

## THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 12TH - 13TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

**TIMING (1 CORINTHIANS 7:25-28)**

**"BUT I DO GIVE AN OPINION..."**

Paul clarifies this section about unmarried people is his opinion not a command from God. He also reminds us that he is "faithful" by the "Lord's mercy," making his opinion valuable.

- This brings up the importance of having older and wiser people speaking into our lives. **The Bible is the authority, but God puts shepherds in our lives to help us.**

**THE TOPIC WAS WHEN TO MARRY**

We're not sure what the "present distress" going on in Corinth was that made it difficult to decide to get married if one was engaged. What we can pull from this is that **timing matters when making big life decisions.**

- More than likely the "distress" was a famine in Greece that economically affected most citizens of Corinth.

**MAYBE NOT WRONG, BUT MORE DIFFICULT**

In this specific case, Paul advised that people wait a while longer before marrying because **"such people will have trouble in this life" if they rush into big decisions.**

- **Though it may not be sinful to rush into big life choices, lacking patience and wisdom may make life more difficult, and God wants to "spare" us from that.**

**SO, HOW DO WE KNOW PROPER TIMING?**

First, **we must be praying for wisdom and seeking God's will for our lives.** We must also be **living righteously** in order for those prayers to be effective (J.s. 5:16).

- Second, we need to **read the Word** to learn God's principles of trust and timing.
- Third, **we need wise Christians that we trust to help us make hard decisions.**

**AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE (1 CORINTHIANS 7:29-35)**

**WHAT IN THE WORLD DOES V29-31 MEAN?**

We are not to take these verses literally. Paul follows Old Testament hyperbole and poetic style to encourage Christians to live cognizant of their eternities.

- Marriage, sadness, material possessions, and even the earth are things to be experienced, but will come to an one day. So, **we must consider what comes next.**

**"I WANT YOU TO BE WITHOUT CONCERNS"**

In this life we will have jobs, friendships, romance, hardships, and various responsibilities. The Bible doesn't tell us to avoid concern for these things, but to **ultimately trust God and follow His commands in all things.**

- This goes back to having an **eternal perspective. We must trust God in this life in preparation for the next.**

**THERE IS BALANCE IN THIS**

Oftentimes the Bible is used as an excuse to be lazy. Though we're to know that this life is temporary, we are also to be responsible and present during this "season."

- **We're to work hard, love, be responsible, witness, and enjoy the things God has given us in this life while not making idols because they will pass.**

**"DEVOTED TO THE LORD WITHOUT DISTRACTION"**

To have a balanced eternal perspective we must not only remove distractions, we must willingly live righteously and trust our Savior.

- **We must be willing to alter our behavior for the sake of honoring God and seeing life through a biblical lens. If we will deliberately focus on Him, we will be shocked by how our perspective changes.**

**REASONABLE (1 CORINTHIANS 7:36-40)**

**AGAIN, USE LOGIC AND WISDOM**

Paul tells men that instead of prolonging engagements to women who may be "getting beyond the usual age for marriage," they should go ahead and get married.

- **If one has been praying, seeking wise counsel, and the timing seems right, go ahead with whatever plans you may have.**

**SETTLED, AND NOT OUT OF COMPULSION**

If one chooses to wait a little longer to make a major decision, that is fine too. The point Paul is trying to make is **thoughtful decision making, not compulsion.**

- This is rooted in an important characteristic of God: **God is a God of order (14:33). Compulsive big life decisions often result in painful chaos.**

**TILL DEATH DO YOU PART**

Paul tells the Corinthians the same thing he taught the Romans (7:2): they must remain married to the same person until death. In this culture, adultery and open marriages were quite common.

- Of course, further clarity has already been given in the first half of this chapter regarding divorce and remarriage.

**"...ONLY IN THE LORD"**

When one marries, they become "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24), so they are to marry another Christian or that "flesh" will be **imbalanced.** This is commanded here and in 2 Cor. 6:14.

- It is a different scenario if one spouse comes to faith after marriage (v12-16). But, **to the Christian, they are to not marry non-Christians.**

**WE ALL HAVE TO BE ACCOUNTABLE**

Paul concludes by saying he has opinions, but they are derived through consultation with the "Spirit of God."

- **Even when there is no sinful choice, there are still foolish ones. We must take personal responsibility and lean on God, His Word, and wise believers to help us navigate our choices.**

**WISE TIMING**

- Though a decision may be good, the timing may be premature. **Though it may not be a sin to make a decision in haste, it will often make life more difficult.**
- Christians need to **pray, read the Word, ask wise counsel, and listen to God and wise people** about when and how to make big life decisions.

**KEEPING AN ETERNAL MINDSET**

- We must remember that we are migrants passing through this life, and though **we are free to enjoy the things of this life, we're to not be overly concerned or idolatrous about worldly things.**
- How we steward this life (our time, resources, and abilities) will determine what our afterlife looks like.

**A BALANCE OF SPIRIT AND TRUTH**

- John 4:24 tells us to worship God in Spirit and truth. This can be understood as living a life that honors God with our intellect and emotions, practically and supernaturally, through prayer and meditation, but also in the logic of His Word.
- **When we live in Spirit and truth, we find balance and practical wisdom.**

**AN INVENTORY**

- Do we tend to rush into big decisions?
- Are we praying for patience, peace, and wisdom before making big life choices?
- Are we surrounding ourselves with wise and godly people to help us?
- What are the ramifications of acting impulsively and not with a clear mind?
- God does miraculous things, but He is also a God of order. **Are we living out the balance of Spirit and truth?** Are we living in supernatural faith and practical application?
- **Do we understand that, ultimately, we will be held accountable for our choices?** Do we also understand that we have help?