**RISE UP** in 2021

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**Beauty and Brokenness**

***Singleness and Marriage***

1 Corinthians 7



Corinth was a sex-crazed, sexually confused culture; many of the people in this church could be branded new believers in Jesus. **They were trying to figure out how to follow Jesus in this culture around them**.

**It sounds a lot like today.** The latest Gallup research says that **5.6%** of the population identifies as LGBT.

According to the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, there are over **568 thousand same-sex couples who are married.**

For the first time since the Bureau **of Labor Statistics began tracking** these numbers in 1976, the number of single people outnumber married people: **More than half of the adult population in the U.S. is single.**

About **50.2 percent or 124.6 million American adults are single**—in 1950, that number sat around 22 percent.

**Single or married?**

1. Both singleness and marriage are **good** gifts from God.

**When it comes to marriage …**

*Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” But* ***because of the temptation to sexual immorality****, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.* ***The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights****, and* ***likewise the wife to her husband.*** 1 Corinthians 7:1-3

Sex in marriage is a good thing ... but not when we **demand** or **deny**.

*Some wonder how sexual activity can be truly satisfying or enjoyable without focusing on yourself. The idea of selflessness here seems contradictory. Does not getting the most out of this activity require putting your own desires ahead of everything else? The surprising answer is no, both on biblical terms and based on human experience.* ***God has imbedded a paradox in how this kind of pleasure works that helps to restrain natural human selfishness.*** *The more a couple focuses on pleasing each other, the more enjoyment each receives in return. And the more a person focuses on demanding his or her own satisfaction, the less satisfaction is possible. Self-centeredness always destroys satisfaction in this arena; unselfishness always makes it better.* **True Sexual Morality** by Daniel Heimbach. (PG version)

*For the wife does* ***not have******authority*** *over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does* ***not have******authority*** *over his own body, but the wife does.* ***Do not deprive one another****, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that* ***Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*** 1 Corinthians 7:4-5

**When it comes to being single …**

*[Jesus] was the most fully human, fully complete person who ever lived, and He was never married. He never indulged in any sort of sexual immorality, any sort of sexual thought, word, or deed outside of marriage between a man and a woman. Being true to who God has created you to be does not mean turning to sinful sexual desires.*

**Counter Culture** by David Platt

***Now as a concession****, not a command, I say this. 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.* 1 Corinthians 7:6-7

*To the unmarried and the widows I say that* ***it is good for them to remain single****, as I am.* 1 Corinthians 7:8

**God is clearly saying singleness is a good gift** from God that includes heroes of the New Testament. Most notably, this includes Jesus; but also John the Baptist, Paul, Silas, Luke, Titus, Apollos, Lydia, Phoebe and Philip’s four unmarried daughters. Singleness is a good gift from God and marriage is a good gift from God.

***I want you to be free from anxieties.*** *The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to* ***please the Lord****. But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to* ***please his wife*** *…* 1 Corinthians 7:32-33

***But if they cannot exercise self-control****, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.* 1 Corinthians 7:9

*A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.* Proverbs 25:28

**Self-control** - that virtue which a man is said to possess who moderates and restrains his sensual appetite.

*Only let each person lead the life that the* ***Lord has assigned to him****, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.* 1 Corinthians 7:17

*So, brothers, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.* 1 Corinthians 7:24

Divorce is **difficult**.

There is one divorce approximately every 36 seconds. That is nearly 2,400 divorces per day, 16,800 divorces per week, and **876,000 divorces a year**.

The divorce rate for a first marriage is around 41%. The divorce rate is 60% for a second marriage and 73% for a third.  **Cumulatively one in every four families will face divorce.**

* There are 2,015,603 marriages per year.
* Marriage rate is 6.1 per 1,000 total population.
* There are 746,971 divorces per year.
* The divorce rate is 2.7 per 1,000 population.

*To the married I give this charge (****not I, but the Lord****): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife.* 1 Corinthians 7:10-11

*And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.” The disciples said to him, “If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry.”* Matthew 19:9–10

2. Both singleness and marriage display the **gospel**.

*To the rest I say (****I, not the Lord****) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband.* 1 Corinthians 7:12-14a

***Christian marriage*** *testifies to God’s faithful covenantal love toward his people and their submission and reception to his sovereign love.* *Redeeming Singleness* by Barry Danylak

***Christian singleness*** *is a testimony to the supreme sufficiency of Christ for all things, testifying that through Christ, life is fully blessed even without marriage and children.* *Redeeming Singleness* by Barry Danylak

,, “So shall your offspring be.” God says, “I’m going to give you offspring more numerous than the stars in the sky. Tons of children and grandchildren.” And God’s design for producing offspring was what? Marriage. From the very beginning, marriage and offspring were central in the blessing of God.

*“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”* ***This mystery is profound,*** *and* ***I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church****. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.* Ephesians 5:31–33

*For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.* Matthew 22:30

3. Both singleness and marriage bring **God** glory.

**To all those who are single:**

* Are you stewarding your singleness well and using it for the Lord?
* Are you using your additional freedom and focus to serve others and serve the Church?
* Do you see your singleness through the eyes of the Gospel of Jesus and His great love for you?

**To all those who are married:**

* Are you stewarding your marriage well and using it for the Lord?
* Are you using your love for God and each other to serve others and serve the Church?
* Do you see your marriage through the eyes of the Gospel of Jesus and His great love for you?