**CORINTHIAN CONJUGAL CORRECTIONS**

We learned back in chapter one that the Apostle Paul had received a letter from a trusted source detailing the problems that the Corinthia n church was having. They were trying to follow God’s word while living in a culture that was sliding further and further away from God and His word…

Does this sound familiar?

Corinth was a party town and the term Corinthian suggested a party lifestyle. Corinth was a stopover seaport where lots of money exchanged hands and there were lots of places to spend money and to sin.

Prostitution was quite common in the Athens and Corinth area and as the church was dealing with this open sinning Rome was beginning to persecute the church in all of the territories it controlled – including Corinth. SO… Paul continues to respond to the letter he had received…

**1 Corinthians 7:1** Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: *It is* good for a man not to touch a woman. **NLT - to abstain from sexual relations. CEV - best for people not to marry…**

* Is Paul encouraging celibacy? Yes… He was either divorced or widowed himself and had chosen a celibate lifestyle.
* Is this for everybody? Listen…

2 Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

* Paul was aware that not everybody in his situation was through with marriage. For that reason he has some good advice for married couples..
* We will pass along this advice with the knowledge that kids are listening too…

**SATISFY ONE ANOTHER**

3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

* Be diligent to render love to your spouse! It is your responsibility!

4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does.* And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does.*

**STRUCTURED SEPARATIONS**

5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to **fasting and prayer**; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

* I am NOT a fan of separations… So I tell people who want to use this verse to separate – You may not eat while you are separated. This verse commands that you fast while separated… READ IT!
* IF you have gotten to this point you probably have some forgiving to do… Get on with it. Forgive… Heal… Humble yourself… Pray!

**FIND YOUR GIFTING AND LIVE IT**

6 But I say this as a concession, **(My opinion)** not as a commandment. 7 For I wish that all men were even as I myself. **(Celibate)** But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

**HANG ON!**

8 But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; 9 but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn *with passion.* **IE, lust.**

**HANG IN THERE!**

10 Now to the married I command, *yet* not I but the Lord: **(I like that Paul separates his opinion from the word of God)** A wife is not to depart from *her* husband. 11 But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to *her* husband. And a husband is not to divorce *his* wife.

* So, here and in many other places the Bible takes a strong stand against divorce.
* In **Malachi 2:16** the prophet declares that God hates divorce.
* In **Matthew 19:8** Jesus declares that divorce was permitted because of the hardness of people’s hearts towards one another…
* Sadly, we see too often that failures and abuse causes people’s hearts to harden towards the one that they had vowed to live with until death did them part.
* IF you are in a suffering marriage, PRAY that God will soften your heart to know and to do HIS WILL. IF you have begun to desire to escape your marriage… Slow down… Humble yourself… Be willing to forgive… Stop being your Spouses judge.
* Saving a struggling marriage is 100 times easier than divorcing and trying to rebuild… Second marriages are 67% likely to end in divorce. 3rd marriages – 74%. **WORTHY.COM.** Rebuilt marriages are stronger than ever when restored.

**MERCY FOR THE UNEQUALLY YOKED**

12 But to the rest **I, not the Lord**, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. 13 And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified **(Holy)** by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified **(Holy)** by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. **(Sanctified)**

* The Apostle gives his opinion here that because one of the parents is a believer the children are covered by grace IF they die before that age of accountability…
* He is NOT saying that the unbelieving Spouse is saved, just better off because they have a believing spouse.
* Peter writes to the unequally yoked – **1 Peter 3:1** Wives, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they observe your chaste conduct *accompanied* by fear.
* Lee Strobel, after chiding his believing wife for years, WAS won by her humble and Godly response to it. They wrote a book together called “Spiritual Mismatch.”

15 But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases.* But God has called us to peace**. (one, peace, quietness, rest, + set at one again.)**

* Believers… WE SHOULD BE the one bringing peace into our marriages…. Quietness… restful… Creating oneness…
* V15 IS NOT a way to get divorced… God calls us to peace… But, if your unbelieving spouse cannot stand you because you are born again, you are not under bondage, or trapped.
* Are you free to remarry? It does not say… It DOES say this…

16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save *your* husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save *your* wife?

* IE, It might be better to stay in an already unequally yoked marriage and see your spouse accept the Lord than to try to end the marriage.
* How can we avoid this situation? DON’T DATE UNBELIEVERS!
* **ARE some called to stay single? Next week we will find out…**

**Until then we should ask ourselves: Am I the source of peace or distraction in my home and family?**