



Grace Life Church
of Dallas

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God

Single: A Biblical Perspective

1 Corinthians 7

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Single in Christ

I am concerned that many of us hold an unbiblical view of singles

- Scripture must shape our thinking (which directly impacts our actions)

Have you ever had any of the following thoughts?

- “If I don’t get married, I am a failure/loser”
- “If I don’t experience marriage/parenting, I am missing out”
- “If my daughter or son do not get married something is wrong”
- “What is wrong with that 30-40 year old man/woman that they haven’t found someone to marry them yet”

Society has those thoughts, but so do many within the church. Are those biblical thoughts?

1 Corinthians 7:6-8

6 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.

8 To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am. 9 But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

1 Corinthians 7:25-38

²⁵ Now concerning the betrothed, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my judgment as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. ²⁶

I think that in view of the present distress it is good for a person to remain as he is. ²⁷ Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. ²⁸ But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that

1 Corinthians 7:25-38

²⁹ This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, ³⁰ and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, ³¹ and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

1 Corinthians 7:25-38

I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. ³³ But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, ³⁴ and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. ³⁵ I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 7:25-38

³⁶ If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed, if his passions are strong, and it has to be, let him do as he wishes: let them marry—it is no sin. ³⁷ But whoever is firmly established in his heart, being under no necessity but having his desire under control, and has determined this in his heart, to keep her as his betrothed, he will do well. ³⁸ So then he who marries his betrothed does well, and he who refrains from marriage will do even better.

1 Corinthians 7:6-7

*6 Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. 7 I wish that **all** were as I myself am.*

– *I wish*: I desire, I would take delight in

In what way does Paul “wish” **all** were as he was?

– v8 *“to the unmarried & the widows I say that **it is good** for them to **remain single as I am**”*

– Do you believe Paul is “ill-wishing” people here?

Before we get to “what is good” about being single in Paul’s mind, Paul answers why some are single & some are not:

– V7 *“I wish that all were as I myself am (single) But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another*

– Paul tell us God has gifted some, which will lead to remaining single and others he has gifted which will lead to marriage

What is the gifting that leads to remaining single?

*V8-9 To the unmarried & the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am v9 **but** if they cannot exercise **self-control**, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion.*

- *Self-control* is the gifting given that determines if one can/should remain single
- The ability to control the desires from v2
- If someone cannot control the desires and they are aflame with passion, they should marry
 - Aflame-Indignant (angered at the injustice)
 - Note: In determining if you are gifted here, do not mistake temptation for “aflame with passion”

Single-What have we noted thus far?

- Paul wishes **all** were single like him
- He is not wishing ill-will but says it is “**good**” for them to remain single
- What determines if we should/could remain single is if we have been “**gifted**” with “**self-control**”

Parents-Is it possible you have set the expectation with your children that they should expect to get married, and it may be that God has gifted them to remain single (and it is good)?

- Have you shared this gifting with your children, or just the gifting of marriage? (“I don’t want them to miss out”)
- Have you so elevated marriage and so minimized being single that they can’t even imagine not being married?
- See what can happen if we have a low/unbiblical view of being single?

What is good about remaining single?

Most of us can answer the blessings of marriage

- Important we realize that the “good” of remaining single does not remove the blessings of marriage
- **Proverbs 18:22** *He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD.*
- **Genesis 2:18** *Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”*
- Marriage & singleness are both gifts/blessings from the Lord (Both with good and both with struggles)
 - It is important as a community of believers, we recognize this about both and appreciate both

What is good about remaining single?

Read v28 & v32-35

- Although there are many blessings in marriage, it comes with great responsibility
- You no longer are thinking for one person but two (“Two become one flesh” Eph 5:31)
- As a married man/woman we must learn to embrace the limitations marriage brings and fulfill our call in marriage (which will keep us from other things)
 - It is wrong for people who are married to forsake the marriage (even if it is for spiritual things)

The good of remaining single is an undivided devotion to the Lord

- There should be an attraction for all of us to undivided devotion
- The married should not resent their divided devotion to the Lord
- The single should not covet the married
- In whatever “good” you find yourself (married/single) learn to live Christ in your calling and glorify God

What is good about remaining single?

Jesus acknowledge that the call to remain single is a high calling and not for everyone, but if you can receive it, receive it

- **Matthew 19:10-12** *The disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry.” 11 But He said to them, “Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it.”*
- **I take from this statement from Jesus that there is great blessing in remaining single**

What is good about remaining single? Paul had this gift, Jesus encouraged it, we must consider it, and hold a high view of it!

- If you are single today, pray
- I pray your heart has been stirred to consider setting aside the blessings of marriage, for an undivided devotion to Christ
 - It is “*for your own benefit*” v35
- Read v36-38
- See and believe that if God calls you to remain single, you are not losing but gaining

What is good about remaining single?

Seeing the good in both, seeing the struggles in both and seeing both are given by God as gifts should not bring division, but appreciation and understanding (which promotes unity)

Final Thoughts

- Singles should not look at the married (with God given responsibilities for their spouse) and think they are less committed or holy
- Married should not look at the singles and assume they are missing out, b/c it appears they gain
- Married should not look at the singles and assume something is wrong if they do not marry but bless and encourage God given singleness
- Parents should share both possible gifts/blessings with their children and encourage them to seek God's will (not what we would like to see (ie-grandchildren))
- Neither the married, nor the single should have self-pity but rejoice in God's goodness in their calling and pray/strengthen/encourage one another their callings (knowing we have different struggles)