

The Blessed Union

13th September 2026

My Last Sermon

1 Corinthians 7:34–40

34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

36 But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry. 37 Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. 38 So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.

39 The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord. 40 But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

The Doctrine

Context is what testifies to the understanding of any given passage within the Bible.

Phrases are multiplied in the scriptures and each phrase carries with it a distinctive meaning that is consistent in its context.

What we have in this passage is simply that which continues in its theme relating to marriage, both in its permissibility and its value.

In this text it testifies to that which is NOT sinful according to a relationship, namely whether to abstain from the physical relationship of that which would consummate a marriage.

To be clear in the definition of the terms related to in the Bible.

Marriage is defined in the physical union between a man and a woman. A person who is betrothed is a person who is not yet married, they may be engaged to be married, but they are not married.

A legal contract IS NOT MARRIAGE either, nor are the vows, nor is the wedding ceremony a marriage. **A marriage is NOT a marriage until it is consummated.**

This is where a "*virgin*" becomes a "*wife*" in the case of a woman. We see there is just that distinction in verse 34;

34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin.

There is also a mistaken interpretation related to verses 36-38, where the thought is referring to fathers giving away their daughters. One modern version of the Bible actually says so by including the word 'Daughter' in the text.

To be sure we understand that the verses from 36 to 38 **ARE NOT speaking of fathers giving their daughters in marriage**. Lets read it again;

*36 But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: **let them marry**.*

This verse alone corrects the assumption in the NASB version of the Bible that adds the word "*Daughter*" after the word "*virgin*" at the beginning of the verse.

It corrects it because the last phrase "*let them marry*", carries the **plural pronoun** that must refer to both the '*man*' at the beginning and '*his virgin*'. These are the only two in the text and so "*let them marry*" clearly can't refer to *the father with the daughter*.

And so, in order to make it morally acceptable, not only does the NASB include **the invisible word 'daughter'**, but needs to also change the plural pronoun "*let them marry*", to "**Let her marry**", and relegate the word "*them*" to the footnotes.

Incredibly in the footnotes, the NASB admits they lied by stating that the literal word is "*them*" and not "*her*".

Just this ONE difference changes the entire meaning of the passage. So much for "*no doctrines are altered*" with the plethora of changes in modern versions.

This is the mess and confusion made when godless men interpret the Bible via a *thought for thought* translation rather than *word for word* translation. What they refer to as "**Dynamic Equivalency**" as opposed to "**formal equivalency**".

And so, this passage has nothing to do with the parent, even though this has been its common interpretation.

The passage speaks to the betrothed husband and potential wife.

Again, to understand it one must first understand that you are not married UNTIL the relationship is consummated. This is still the case today.

THE DOCTRINE

So what is the doctrine teaching us in verses 36 to 40?

Two things are taught:

1. **36-38** Whether a man determines to marry his betrothed or not, he does not sin in either case, even if one is preferred over the other; *38 So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.*
2. **39-40** If the husband dies, the woman is better to remain single, and if she marries, she must marry only in the Lord (ie A fellow believer).

Amen.

Pray.

The Introduction

The doctrine that is being presented is not difficult to see, and yet there is within the passage two and only two considerations of life that has value in life.

The first is that of marriage.

The life long relationship of when two souls **become united in one** and the blessed state of that relationship for life.

This is the first presentation that we have for a blessed life which solves many of the problems of life, but is also not without its troubles.

The Blessed part of that Union is when both members are united to Christ,

both together and INDEPENDANTLY.

The second consideration is that of the single life.

This is the life that has no need of a spouse. And when the Bible speaks of "no need" it speaks of a man or a woman who have no physical need for a husband or a wife.

They are able to control their urges, they are essentially *eunuchs* from birth and have no necessity, they do not burn in lust and can abide alone having full contentment with a focus to serve the Lord with singleness of heart and life.

This too is a BLESSED UNION, for it has God and Christ as its spouse.

As to both preference and experience, I can only speak to one of these blessings, but it is clear in the entirety of 1 Corinthians chapter 7, that Paul is writing in response to the question given him and he teaches that **either option is blessed**, BUT he also makes it clear from the beginning that **one is preferred above the other.**

1 Corinthians 7:1

¹ Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

Paul does not flinch when it comes to speaking to that which he believes is better.

He affirms it as to his personal testimony in verse 7-8;

1 Corinthians 7:7-8

⁷ For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. ⁸ I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

But, he also *affirms* both in the 2nd verse and again in the 9th verse.

1 Corinthians 7:2

² Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

After he attests to the value of the single life in 7-8 he writes in verse 9;

9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. 1 Corinthians 7:9

Notice the reasons for marriage is "**to avoid fornication**" (v2) and "**if they cannot contain**" (v9).

In a Jewish culture, where it was seen as a shameful thing for a woman or a man to remain unmarried, this statement stands in stark contrast.

But ALSO, in a secular /pagan **culture such as both in Corinth and in the world today**, where it is so permissible and nigh expected that fornication is the norm, **marriage in any formal sense is almost frowned upon.**

To "*Corinthianize*" was the common term referring to "*fornication*" in that secular world.

Sex outside of marriage is the norm in our immoral world, and as such THERE CAN BE NO BLESSING.

So here we have Paul intent on satisfying NEITHER cultures.

He stood in opposition to BOTH his own people AND that of the secular world the Corinthian Churches were used to.

No wonder so many despised Paul the Apostle, and no wonder he had to defend himself that they might take his words seriously as the words of the Lord.

Both of these positions, that of marriage and that of the celibate life, have their benefits converge in ONE UNION.

That is THE BLESSED UNION with the Lord.

Having given you both the doctrine and the introduction, we are going to look at only two points this morning. Both will be seen in contrast to the culture, but both will show their blessedness to them who trust in the Lord, in UNION WITH HIM.

The Blessed Union

1 Corinthians 7:38

38 So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well;

From the beginning of the world God had made them to "*replenish the earth*", that is, to fill the earth with people.

The man shall be joined to his wife, the wife to the man, and together the earth will be filled with mankind. **A people created in the image of God** and a flourishing and blessed civilisation of God fearing people.

Relationship is INBUILT in God.

The co-relationship of **God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit**, is an eternally blessed union that can only be HINTED at in the relationship of man wedded to his wife, with both in BLESSED UNION, looking to God the father.

That is the ideal.

That is the most perfect union of all unions.

Husband, Wife, God and a "*threefold cord is not quickly broken*" (Eccl 4:12).

This is the single most perfect relationship, **if ONLY mankind would have held to it**. If only the chosen people of God would have held to it. **If only Christians would hold to it.**

Turn to

Genesis 2:24–25

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

And they would never be ashamed.

If sin was kept at bay, **If man did not think he needed more**, he could have remained in that BLESSED UNION of husband, wife and God, and would find himself content and forever blessed.

But no.

Man also wanted to be "*as gods, knowing good and evil*" (Gen 3:5) and so he tasted of that forbidden fruit.

Suddenly, that which was good was violated, corrupted, fallen.

What was blessed, now became CURSED.

Sorrow in conception multiplied to the woman, "*in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children*". Sorrow multiplied to the woman in her **subjugated desire** to overrule the man; "*thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee*".

To the Man, [Genesis 3:17–19](#)

.... Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; ¹⁸ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ¹⁹ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

This "Original Sin", has caused the fall of all that God had given to man to be eternally **blessed**.

The "*threefold cord*" was now broken with man wanting to go his own way.

Beloved, if you want to know why marriages fail so frequently today,

it is because of this very same reason. **Man wants to go his own way.** Its no longer a "*threefold cord*", it would be of some value if it were **two ply**, but it is not even that.

The Lust of the flesh in Mankind sees him continually wanting to go his own way.

Marriages fail when ONE PARTY decides to do it His way/Her way and takes both spouse and God out of the equation.

A marriage can survive without God, but God designed marriage to be a BLESSED UNION with him.

Fornication however is going your own way. As such many families have broken apart, and too often children pay the ultimate price.

1 Corinthians 7:2

2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

Fornication, sex outside of the blessed confines of marriage, **is the ultimate expression of man wanting to go his own way** in the secular world of the Corinthians.

(NB: When I use the male pronouns I am referring in the traditional way to mankind, both male and female)

The fall of man was precipitated by man **believing he was being deliberately held back** from all that was good;

Genesis 3:5

⁵ ***For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*** Said the serpent to newly weds in the first marriage of history.

"You don't have all you need to enjoy your life", "God is holding some great thing back from you" "just one bite" said the serpent to the man, as he notices the Apple Logo on his phone.

Fornication, and the thin end of the wedge known as Pornography (Literally *"Evil Graphics"*) indulged just for a moment the idea that you are missing something in your UNION,

This is the state of *the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life* (1 Jn 2:16).

That same serpent continues to do so today, and the world believes

him.

The demographics of a prosperous civilisation is at least 2.3 children per couple as a minimum, above is better.

Replacement value of the people of any given civilisation must be 2.1 children per biblically wedded husband and wife, assuming all marry.

A civilisation with a demographic under 2 cannot sustain itself, and a civilisation with a demographic less than 1.8 children per couple is irretrievable without any outside influence.

The birth rate in Australia hit that irretrievable level in 2014 with a fertility rate of 1.795.

In 2024, it dropped to under 1.5 children per couple.¹

Italy it is 1.18.

Spain 1.16

Poland 1

Singapore 0.95

South Korea it is 0.75

China it is 0.58-0.7²

(Side note: Australia had 295,000 births in 2024 to register the 1.495 children fertility rate. Australia murdered around 100,000 children before they were born in that year, with an unknown number killed via the morning after pill. Those added to the birth rate would have brought us above replacement).

The world has been sold a lie by that serpent.

The world cannot fornicate its way into prosperity. Mankind cannot be blessed outside God's ordained life of blessing.

{NOTE_LABEL} <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/births-australia/latest-release>
{NOTE_LABEL} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_total_fertility_rate

Children are a blessing

⁴ As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. ⁵ Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate. Psalm 127:4–5

Blessed is the man who loves his wife;

[Ephesians 5:28](#)

²⁸ *He that loveth his wife loveth himself.*

[Ephesians 5:28–33](#)

²⁸ So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. ²⁹ For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: ³⁰ For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. ³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. ³² This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Beloved, this is the BLESSED UNION.

We are seeing the demise of civilisation before our eyes, and all because man does not want to trust God but go his own way.

Paul was writing **to a culture of fornicators** and taught them to trust in the Lord and how he has ordained matters **that they might be blessed.**

YOU, YOUR WIFE and GOD is the ONLY way you are going to have a blessed life. Resist the stubborn sin that deceives you otherwise.

[1 Corinthians 7:38](#)

³⁸ So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well;

The Blessed Union

[1 Corinthians 7:38](#)

*³⁸ So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; **but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.***

It is intriguing to us to consider Paul's words to the Corinthian Churches respecting both marriage and non-marriage related to how he sees one having greater benefit

or value than the other.

We might be perplexed by it, but he gives both a biblical precedent for it and justifies it further with his own lived experience.

but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.

At the beginning of the chapter he makes it clear that "*it is good for a man not to touch a woman*" (v1).

He writes of himself as the example in verse 7 and 8.

He speaks of a man retaining his virginity in verses 25-26

Saying *that it is good for a man so to be.* (v26)

And then refers to the virgin marrying who "*shall have trouble in the flesh*" (v28)

It is the passage from verse 28 that gives to us an understanding of why Paul is making such claims for those who are able to abide without a spouse, why it may be that ***he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.***

1 Corinthians 7:28–31

28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you. 29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; 30 And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; 31 And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

In short, there is a **Blessed Union** when there is that singular concentration of our relationship to the Lord, and most especially as we *see the day approaching*.

Paul was clearly concerned with the nearness of the time and the Lords imminent return, he states it plainly in the passage;

29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; 30 And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; 31 And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

The ability to attend to the work of the Lord is far simpler without the need **to care for the pleasure of a wife or a husband.**

But this is ONLY true IF you can physically abide celibate. If not, then marry.

[1 Corinthians 7:2](#)

² Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

Paul wrote about his right to lead about a wife;

[1 Corinthians 9:3–5](#)

³ Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, ⁴ Have we not power to eat and to drink? ⁵ Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

Paul is certainly not "*forbidding to marry*", in fact he warns of such false brethren and wolves who would teach any such thing in his letter to Timothy;

² Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; ³ Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. ¹ Timothy 4:2–3

The qualification to Pastor or the office of a deacon, requires a wife!

He writes in [Hebrews 13:4](#) "*Marriage is honourable in all*".

All this remains true, and yet even our Lord Jesus Christ spoken on the BLESSED UNION of a single life devoted to God when asked respecting the nature of divorce;

[Matthew 19:7–12](#)

⁷ They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? ⁸ He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. ⁹ And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. ¹⁰ His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. ¹¹ But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. ¹² For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

Beloved, there are those among you who can receive it.

Not all people are disposed to marriage.

There are those so born from their mothers womb, and there are some who *have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*

Note the purpose however, both Paul and Jesus spoke of it, it is "*for the kingdom of heavens sake*" in Jesus words, and it is "*that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction*" in Pauls words (1 Cor 7:35).

Close

The Blessed Union

Beloved.

Everything about our lives is Blessed when that UNION includes Christ.

Nothing works well otherwise.

If you are married, attend to it the Lords way and you will be blessed. **Ignore God and do it your own way and you will struggle and perhaps even find your marriage relationship fall into disrepute with a life of misery.**

Repent therefore.

Swallow your pride and repent. Turn back to living the married life DELIBERATELY through the Lords instruction to you.

Husbands, *LOVE YOUR WIVES.* (Eph 5:33)

Wives, *REVERENCE YOUR HUSBANDS.* (Eph 5:33)

BUT THIS IS THE KEY,

You must BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND INDEPENDENTLY ONE OF ANOTHER, **join in that Blessed Union with the Lord as if you are**

unmarried.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: ... 1 Corinthians 7:14

Whether you are single and in that blessed union with Christ, or are married and in that blessed union with your spouse AND Christ, you are still in an individual relationship with God that can affect others, most importantly your wife or husband.

Ladies, do you believe it is going to be your beauty that transforms your husband to a godly man? Do you think it will be your focus upon your man that will draw him to Christ?

1 Peter 3:1–4

1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. 3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

And so it is also with you gentlemen.

Ephesians 5:25–28

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

THERE IS A THREE FOLD CORD, do not break it.

The blessed union Cannot be without God.

Do you know him?

Are you saved?

He calls you to his cross and, hanging there, testifies himself as worthy of your trust and life