 7:36-38 (NIV)

A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. In my judgment, she is happier if she stays as she is – and I think that I too have the Spirit of God.” 1 Co 7:39-40 (NIV)

Summary

- Paul was an apostle whose commands and counsel should be heeded
- marriage was perfectly acceptable
- better to be unmarried, if appropriate
- remain in the situation you were in when you were called by the Lord
- be a servant of Christ - He gets first place
- be holy, devoted to the Lord
- now is the time

Be a good and faithful servant