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A1216 – April 15, 2012 – 1 Corinthians 7:1-7
Do Not Deprive One Another

If you would turn once more to the book of 1 Corinthians 6. We are at a transition point today in the text. But before we move forward let's step back and recall 1 Cor 6:12-20. This is the most pertinent NT text on the proper use of the body. Paul has repeated a popular slogan at Corinth in verse 6, "All things are lawful for me," but Paul modified it by adding, "but not all things are beneficial." We may have freedom to do many things in the Christian life but that does not make them beneficial to others, nor he says, will I "be mastered by anything." The Corinthians argued in verse 13 that the body was something that would be done away with so then it could be used to fulfill whatever urges it had, but Paul said the body was for the Lord and in verse 14 it would be raised. Verse 13, "Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, you can't extrapolate the logic from food to sex, Paul says the body is "for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. 14 Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power." There's the resurrection. In verse 15 our bodies are parts of Christ as your hands are part of your body, each of us is a part of Christ, "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!" And then he goes into more arguments. Verse 16, Why shall it never be? "do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body *with her*? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." You've established a blood tie with someone when you've had sex with them. You aren't married with them but you are one flesh with them, you are forming ties that are illicit. Verse 17, "But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*. 18 Flee immorality." Run, we said and we used Joseph running from Potiphar's wife as an example, run for your life. "Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body." or inside his own

body, he sins into his own body. There's been a penetration on the interior from a foreign body. Verse 19 explains, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God," when you became a believer, your body was made a temple, a naos. There are two words for Temple in the Greek, *naos* and *ieron*. The *ieron* was the entire temple complex but the *naos* was the Most Holy Place. Guess which word is used of your body? The *naos*, the Most Holy Place. Your body is the most holy place on the planet. Not the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. You, you are the Temple Mount. So if you want to visit the Temple just look at your body. Isn't it strange that if you go visit the Temple Mount in Jerusalem that the only Temple there is you. And the Jews and Muslims get very sensitive about that place. But you walking around up there are the only Temple on that Mount. And you are to be holy like the most holy place in the external temple was holy, so do not defile yourself on the interior since your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in you. End of verse 19, "do you not know...that you are not your own? ²⁰For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." Your body has been purchased in the cross of Christ and therefore it does not belong to you, it belongs to the one who purchased it, it belongs to Jesus Christ and therefore we should glorify God in our bodies. Now how does that affect how you use your body?

Alright, we are now going into 1 Cor 7 and the subject is going to be marriage and divorce and sex. So, because children are present I want to say a few words about sex and children. I'm going to try and use euphemisms throughout for sex to soften it but understand that the text is talking about sex. As for how to teach this to your children let me make a few points. First of all, don't wait too long, especially if your child spends a lot of time with other kids, whether at school or at a playtime. Lots is talked about on the playground and elsewhere that you probably have no idea about as a parent and this is a subject you want spoken of correctly because your first impression of it sets the structure of the way your child will think about it for the rest of his/her life. And I'm just warning you because if you put this off and put this off and put this off then they are going to have this category shaped by someone else and it's not going to be a good shape. Secondly, it's something that will come up in the course of their normal growth. One day they'll ask you something, at least I hope they do, if they don't ask it's probably because they heard something on a movie or from a friend and they already think they have the answers. But if and I hope they do ask you

something it's not a subject to put them off about. Your responsibility is not to put them off but to consider the question, gauge their ability to understand the answer and decide how much to tell them at that time. Third, there are healthy and biblical ways to introduce the subject. The first thing you want to use is the Creation narrative. God created Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve so an early lesson is one man and one woman. God put them together in marriage. It's a very easy, non-invasive lesson. The second lesson is to move to the Flood event and here you're interested in the animals, there were two of each kind, a boy and a girl, a boy and a girl monkey, a boy and a girl dog and so forth. And it's here that you want to broach the question of why? Why was it a boy and a girl and not a boy and a boy? Because a boy and a boy can't make a baby daddy. That's right. So already by Creation you've covered fundamentally the issue of heterosexuality, one man and one woman, that's a major structural pattern for thinking properly. And secondly, with the Flood you've covered procreation, what's required to make babies, another structural pattern for thinking correctly in this area. The third event you want to use is the Virgin Birth and what you can show here is several things. One thing you can show is that this is serious because Joseph was going to put Mary away when he found out she was with child. So this is something that is supposed to occur only in marriage, it's a sacred thing and it's very important structurally speaking. If a person has instilled in his/her mind early on this idea from Joseph and Mary then they're setting themselves up for a good outcome. And second, from the virgin birth they can learn the uniqueness of the Savior, He came into this world not by a man and a woman but by the Holy Spirit and this sets Jesus Christ apart from all other human beings in that this is how he avoided sin. So that's another thing you can show, how sin is transmitted along with that act, but all I'm trying to do here is show you there are Scriptural ways of establishing a way to think about this early on. I know parents are afraid of this but what you should really be afraid of is other kids telling your kid about this because the perspectives are radically skewed. And there are other things you can go to. For example design, male and female are designed differently, that's a very important concept, each person is designed and that implies responsibility. You don't have to give them all the pieces at one time, just give them what is proper and then let them think about that. Pretty soon it will all come together and they will see the magnitude and importance of it and its proper place. But before our lesson today I wanted to give you a few tools for how to teach this subject to your children and emphasize how important it is because if you

don't teach it to them they're going to learn it somewhere else and you probably won't like the story they got, the one you never hear.

We are now going into chapter 7 and you will notice the very first words, **Now concerning the things about which you wrote. Now concerning** are the Greek words *peri de* which are used to show a shift in focus. Paul has been addressing Reported Problems, news that came to his ears by way of the people out of Chloe's house, now he shifts to address Raised Questions. So it's at this place I divide the book. I simply divide it in half, chapters 1-6 dealing with Reported Problems, these are things the Corinthians did not want Paul to know about but Paul found out anyway. Now that he has addressed those he turns to the second half of the book, chapters 7-16 where he deals with Raised Questions, or Statements rather; these are things the Corinthians simply wanted more explanation about. It would be like you sending me a statement and saying, what do you think about this, what do you think about that and I would address those as best I could. Now, it is clear that they sent Paul some statements asking for comment because Paul says **concerning the things about which you wrote**, so Paul had evidently received a letter from them and if you turn to 1 Cor 16:17 we can conjecture that the men listed here delivered the letter. They may not have delivered it because Rome did have the *cursus publicus*, the "public course" by which mail could be sent very rapidly through various relay stations. The Roman postal system was not equaled in speed of delivery until 19th century Europe, so they'd give Fed Ex something to worry about. And it's possible the letter traveled via the Roman postal system but I think it's more likely the men in verse 17 delivered it and you'll see why. It contained money. Paul says, "I rejoice over the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have supplied what was lacking on your part." That's the financial gift. The Corinthians were behind in this department and so these men delivered the gift and along with it they probably delivered the letter.

1 Cor 7:1, *peri de*, **now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.** Let's work with the translation a bit. First of all the word **touch**, "touch a woman" is not the Greek word for "touch." The Greek word for touch is *thiggano* and this is not *thiggano*. This word is *apto* and refers to "intimate touch" or sexual relations. Obviously it includes touching, but the kind of touching referred to here is a specific kind of touching, sexual contact.

Turn to Gen 20:6. I want you to see that this word is a word that refers to this kind of intimate relation. If we don't get set off on the right foot in this passage we'll be confused the whole way through. So it's better to just spend some time getting started on the right foot. Gen 20:6, this is when Abraham took Sarah down to Gerar in the Sinai. And when he arrived there was a king, King Abimelech who ruled the area and he took Sarah for himself. Notice verse 3, "But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married." ⁴Now Abimelech had not come near her;" no intimate contact, "and he said, "Lord, will You slay a nation, even *though* blameless? ⁵"Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this." ⁶Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also kept you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her." And the words "touch her" right there at the end are the same Greek word in 1 Cor 7:1. God is saying I did not let you have intimate relations with her; I kept you from this as the sovereign of the universe. Isn't it interesting God can do that? The reason God did it was because of the seed promise, but the point we want to see is that this word "touch" is the word for intimate touch, intimate relations.

Now turn to Prov 6:29. I'm taking examples from the use of this word in the LXX which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT to show that the Jews used this word *apto* for intimate contact. In verse 29 he says, "So is the one who goes in to his neighbor's wife; Whoever touches her will not go unpunished." That is to have intercourse with her. So as we go back to 1 Cor 7:1 understand that the word "touch" here is a euphemism, it's a nice way of saying what we all know is the real issue.

Now the second thing I want to work with here is just what is it the Corinthians wrote? Some people say there is a list of questions Paul got and we don't have the questions, we only have the answers and so we have to infer what question they were asking him. However, we ought to question whether they're asking him a question at all. A number of commentators think it's not a question at all but a statement and they want Paul to comment on the statement, namely, verse 1, **It is good for a man not to**

have sexual relations with a woman. Now Paul, tell us what you think about that statement. Is that a biblical statement? And if that's the case we have the exact thing the Corinthians were saying right here in verse 1, It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman. Now this is, I think, correct and a number of translations accurately translate this by putting it in quotations. For example the Holman Bible translation says, quote "It is good for a man not to have relations with a woman." Dan Wallace's NET Bible translates, "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman." The Lexham translation follows suit as do others. So if you put quotes around it then what we actually have in verse 1 is the statement the Corinthians wrote to Paul and they want Paul to comment on the statement. There was a difference of opinion floating around at the Corinthian church on whether it was good or not good to have sexual relations with a woman.

Now, a simple clarification at this point will help a lot and that is this; they are talking about having intimate relations with your own wife, in marriage, they're not talking about having intimate relations outside of marriage, obviously that is wrong and obviously they knew that, they had tried to hide from Paul that some of that was going on between a man in the church and his stepmother, so that is not the issue, the issue is whether there is a place for celibacy within marriage.

Now you might wonder why they would wonder about such a thing but if you remember that they were highly influenced by Greek ideas you'll remember that the Greeks viewed the body as a prison house of the soul. The body was considered intrinsically evil by many Greeks while the soul was considered intrinsically good and part of the divine. So the Greek goal was to get out of the body, be set free from the body so the soul could be absorbed completely into the divine, that's why the Greeks laughed at resurrection, they're laughing at Paul in Acts 17 when he mentions resurrection of the body. And that's why you had several problems at Corinth; these believers were so infected with Greek philosophy that some of them had rejected the resurrection altogether. They had accepted the Greek concept of the body, that it is just material and it's evil and there were two ways you could act on that. First of all, one approach was to go toward Hedonism, if the body is just going to go to destruction then when you have a sexual urge just fulfill it, it's unrelated to spirituality, this is the licentious approach and always paganism

either drifts toward licentiousness or to legalism. Paul has already dealt with the licentious believers in chapter 6 where he said the body is a part of Christ and that it is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that it was bought with a price and therefore we ought to glorify God with our body, not use it for Hedonism. Now in chapter 7 we meet the legalistic believers. They swung the other way. They started with the same premise, that the body is intrinsically evil and went to asceticism, to avoid all sexual urges we're going to make the body pure by not defiling it with intimate relations.

So Paul is here addressing a statement that betrays an ascetic leaning of some of the believers at Corinth. And verse 1 is attesting to the idea of a husband denying sexual relations with his wife because he's going ascetic, somehow denying the bodily desire for intimacy is going to make him more spiritual, that's what he thinks.

And further, they probably thought this because Paul was celibate. Paul wasn't married, at least not at the time, we'll discuss this more thoroughly later, but verse 7, in brief, **yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.** Paul had the gift of celibacy and so they may have thought, we need to be like Paul and be celibate because he's the model of spirituality. So the statement of verse 1 - is it good for a husband not to have intimate relations with his wife, will that make him more spiritual, is celibacy good within marriage?

Now verse 2 is Paul's response. But before we look at it we might remark that verse 1 is a good principle for the unmarried. If you are unmarried it is good not to have intimate relations with a woman, in fact it's not good to touch them either because that could lead to other things. But if you are married, that's the issue Paul's responding to in verse 2, if you are married should there be celibacy within marriage. Paul response is this, **because of sexual immoralities**, plural, because of the rampant sexual deviancy in the Corinthian culture and in our culture as well, **each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.** Have being another euphemism for sexual relations; have does not mean to get married to a wife or a husband, it's a euphemism for having intimacy with your own wife and with your own husband. So he is commanding intimacy within marriage here. It's an essential component of marriage. Both the man and the woman are

commanded here. The man must have relations with his own wife and the woman must have relations with her own husband.

Now we want to comment on the implication; namely monogamy; marriage is between one man and one woman. The verse does not allow for polygamy, men having more than one wife as early Mormonism taught and practiced and as modern fundamentalist Mormon groups teach and practice, even though it's illegal; you still do find it in Utah, Arizona and Texas and it's usually not prosecuted. But Scripturally it's sinful. Marriage is between one man and one woman and human religious groups, human courts have no right to re-define the ages old definition of marriage given by God when He created the first man, Adam, the first woman, Eve, and performed the first marriage ceremony. Though some OT saints did practice polygamy like David and others and the reason David and others did this is because they followed cultural standards rather than biblical standards and if you study their lives you'll see it always caused problems. Go look at David's life and see if having more than one wife was a good idea. It was never a good idea. God's idea from the start was one man and one woman and that's as early as Genesis 2.

Another thing the verse supports, by way of implication is heterosexuality over and against homosexuality. We saw in 1 Cor 6:9-10 that homosexuality is sinful because it is contrary to the original design. There is no such thing as homosexual marriage in God's eyes and you can go listen to the arguments for and against homosexuality in that lesson, it's all laid out, 1 Cor 6:9-10. I went through the theological journals and quickly went through the arguments for and against it in that lesson. The conclusion was that the Bible does condemn homosexuality.

So verse 2 not only commands intimacy within marriage, intimacy between one man and one woman in marriage and by implication it condemns any other union besides one man and one woman. Verse 3, and here we get into some serious issues. **The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.** Another command here to those who are married. The command is the word **must fulfill**. This word, *apodidoto* is a contractual term, it means to meet a contractual obligation, it is a requirement and it points to the first aspect of marriage; a covenant. Two things have to happen for there to be a marriage. First of all a contract or covenant has to be made between the man and the woman, that's the

marriage covenant. If you don't have that you don't have a marriage even though there may be intimacy. Intimate relations doesn't make two people married, it makes them kin, it makes them related, it makes them one flesh but it does not make a marriage because there's no covenant. So when you go to a wedding ceremony the man and the woman have these things called vows, that's the heart of the wedding ceremony, everything else is just fluff, it may be real pretty fluff and have a lot of meaning to you, they may have a unity candle or something, that's all fine, but what has meaning to God in that ceremony is not the kiss, it's not the minister, it's not even the state, the state of Texas is irrelevant to the equation, it's the vows, what this man and woman promise to do for one another in the vows. The vows are the legal terms of a contract that this man and woman are making.

The second thing that has to happen for there to be a marriage is consummation. It must be consummated. If all they do is say the vows but the marriage is never consummated then a marriage has not occurred. That's why at the Jewish weddings they'd go through the whole ceremony which included the covenant vows and then the man and woman would go to the bedroom chambers and consummate the marriage; there had to be physical evidence that it was consummated, we won't go into that but it's very important, then they'd come back out and join the marriage party for a celebration.

So a marriage has occurred when there is a covenant made and when there is consummation. Verse 3 is referring to the covenant portion; the husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. This refers to the intimate duties. The covenant terms include relational duties. People in the 21st century don't like the way that sounds, it doesn't sound romantic, but it doesn't matter because intimacy is a duty. When you get married this is required, not just once to consummate, but ongoing. The other word here is **duty**, it's a duty. What's a duty? It's something obligatory. On what grounds? Contractual. When you get married you contractually agree to fulfill the intimacy needs of your partner.

Now I want to highlight three principles about this so there's no misunderstanding. The first point is that intimacy needs of the partner in marriage must be met. It is your duty to do that for your partner. And to not do that is to be a covenant breaker, it is to sin and then you are out of

fellowship and it is going to go very badly for you over time. So sex within marriage is not optional, it is a duty, it is an absolute. When you married part of the agreement was that you would fulfill your relational duties to your spouse.

Second point, desire for intimacy varies from person to person. There's no set level and that means you may not meet eye to eye on this. Some desire more and some desire less. This fact is evident not only from experience but from the fact Scripture lays down no schedule for how much, how often. And it is very important to add that neither partner is to be faulted because of their degree of desire, whether more or less. Variation in desire is absolutely normal and there is nothing sinful about it. So don't rake one partner over the coals for their desire as if they are unspiritual.

Third point, in light of the second, the partner having less desire is obliged to fulfill the needs of the partner having more desire. This is always the case. You say, oh, why, why must I rise to the desire level of this other person, I just might die if I have to do that. No actually you will not die, but if you don't you might destroy your marriage. Because verse 5 you are going to make the other person very frustrated and they are going to fall into the temptation of Satan and because of lack of self-control your partner is going to be in great danger of falling for temptation and going elsewhere to have his or her desire fulfilled elsewhere. Not that he or she is justified in doing that, may it never be! But the danger of sexual temptation ought to be avoided at all costs. So understand that marriage was given for that purpose and therefore it is very dangerous to withhold intimate relations from the partner who has greater desire, very dangerous, Scripture says so. But on the other hand Scripture presents no danger to the person who has less desire fulfilling more. No danger whatsoever. In fact it's his or her duty to fulfill more than they want to, that will not hurt the marriage. It will help the marriage.

So those are three principles from v 3, let's add a fourth from verse 2. First of all, marriage is between one man and one woman, secondly, intimate needs of the partner must be met, third, intimate desire varies from person to person and lastly, the partner having less desire is obliged to fulfill the needs of the partner having more desire.

Now if you decide you are not going to follow these Scriptural principles then there are consequences. So let's look at three consequences. First of all, you are a covenant breaker if you do not fulfill the intimate duties to your partner. You have violated the contract that you made with this person before God. And that gets you out of fellowship and now you are not helping your marriage, you are hurting your marriage.

Second consequence, not only are you a covenant breaker but you make your partner frustrated. How is that good? Is that going to benefit your marriage? I don't see how it could be any benefit at all to have a frustrated spouse in the house.

Third, and this follows, the frustrated partner is going to be open to temptation, especially in a culture like Corinth or ours where people hardly wear any clothes at all and pornography is readily accessible. Verse 5 says this frustration leads to Satan tempting and the person may lose self-control and go elsewhere to satisfy the frustration. They shouldn't give in to it, this is not blaming the partner who won't fulfill it, but they may give in to the temptation that comes when they don't. And this is often, often, often the case, over and over if you go into the cases of adultery you will find that one partner was not having their desire fulfilled and so they went elsewhere and that destroyed the marriage, it destroyed the family; it caused all kinds of fallout.

This is what was going on at Corinth, they had one partner in the marriage who said celibacy will lead to greater spirituality and the other partner was getting frustrated and came under temptation and went up to one of the prostitutes at the Temple of Aphrodite to satisfy the desire. That's the situation. Our situation is similar in that if one partner deprives the other for whatever reason, and we'll get into the reasons, then it opens the other partner up to this danger.

Now with that said let's go on to verse 4 and see more. **The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.** Now this word **authority** means "to have the right of control." Did you know you forfeited the right to control your own body when you got married? You gave up the independent use of your body.

And if you are saying, it's my body and I'll do what I want with it you are sinning. You do not have the right to do what you want with your body. You gave all those rights to your partner! That's what the word means, "the right or power to do with something as one sees fit!" So husband, you look at your wife and you see her body, now you have the right to do with her body as you see fit, that is your right, she gave it to you when you got married. And wife, you look at your husband and you see his body, now you have the right to do with his body as you see fit, that is your right, he gave it to you when you got married. The extension of this is that you not abuse one another's bodies, that would be anti-Scriptural; but whatever is agreeable by consent, whatever is consistent with Scripture, that is fully acceptable. Your body is not your own. Now you may disagree but I want you to go back to 6:19 to see who ushered the command, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body." So then your body first of all belongs to God, doesn't even belong to you, we are to glorify Him in our body. Secondly, God says if you're married your body belongs to your spouse to use it as they see fit. So you have nothing to say about it because God has already pronounced His viewpoint.

Now it's very interesting that this goes both ways in verse 4, the husband has authority over the wife's body and the wife has authority over the husband's body. And this shows you that husband and wife have equal rights over one another. It doesn't say anything like husbands have the right over the wife's body to do whatever you please. No, this is a two way street, husbands and wives have equal rights in this department and equal marital duties. And if you followed this your marriage would be healthier. I assure you, intimacy is a vital part of marriage and until you bow the knee to the authority of Scripture on the matter some one of you or both of you are going to be frustrated. And if you are unmarried, consider that when you get married you are forfeiting rights over your own body. You ought to know that going in rather than after the fact. When you marry you are to have intimate relations with your partner, it is a duty to fulfill, you do not have authority over your own body.

Verse 5, **Stop depriving one another** or rather **Do not deprive one another**. This is the fourth command, do not do this. Do not withhold intimate relations. Now this is the point we really have to work with in our

culture. They were withholding it at Corinth for different reasons than it is withheld in our culture. They were withholding it because Greek philosophy was infecting their concept of the body and leading them to asceticism. They thought celibacy, depriving the body would have spiritually enlightening benefits, which is false, it's dead wrong, abstaining from intimacy in marriage will not help anyone be more spiritual.

But in our culture we have other reasons that marriage partners deprive one another of sex, namely using it as a reward, if you're a good boy and all the rest of it. That's HVP, that's what the culture says, the culture uses it as a manipulative tool. That's not only dangerous it's sinful. Intimate relations is not a reward it's an obligation, as a Christian you are contractually liable to have relations with your spouse, you are duty bound to have relations with your spouse and you do not have authority over your own body. You have no right to turn it into a favor or use it as a manipulative tool. The general command which stands for all time is verse 5, **Do not deprive one another.**

But then Paul gives what appears to be an exception. And this is an exception to the rule. In fact, in the Greek, where it says **except by agreement for a time**, the word is *meti*, which actually means "perhaps," when this word is used whoever is speaking is in doubt concerning this. Paul is not sure about this. He is saying maybe there is some benefit to abstaining for a time, but I don't really know. And I'll give some suggestions for when it might be okay. Another word that's used here that is untranslated is *an* and it means there is some circumstance or condition that requires abstinence. So that's the way it is, this is the verse 6 concession, it's just this situation that you are forced into Paul says perhaps there are situations where you are required by the conditions at hand to abstain from sex within marriage, but I don't know, I'm not sure about that.

Let's read the verse and then we'll give some examples of some situations. **Do not deprive one another, perhaps by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.** So there are three things required here if you are going to be abstinent in marriage. First, it requires mutual consent, you've got to agree with your spouse, this is not a unilateral decision, this is a bilateral decision and it has to be because you don't own your own body, your spouse does, so logically you

would have to mutually agree. Second, a high spiritual concern must be the situation in life, some situation that requires prolific prayer, not a normal everyday situation but an intense situation that is so demanding that even intimate relations have to be put aside. And third, it must be of temporary duration, **for a time**. That is, from the outset it is determined that this will last 2 weeks or 2 months or 2 years, whatever, but the partners have to agree due to a situation demanding prayer and for a set period of time after which you are going to **come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self control**.

Some situations where this might be on the table would include things like military duty, extended leave of absence due to job, family matters, illness, surgery, mission trip, all situations that would require prayer. This is not abstaining for the purpose of prayer, this is circumstantial, there is a situation that requires prayer, like active military duty, illness, etc...that force the situation.

Verse 6, **But this I say by way of concession, not of command**, verse 6 uses the near demonstrative, this, so it's referring to verse 5, the thing that Paul concedes and is not commanded is temporary abstinence and we've been through some reasons, they're circumstantial reasons, things beyond your control.

Verse 7, **Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.**

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