

Marriage and Contentment

1 Corinthians, Vol. 11

HBC 1/29/20

1 Corinthians 7:17-40

In Chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians, Paul has been discussing the proper conduct regarding marriage in response to questions the church at Corinth wrote to him seeking counsel. Now we come to verse 17 which begins a discussion to the end of the chapter on the issue of contentment. So, to cover the 24 verses in this section we will consider the main points of Paul's argument.

The specifics Paul has been stating concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage have touched upon a general principle which he develops in the remainder of the chapter. The issue is **contentment**. The Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible for contentment carry the ideas of regarding something as sufficient or recognizing sufficiency.

Hence, **to be content** in the Biblical sense is _____.

This kind of contentment is commanded for believers.

Luke 3:13-14 makes 3 points about being content:

1. "Do not take money by force." That is stealing: #8 of 10 commandments
2. "Do not accuse anyone falsely." That is bearing false witness: Commandment #9 Be content with truth
3. "Be content with your wages." Do not covet commandment #10

Hebrews 13:5-6

1. "Do not love money". The love of money is a root of all sorts of _____ (1 Tim. 6:10).
2. "Be content with what you have."

Notice here that this contentment is rooted in an understanding of God's _____.

"But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by _____. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content."

This contentment is intimately associated with godliness. This godliness results in being able to distinguish desires from needs and thus be free from being manipulated by desires and able to be satisfied with the provision of God.

What did Paul tell the Philippians in 4:11 – 12 that he had learned about contentment?

The “secret” referred to here is stated in verse 13 “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.” Again, contentment is rooted in understanding the faithfulness of God.

The contentment the Bible commands for believers is an acceptance of God’s dealings as they affect your _____ in life, your _____ in life, and your _____ in life. It is a settled disposition to regard God’s gifts as sufficient and His assignments as appropriate. In other words, trust Him. True contentment is found only in trusting _____.

False Ideas and Counterfeits of True Contentment:

There is a common Christian heresy based on a misuse of 1 Thessalonians 5:18, which says, “In everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” Is this saying you should be thankful for every circumstance?

The principle of contentment is general in scope and _____ Christian.

I. Contentment about religious status

v.17 states the first of three occurrences (vv.17, 20, 24) of the general principle to be _____ in whatever condition God has called you. It applies to the entire chapter.

Assigned: Every Christian has been endowed with certain _____ and placed in a certain place in the world.

Called: This refers to your _____.

Walk: This is a common metaphor for simply _____ life.

God never intended for the body of Christ to be homogenized. Rather, it is a mosaic made up of myriad pieces, each unique and unlike any of the others; and yet, we are one in Christ.

Do your former customs of religion, your background and what you feel comfortable with matter to the Lord?

What concerns the Lord?

What about the **many Christian denominations**? Those distinctions between religious backgrounds should never be carried over into the church as a basis for granting or denying fellowship. But neither should they be ignored or repressed so that they are something a person becomes ashamed of. How does God want to use you?

You should emphasize your identity as a _____ as just exactly who and what you really are in Christ. Jesus gave us the model for living the Christian life.

II. **Contentment about social status**

The point is that God has a purpose for you in the _____ in which He called you.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away, behold, new things have come” 2 Cor. 5:17.

Becoming a Christian does not mean you change _____.

The most profound impact you can have for Christ in the shortest period of time will be directed toward those who . . .

Thus, your new witness has the greatest impact on those who knew you before your salvation.

III. **Contentment about marital status**

God designed and established the institution of marriage, and He called it **very good**. In the process of creation, God said four times, “It is good” (Genesis 1:12, 18, 21, and 31). But in 2:18 He said, “It is not good”. What was not good was for _____
_____. Therefore, God provided woman and God instituted marriage.

The purpose of this message is to help you count the _____ of marriage and make the _____ necessary.

To whom is Paul concerned that you maximize your service?

When Paul gives his opinion on a matter, how should we view it? As something authoritative and _____.

In vv. 29–31 Paul seems to remind them of Jesus' words, that though we are *in* the world we are not *of* the world, but He chose us *out of* the world. So do not get caught up in the things of the world, for the form of this world is passing away.

Earthly relationships, attachments, and attitudes are subject to being _____ at any time. Your commitment and service to God must _____ all these earthly things.

In vv. 32–35 Paul wants his readers to be free from _____ about the things of the world.

In vv. 36–38 Paul discusses the concerns of a father or guardian pertaining to his virgin daughter. The father or guardian had the responsibility for deciding whether or not she should marry. Here again, Paul encourages _____ for those who have the gift of singleness. In each of these cases, Paul is not disparaging marriage. He knows that marriage is the design and purpose of God for most people. But whatever our lot in life we are here to _____ and honor Him.

In vv. 39–40 Paul addresses the _____ of marriage vows.

Paul tells us to view marriage with **Caution**:

Verse 28 explains that those who are married will have “_____ in this life”.

There are many factors to be considered before a person contemplates marriage and thus marriage must not be considered lightly. Things to be considered:

Paul tells us to view marriage with **Confidence**:

It is not a _____ to be married. In fact, it is normal to be married.

Being very cautious not to enter flippantly into a serious commitment, you can also realize that when marriage is God’s will it is a wonderful source of blessing and companionship unrivaled in any other sphere of human existence.

Paul tells us to view marriage with **Concern**:

In order to have a good marriage, _____ commitment is required.

It is wrong, it is sinful, to ignore marital and family responsibilities in the name of service to the Lord. Therefore, you should enter marriage with the understanding that these proper concerns will await you. If you are not willing to deal with these concerns, you are not ready to be married.

Paul tells us to view marriage with **Constraint**:

There are actually two constraints place upon marriage in vv. 39–40: marriage is _____ and only to another _____.

This is why in every Christian marriage ceremony something like “as long as we both shall live” or “till death do us part” is included in the vows. The only kind of “mixed marriage” that is prohibited: “do not be bound together with an unbeliever” (2 Cor. 6:14).