

Outline: “More than Marriage, Unto the Lord” 1 Corinthians 7:25–40

Worship Service – September 28, 2025

Introduction: Modern confusion and the struggles of the Corinthian church

- In today’s age of information overload, people are also confused about the value and meaning of marriage.
- The believers in Corinth were also unsure: should we marry or remain single?
- This passage is Paul’s advice for such confusion.

Context: Paul’s teaching on marriage and singleness

- Paul responds to the church’s questions about marriage, divorce, and male–female relations.
- He does not reject marriage; at times he even recommends it to avoid sexual temptation.
- What matters is not marital status but being “called and saved by the Lord.”
- In the previous section, Paul taught about living faithfully in the state of one’s calling (circumcision, slavery).
- Here, the focus is on singleness, engagement, and remarriage.

Basic premise: Paul’s advice vs. the Lord’s command

- Paul’s recommendations here are “advice,” not “commands from the Lord” (v.25).
- He encourages singleness, remaining engaged, or not remarrying, but not as binding rules.

1. Choosing the best according to the situation

• Why Paul recommends singleness: the present crisis (v.26)

- The church faced sexual temptation, immorality, and persecution from both Jews and Gentiles.
- Maintaining family peace and raising children was difficult in that environment.
- To avoid unnecessary troubles, Paul suggests remaining single (v.28).

• Either choice is not sin

- For Paul, marriage or singleness “is not a sin.”
- “Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released” (v.27).
- “If you think you should marry, do as you wish” (v.36).
- The key is to make faith–based decisions.

• Advice to the engaged (vv.36–38)

- Considering the cultural context (age of marriage, weight of engagement).
- If remaining engaged seems improper, marry (v.36).
- But if they freely decide to remain engaged, that too is honorable (v.37).
- The important thing: making responsible, faith–driven decisions.

• The Bible calls for autonomous faith–based decisions

- Some prefer just obeying orders without thinking.
- Yet faith requires discernment and decision–making.

- In life choices, Scripture calls us to decide by faith, according to biblical values.

2. What is the standard? – (1) This world is temporary

- “An eternal perspective” – “looking toward the end” (vv.29–31).
- “The time is short”: worldly values and systems are passing away.
- Nothing here is eternal: goods decay, values shift, forms vanish.
- At the resurrection, there will be no marriage (Mark 12:25).
- Marriage and earthly matters are not ultimate.
- “Those who have wives, as if they had none”: do not absolutize marriage.
- “Those who weep, as though not weeping; those who rejoice, as though not rejoicing”: not controlled by fleeting emotions.
- “Those who buy, as though they did not possess”: not clinging to wealth.
- The important point: this world is temporary; only what is eternal in Christ endures.

3. What is the standard? – (2) Concentration on the Lord

- “Be free from concern”: have an undivided heart (v.32).
- Believers must focus on what pleases the Lord and how to serve Him.
- Paul’s recommendation of singleness was not to restrict but to benefit the church (v.35).
- Wholehearted service to the Lord is a blessing for all Christians, not just pastors.
- Our decisions must be guided by: “How can I please the Lord? How can I serve Him?”
- Especially in difficult times, Paul presents singleness as an option that allows greater devotion to the Lord.

Conclusion: Living with an eternal perspective and focus on the Lord

- We too face many confusing choices today.
- Paul does not give an “absolute answer,” but two vital standards:
 1. This world is temporary: fix your eyes on eternal life and the Lord Himself.
 2. Seek how to please and serve the Lord: make this the foundation of every decision.
 - Paul recommended singleness not to bind us, but to free us to focus on serving the Lord wholeheartedly.
 - Decisions must not be based on worldly values or others’ expectations, but on these two standards.
 - The Lord leads us not into bondage, but into a dignified life fully devoted to Him.
 - May this coming week be one where we walk trusting the Lord, making Him our standard.