PAUL’S MARRIAGE SEMINAR:
TO MARRY OR NOT MARRY?
1 Corinthians 7:1-7
1 Corinthians 7:1

“Now concerning the matters about which you wrote ...” (ESV)
Answers to Questions from Corinth

• Now Concerning ...
  – Abstinence (7:1), Marriage (7:2), Singleness (7:8), Remarriage (7:9), Divorce (7:10)
  – Food sacrificed to idols (8:1)
  – Spiritual gifts (12:1)
  – The collection of offerings (16:1)
  – An upcoming visit from Apollos (16:12)

• Instruction on ...
  – Head coverings (11:2)
  – Conduct at Lord’s table (11:17)
  – The Resurrection (15:1)
1 Corinthians 7:1-3

“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. 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, ...
1 Corinthians 7:5-7

“so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 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.” (ESV)
The Underlying Question

“‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’” (7:1)
1 Corinthians 7:1

• 1984 NIV
  – “‘It is good for a man not to marry.’”

• 2011 NIV
  – “‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’”

• ESV
  – “‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’”

“TO MARRY OR NOT MARRY”
DO NOT “TOUCH” (*haptō*)

• Literally, “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.”
  – A euphemism in both Hebrew and Greek for intimate relations.
The Answer to the Married

“Each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband”

(7:2)
Marriage Instructions

• God designed marriage as THE place for the expression of human sexuality (Gen 2:24; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; etc.)
Marriage Instructions

• God designed marriage as the place for the expression of human sexuality
• Marriage is between one man and one woman
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• God designed marriage as the place for the expression of human sexuality
• Marriage is between one man and one woman
• **Marriage is a profound union—the two shall become one flesh** (1 Cor 6:17, quoting Gen 2:24)

“TO MARRY OR NOT MARRY”
Matthew 19:4-6

“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” (ESV)
Joined *(kollaō)*

- Glue, to join together, to unite
  - Word from which we get colloid

“TO MARRY OR NOT MARRY”
Marriage Instructions

• God designed marriage as the place for the expression of human sexuality
• Marriage is between one man and one woman
• Marriage is a profound union—the two shall become one flesh
• **Marriage is mutual submission**
Qualifiers for Abstinence In Marriage

- It requires mutual consent
- It is temporary
- It is for the purpose of prayer
- It is not a command, but a concession
  - “Now as a concession, not a command, I say this.” (7:6)
The Answer to the Unmarried

“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.”

(7:7)
Gift (charisma)

• Same word used of the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:4ff.
1 Corinthians 7:33-35

“The married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried ... is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit ... 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.”

(ESV)
PAUL’S MINI-Marriage Seminar

• Marriage = good
• Abstinence w/in marriage = bad (w/ exception)
• Singleness = good
• Intimacy outside of marriage = bad (w/ no exceptions)
• Burning w/ desire and not married = bad

“TO MARRY OR NOT MARRY”
PAUL’S MINI-MARRIAGE SEMINAR

• Remaining unmarried can be good (if it allows you to serve God).
• Remaining unmarried is bad (if you struggle for intimacy).
• Married people belong to each other and should live that relationship fully—as one.
• All should be content in the roles God has given.
• Both marriage & singleness can clarify your commitment to Christ.
• All believers should be available to Christ, regardless of their status in life.

“TO MARRY OR NOT MARRY”
“Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him.” (7:17)