

Marriage and Singleness

1 Corinthians 7:1-9

Outline of 1 Corinthians:

- I. Introduction (1:1-9)**
- II. Problems Reported (1:10-6:20)**
- III. Questions Raised (7:1-16:4)**
 - a. Confusion with Marriage (7:1-24)
 - b. Confusion with Getting Married (7:25-40)

A. The question (v1)

The question seems to be this: Should we avoid physical intimacy?

- Celibacy is “good” (Greek *kalos*) = *good, fair, beautiful, excellent, honorable*

B. The answer for the married: “No” (v2-6)

- The belief that celibacy is best for married people is an expression of asceticism.
 - Asceticism is severe self-discipline and avoidance of all forms of indulgence.
 - Asceticism is useless against temptation – see Colossians 2:20-23.
- Celibacy within a marriage can lead to temptations.
- Giving physical intimacy within marriage is an expression of mutual submission within marriage.
- There are exceptions to this rule, but communication with your spouse is needed.

C. The answer for the single: “Yes” (v7-9)

- Both marriage and singleness are gifts from God, each providing different benefits.
- For those who are not married, celibacy is the only honorable choice.

Overview of the Biblical Doctrine of Marriage

Origin: God instituted marriage (Genesis 2:18-25, Mark 10:6-9).

Order: Husband and wife are equal in value (Gen. 1:27); the Husband holds a higher rank (Gen. 3:16b, 1 Cor. 11:3).

Purposes:

- Companionship & mutual support (Gen. 2:18)
- Procreation (Gen 1:28)
- Pure sexual expression (Gen 2:25, Heb. 13:4)
- Humility (Eph. 5:21)

Responsibility: Husbands sacrificially love; wives respectfully submit (Eph. 5:22-33).

Reflection: Marriage practiced well reflects the relationship between Christ and His Church (Eph. 5:23-32).

From the Grace Gospel Bible Church doctrinal statement section: FAMILY—

We believe that God created and blessed the family as the foundation of society. **Marriage unites one genetically defined naturally born male (man) and one genetically defined naturally born female (woman) in a lifetime commitment to each other (Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 7:1-3).** We believe civil unions and domestic partnerships do not constitute a biblical marriage nor do we acknowledge them as such.

Marriage provides for intimate companionship, pure sexual expression (Genesis 2:25; Ephesians 5:31-33), procreation, and reflection of the relationship of Christ to the church (Genesis 1:28; Proverbs 5:15-19; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5). **The marriage relationship is biblically the only legitimate and accepted sexual relationship (Hebrews 13:4).** A husband is commanded to love and provide for his wife as Christ loved the Church. A wife is commanded to respect and submit to her husband as the Church submits to Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33). We believe that any sexual activity between two people of the same genetically defined gender is sinful (Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; Jude 1:4, 7).

Marriage is designed by God to be a monogamous lifelong commitment between a man and a woman (Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11). We believe divorce is forbidden by God and is contrary to His will with two exceptions. In the case of sexual infidelity, divorce is biblically permissible for the offended partner though not commanded (Matthew 5:31-32, 19:8-9) and in the case of an unregenerate spouse who wants to depart from the believing mate, the believing mate is commanded to let them depart (1 Corinthians 7:15-16).

Children are a gift from God and are fully human from conception (Psalm 127:3; 139:13-16). Parents of children have been delegated authority by God over their children (Ephesians 6:1). Corporal discipline properly applied is biblically sanctioned and is a legitimate form of child discipline (Proverbs 22:15, 23:13-14, 29:15, 29:17; Hebrews 12:5-11). Parents are to train their children by modeling a godly life, teaching them the Scriptures, disciplining them in love, and providing them a resource of wisdom and counsel (Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Proverbs 1:8-9; 13:24; 22:6). Parents are to care for the needs of their children (2 Corinthians 12:14; Ephesians 6:4). Children are to obey their parents with respect and honor, caring for them in the time of their dependency and old age (Exodus 20:12; Leviticus 19:32; Proverbs 23:22; Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20; 1 Timothy 5:3-8).