

1 Corinthians 7:1-7 (May 15, 2022)

OPENING QUESTION:

SERMON DISCUSSION: How were you impacted by the sermon? What new thoughts or lessons did you discover? In what ways did you find yourself challenged and/or encouraged?

READ 1 Corinthians 7:1-7

NOTE: In the first six chapters of 1 Corinthians, Paul addresses issues concerning the church that had been brought to his notice by Chloe's people. However, in chapter seven there is a shift. Paul begins to deal with topics raised by the Corinthians themselves by saying, "Now concerning the matters about which you wrote" (1 Corinthians 7:1).

1. Previously, Paul speaks to the issue of sexual immorality (adultery and fornicating with prostitutes-1 Corinthians 5:1-8; 6:12-20) that had been accepted by **some** in the church who thought that bodily appetites were matters of indifference for believers. However, there were **others** who held an opposite opinion which prompted them to present to Paul that statement in 1 Corinthians 7:1, "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman". Why is this a dangerous statement?

2. a. Discuss one purpose for marriage according to 1 Corinthians 7:2.

b. Name other purposes God intends for marriage from the following scriptures:

Genesis 1:27-28

Genesis 2:18-25

Deuteronomy 11:18-19

Ephesians 5:22-32

3. "Verses 3-5 prove crucial in understanding the role of sex in marriage. It is something each partner 'owes' to the other. So it should never be used as a bribe or reward for good behavior or as something to be withheld as a threat or punishment. Husband and wife alike must be sensitive to the emotional and physical states of each other and not insist on sex on demand. But neither should one partner consistently try to get out of satisfying his or her spouses conjugal needs. The mutual agreement and submission Paul command here should in fact apply to most all areas of marriage (Eph. 5:21)."
(The NIV Application Commentary-1 Corinthians p. 137 by Craig L. Blomberg)

Answer the following questions regarding 1 Corinthians 7:3-5:

- a. What may have been surprising about the issue of authority?
- b. What is Paul **not** saying?
- c. What is implied about one of the purposes of sexual intimacy?
- d. What is the primary principal Paul is conveying in 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 (Matthew 22:39; Ephesians 5:21, 28-30)?

4. John Calvin said, "[Celibacy], I acknowledge, is an excellent gift; but keep it in view, that it is a gift. Learn, besides, from the mouth of Christ and of Paul, that it is not common to all, but is given only to a few." (Ligonier.org regarding 1 Corinthians 7:6-7)

Consider God's purposes for giving someone the gift of celibacy.