

0:52 Well, welcome, brethren, and welcome to another Wednesday night Bible study, and I can say Wednesday night as it is Wednesday night, even though we're doing these studies every day this week.

1:05 tonight, I, I should, I noticed I should say it's day 4 and 5 because it's the, you know, the first part before the sun sets, we're in day 4 and then sun sets, we're into day 5 of these feast days of unleavened bread.

1:21 And God willing, what we're going to cover tonight is the first part of Chapter 7, and this is a pre-recorded message.

1:29 It's actually Wednesday afternoon for me right now.

1:33 I'm actually going out this evening with my wife and my kids to celebrate our 34th wedding anniversary.

1:40 So my wife and I have been married now for 34 years.

1:43 That was actually on Monday.

1:44, but we've been doing other things here in Toronto, and so, Wednesday night, we're actually going to, just have a celebration and just give God thanks for everything that we have, how we've been blessed now for going on 34 years.

2:01 So sorry that I can't be with you live this evening, but I'm sure you understand that, I do have a personal life and I want to just take some time to acknowledge the blessing that my wife has been for me.

2:13 So, let's get into 1 Corinthians 7, and we'll just be able to cover the first part of 1 Corinthians 7.

2:21 I'll just go ahead and share my screen.

2:26 And just make the font a little bigger.

2:28 There we go.

2:30 He says here, I actually, before I get to chapter 7, and as we get to chapter 7, Paul says, OK, now, concerning the things that you wrote to me about, so he finally begins to answer their letter.

2:44 So they've obviously written to him, he's in Ephesus at this time.

2:47 They've written to him, and he's responding to their letter, but it took him 6 chapters.

2:53 Of dealing with higher priority items that were on his mind before he actually turns his attention to what's on their mind.

3:01 And just to remind you, I'll just quickly go over some of the commands in these first six chapters that are critical to Paul as a shepherd over Corinth.

3:12 The first one is begging them by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3:16 To speak the same thing, have no divisions, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, and I've spoken repeatedly about what that means.

3:27 He says in verse 16 of chapter 4, I'm begging you, be followers of me.

3:34 I've laid the foundation.

3:35 I am adhering closely to the pattern that Jesus Christ laid down.

3:40 You're straying from the foundation.

3:43 Be you followers of me.

3:45Chapter 5 where we were yesterday, not yesterday, the day before, purge out therefore the old Levin that you may be a new lump.

3:55So, so purge out the old Levin.

3:57We're on the other side of, of Christ sacrificing Himself as our Passover.

4:03In verse 11 of chapter 5, I have written to you not to keep company if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator or idolater.

4:13Or or covetous or idolater or railer or drunkard or an extortioner with such a one know not to eat.

4:22In chapter 6, where we were yesterday, verse 8, you do wrong and you defraud your brethren, stop doing this.

4:30And then he says in verse 18, flee fornication.

4:34So, so there's very, very clear commands in verse 20 of chapter 6, glorify God in your body.

4:43And in your spirit, which are gods.

4:45So this is what was occupying the priority space in Paul's mind as he's writing to the Corinthian brethren.

4:56So having dealt with all of this 1.

4:59In the congregation and very, very, very clear commands as to how to remove it.

5:05Now, we can sort of exhale.

5:10And go to chapter 7, and read the rest of this letter, where he's addressing their questions.

5:17So he begins chapter 7, which begins sort of the whole section, the rest of the the letter, which is, if all of this 11 wasn't in the congregation, then this would be chapter 1.

5:28But because of the 11 in the congregation, we've got 6 chapters dealing with that 11, the 1st 4 dealing with the the major 11, and then chapters 5 and 6 dealing with the 3 big lens that can only be dealt with if we deal with the 1st 11 in chapters 1 to 4.

5:46OK.

5:47Now, exhale, we come to to their questions.

5:51Now concerning the things whereof you wrote unto me, he says.

5:57Oh sorry, it colon.

5:58It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

6:02So this is one of the things that they wrote to him about, and these are basically Greeks who are influenced by Plato, who believe in in celibacy that the the flesh is evil, and the spirit is good, and therefore you should have nothing to do with the flesh, and then there's other Greeks that believe because of this this separation between flesh and spirit, you can do whatever you want in your flesh, and it doesn't matter.

6:25Because the flesh is corrupt anyway, so there's no, no harm, no foul.

6:29So Paul is really correcting these false ideologies and narratives and replacing them with the foundation, which is Jesus Christ.

6:39So their understanding is it's good that a man shouldn't touch a woman, and even if they're married.

6:45So you have some that are married and they're visiting prostitutes, you have others that are married and they won't even touch their wives.

6:52So they're writing to him to say, it's good for a man not to touch a woman.

6:57So he says, however, That might be true in a in a way, and he'll talk about that.

7:03However, to avoid fornication, Pornea.

7:07In a sin sick city.

7:10Let every man have his own wife.

7:13And let every woman have her own husband.

7:16So there's a place for marriage, and this is honorable.

7:20Now, those that are married.

7:23Don't fall into this platonic ideology or philosophy that says that the flesh is wicked.

7:29And therefore, even though you're married, don't touch your wife.

7:33No, let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence, and likewise also the wife unto her husband.

7:42So verse 3 is sort of Gold King James language, but as Paul is basically saying, within the marriage covenant, there should be lots of sexual activity, there should be lots of intimacy.

7:53And, and, and there should be no withholding of this intimacy.

8:00The wife does not have power over her own body.

8:05Now, That's fair, but that wouldn't be surprising.

8:10You know, within the Roman culture, within the Greek culture, within the ancient culture.

8:15This is no surprise that the wife doesn't have power of her own body.

8:19She's married to her husband, her husband is her, her master, her lord.

8:23But listen to this ancient text.

8:26The husband has power over her her, and likewise also, the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife.

8:34That is revolutionary.

8:36That is unheard of.

8:38That is how Christianity has shaped the modern world, because this is mind blowing, that it's mutual.

8:46The wife cannot say no to her husband and and and with withhold intimacy from the husband, but neither can the husband withhold intimacy from the wife.

8:56The wife has authority over his body, and he has authority over her body.

9:03Mind blowing.

9:05Verse 5.

9:07Do not defraud, defraud you not one or the other.

9:11Get rid of this platonic philosophy.

9:14Do not do this.

9:15Oh, it's good for a man not to touch a woman.

9:17No, don't defraud one another.

9:19Unless it be with consent for a time.

9:23So maybe you both agree there's something going on, and you really need to focus on the spiritual.

9:31dimension of life and your relationship with Christ, and prayer and study, but only for a time.

9:42So you, so don't defraud one another unless it be with consent, you both agree for a time that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and then make sure you come together again.

9:52 So this is not ongoing, it's not the sort of you know, we're not following the doctrine of Plato.

9:59 So make sure you do come together again, be intimate again.

10:04 That Satan tempt you not for your incontinence.

10:08 In other words, this philosophy that you have that a man won't touch a woman or or a woman, her husband.

10:15 It's not sustainable.

10:16 You're human.

10:18 So, if you try to live this lofty way, it's gonna backfire.

10:23 And you think of, if you think of the the Catholic Church and the horrendous perversion that has been exposed, that has been within that church.

10:31 Well, you're forcing these young men to be celibate when that's just not natural.

10:37 And so then the Satan, the enemy gets in and starts to leverage that natural desire, but pervert it.

10:45 And then they, they take this pent up sexual energy, and they end up being tools for the devil.

10:51 Paul is saying you're in, you're in very dangerous, on very dangerous ground on very thin ice, if you start trying to infiltrate the church with platonic philosophy.

11:04 Cause you do have Satan is all up and down Corinth.

11:08 And there's all kinds of opportunity to pull people, Christians, into sin.

11:14 He says, But I speak this by permission and not of commandment.

11:22 In other words, I am making a a judgment here around verse 5, saying that, hey, you might take up fasting and prayer to have some time to focus, make sure you do come together again.

11:42 This is, this is not a commandment.

11:44 This is just my judgment on this.

11:48 But I wish, he says, that all men were even as I myself.

11:54 And and clearly, Paul was just very, very focused and and he was single, and he, he believes that just given the potential for persecution, that as he's traveling as an apostle and facing all of this persecution, he's been very, very focused, and maybe he understands how, how much more difficult that would be if he was married.

12:17 And so because of what he understands and what he sees, he wishes people could be like him.

12:23 But every man has his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that, so he's acknowledging not everybody is like him, so.

12:35 You know, for myself.

12:38 From I was a child, from I was 6 years old, I always wanted to be married.

12:43 And my whole life from 6 years old, in the back of my mind, I wanted to be in a very, very happy, loving marital relationship because of what I was exposed to as a child.

12:55 And now having been married for 34 years and happily married for 34 years, me personally, I can't imagine as being single.

13:05 It's just that's not my gift.

13:08 It was clearly it was Paul's, and I've met people who are very, very happy to be single and would find it a nuisance and just very difficult for them to be joined to somebody.

13:20 So Paul is saying this is how we are wired, sort of a factory setting.

13:26 For some of us, we are wired to be very happy and very content in a very close marital union.

13:35 For others, that would just be too constraining.

13:37 It just, just again, people are wired differently, and they can be much more successful and more content being single.

13:44 And so Paul is acknowledging this.

13:48 He says in verse 6, I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it's good for them if they abide as myself.

14:00 And again, Paul has a big vision, he understands what's ahead, and then based on his understanding, he's saying if you can be single, it's a good thing.

14:09 And we would say to young people today, don't rush into marriage, right?

14:15 You know, when, when you say I do, that's a life sentence.

14:19 And hopefully, both of you understand what you're getting into, and you're able to say I do, and be a source of joy and comfort and strength to each other, but for many, They're caught up in the emotion, they don't have good counseling about it, and they jump in, and they don't even know how to make for a happy relationship.

14:41 I would say based on my experience, a happy relationship takes a lot of effort, especially in the beginning.

14:48 You cannot take your spouse for granted.

14:51 There's, there's work that has to be done, and my wife is very industrious, right?

14:55 It's just I just I'm always in awe of this combination of tremendous beauty and an incredible work ethic in an industrial level work ethic, packaged very beautifully.

15:09 so to me, when I look at our relationship over 34 years, there's no way we could have this relationship.

15:16 If my wife wasn't the hardworking woman that she is.

15:20 And I would like to think that she would say the same, that I'm a hardworking man, and, and there's effort is that I I the analogy that I like to use or the metaphor that I I like to use is a garden.

15:31 You can start out with a beautiful garden that's just got all the right design and the beautiful flowers, and people look and say like, wow, that's amazing.

15:42 But if you don't put in the hard work.

15:45 Of tending to it, of removing the weeds, of nourishing it, of watering it, of making sure it gets sufficient sunshine, then, you know, a few months later, that garden is a disaster.

15:58 Put years later and it's, it's unrecoverable.

16:02 So this is where you see a lot of marriages end in divorce, and it's not that they didn't start out well.

16:08 It's not that they didn't have the tremendous potential.

16:10 It's not what that they weren't properly matched, it's they didn't put in the hard work.

16:14 And then the thing about it is, once you have that work ethic, it doesn't feel like hard work anymore.

16:20 It's just natural.

16:20 This is how you engage with each other, this is how you look after each other.

16:24 This is how you grow together, and you make sure you pull out the weeds.

16:29But What Paul is saying is, he actually wishes just based on what Christianity, following Christ means in the world.

16:40If you're unmarried, he's saying it's good to stay that way.

16:44And to the widows to stay that way.

16:47But if they cannot contain, let them marry.

16:52So don't play with this drive, this, this natural sexual drive.

16:59Don't play games with it.

17:00Don't pretend that you can be platonic, and I've actually had a brethren say to me, hey, this couple's living together, but it's platonic.

17:10And, and we should accept this.

17:12No, we cannot accept it.

17:13We must avoid the appearance of evil, and that is just a very dangerous position to put anybody in.

17:19And it's just terrible for the reputation of the Church of God.

17:24So, yeah, Paul is acknowledging and he wants them to understand.

17:29That the natural drive in humans is sexual, and if you cannot control that, make sure you get married, because it's better to marry than to burn.

17:40Meaning any sort of Pornea will lead to destruction.

17:44Do not play around with this.

17:47He says And unto the married, he says, I command, yet not I but the Lord.

17:56So before he said, you know, this is my judgment, this is what I would say to do.

17:59Here he's saying this isn't coming from me.

18:02This is coming from the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

18:05To the married, I command, yet it's not me, it's the Lord that's commanding you.

18:10Let not the wife depart from her husband.

18:14So Paul is saying, I didn't make this up.

18:17If you're married, you cannot leave your husband.

18:20That's what the Lord says.

18:23But And if she departs.

18:27Let her remain unmarried.

18:30Or be reconciled to her husband.

18:33So don't leave your husband.

18:35Once you're married, you're bound in a covenant, a lifelong covenant, till death do us part.

18:41That's what you said, that's what you vowed.

18:43It's a lifelong covenant.

18:46So don't leave your husband.

18:48If something happens where you have to leave, maybe the husband is violent or a drunkard, something's gone wrong, deep dysfunction.

18:58Then if she departs and separates herself.

19:02Then she cannot remarry.

19:05Paul is saying, I'm not saying this is, this is from the Lord.

19:08Let her remain unmarried.

19:10Or the other choice is, be reconciled to her husband.

19:14 So figure it out, get counseling, get ministerial support, figure out the reconciliation, but that those are your choices.

19:22 Stay unmarried or reconcile to your husband.

19:25 What is not an option is finding another husband.

19:28 And Paul is saying, this is not my command, this is the Lord's.

19:32 And let not the husband put away his wife.

19:36 This is a lifelong covenant.

19:38 Don't play games.

19:39 And he's saying, I, I'm not saying this, this is what the Lord said.

19:42 And we can see the Lord say this in Mark 10 and verse 11.

19:47 He says unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another commits adultery against her.

19:54 So you can't do this.

19:56 And if a woman shall put away her husband and be married to another, she commits adultery.

20:03 What Paul is saying I didn't say this, the Lord said it.

20:05 In Matthew 5:32, he says, this is all red letter.

20:11 This is Christ speaking, but I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, except for the cause of Pornea fornication, and that has to do in the Jewish community within with sex before marriage that wasn't known, he, if it's not except for that causes her to commit adultery.

20:32 And whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, commits adultery.

20:37 So it's very, very different understanding of marriage than our society.

20:43 So our society, people divorce and remarry all the time, but Christ is saying this is very heavy, this is very deep, and the disciples were shocked.

20:53 They said in that case it's better not to marry, and Christ said, well, marriage isn't for everybody.

21:00 In Matthew 19 and 6, he says, when this marriage union takes place, wherefore they are no more two but one flesh.

21:10 What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder, that this marital union is a binding by God Himself.

21:22 And since God has bound these two humans together to make them one.

21:27 No one Better dare Tear them apart.

21:33 And then in verse 9 he says, and I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife unless it be for Porne.

21:41 And shall marry another commits adultery.

21:45 And whoso marries her, which is put away, commits adultery.

21:48 So this is what Paul is saying, that this is a command.

21:52 I'm commanding you.

21:52 Oh, by the way, it's not my command, it's the Lord's command.

21:58 And then in Romans 7 and 2, based on the Lord's command, Paul is instructing the Romans, for the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he lives.

22:12 As long as he's alive, it doesn't matter where on the planet he is.

22:16 They could be thousands of miles apart.

22:20 Paul is saying based on the Lord's teachings.

22:23 If a woman has a husband, she's bound to him by law as long as he's alive.

22:30 But if the husband is dead, she's loosed from the law of her husband.

22:33 So that's, that's the release from the covenant binding, is when it's till death do you part.

22:41 It's when the husband dies, then she's released.

22:45 But until then, be reconciled with your husband or remain unmarried.

22:52 And then in verse 6.

22:57 And I didn't want that.

22:59 So let's go to back to 1 Corinthians 7.

23:03 And let's go to verse 12.

23:08 Just to continue then, he says, but to the rest I speak.

23:15 Not the Lord.

23:18 So this is now what he's saying, but to the rest speak I, not the Lord.

23:23 If any brother has a wife that doesn't believe.

23:27 And she, so this is not a commandment from the Lord, this is his judgment.

23:32 But to the rest I speak, not the Lord.

23:35 If any brother has a wife that doesn't believe, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

23:43 So even though she's not part of the covenant community, if you are bound to her in a marital covenant, don't divorce her.

23:50 If she's happy or she's pleased to dwell.

23:54 And the woman which has a husband that doesn't believe.

23:58 And if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

24:02 So we, we don't want to destroy family bonds.

24:05 And so just the fact that they're not believers, if they're pleased to dwell, then even though they're not believers, then you stay together.

24:13 Why?

24:13 Then he gives the logic why he comes to this judgment in verse 14, for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife.

24:24 And the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband because they are one.

24:30 And the wife is sanctified and there one, the husband is automatically also set apart and vice versa.

24:37 So this is why he's saying, don't, don't, separate, don't divorce.

24:44 And I can say in my decades of experience, I have observed many, many times.

24:49 In fact, I just observed this recently.

24:53 Where a husband or a wife is not a believer, but they're pleased to dwell and just over time, they're learning a little bit here, a little bit there, little snippet over there, and, and they begin to change, and they begin to entertain, OK, like what is this?

25:10 And and they're learning it to the point where they repent, and they're baptized, and they're now in the covenant community, because the whole time they were set apart.

25:18 And in a sense that that the this calling is extended to them if if they respond, and it just takes wisdom from the spouse, not to be pushing.

25:28 In fact, the brother was just sharing with me, just this past high day, that he doesn't speak about religion to his wife anymore.

25:37He just found that she was always resisting, and by not speaking about it, she's now taking an interest to the point where she's now attending regularly.

25:47So he's saying this is why you shouldn't separate from an unbelieving spouse because they're sanctified, or else were your children unclean, but now they are holy.

25:59They are also set apart automatically.

26:01So just having one believer in the family sanctifies the family.

26:06He says now, however, so having said that, if they're pleased to dwell, here's the opposite where they're not pleased to dwell, he says, however, But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart.

26:21A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace.

26:28So this is a very, very different situation, he says, than if it's a believing spouse.

26:34If it's an unbelieving spouse, let them depart.

26:37They, they, they, they don't care to dwell in peace, let them go.

26:41But if they do are willing to dwell in peace, then you you keep that, that, covenant bond.

26:48He says, For what do you know, oh wife?

26:53Whether you shall save your husband.

26:55And again, I've seen over my decades, I've seen spouses that were initially very hostile.

27:01Eventually change.

27:02And eventually repent and be converted or baptized and converted.

27:07So Paul is saying you don't know the future, and God may be using you to call your husband.

27:13For what do you know, O wife?

27:15Whether you shall save your husband, or what do you know, old man, whether you shall save your wife, and it's quite fascinating throughout Corinth.

27:25There's a lot around this theme of knowledge where the Corinthians think they know a lot, and Paul is challenging, well, how much do you actually know.

27:32So this is something again where he's saying, how much do you actually know?

27:37And then verse 17.

27:40He says, But as God has distributed to every man.

27:45As the Lord has called everyone, so let him walk.

27:50And so ordain I in all churches.

27:53So this was not just for Corinth.

27:56These instructions are across the entire Church of God, and this is what Paul is teaching to all the churches of God.

28:04And so certainly at that time it was all the churches, all the congregations, but through time, it's all the churches and congregations as well.

28:12So it certainly applies to us, and again, not everybody is suited for marriage, not everybody is suited for the single life.

28:22Not every marriage is is happy and some we should not, I let me just say this.

28:29We should not proactively become unequally yoked.

28:33In this case, and what mostly what happened is the women would be the ones that would respond to the gospel.

28:40But they were married to a man that didn't respond.

28:43 And so they found themselves in this situation where they're responding to the gospel, but they're married and their husband doesn't care for it.

28:50 And that's what Paul was instructed.

28:52 He's not saying here, if you find somebody in the world that's not converted, go ahead and marry them, and if they're happy to please, if they're pleased to dwell with you, then, then just go ahead and dwell.

29:02 That's not at all what he's saying.

29:05 So we need to be very, very careful about that.

29:08 Well, let me pause there because as I say, we're just going out this evening to celebrate our anniversary.

29:15 So I'll just, pause there, and we made it up to verse 17, and then God willing, tomorrow I will be live and God willing, I'll be live for the rest of the week, just one exception tonight, and we'll continue with chapter 7 tomorrow.

29:31 God be praised.

29:32 God bless you, brethren, we will see you tomorrow.

29:34 God bless.