

## I. The overarching concern of Paul

### A. The Corinthians' Concerns

1. Report vs request
  - a. Reports (Chs 1-6)
    - (1) **Factions - 1 Corinthians 1:11 (ESV)** <sup>11</sup> *For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers.*
    - (2) **Incest and Arrogance - 1 Corinthians 5:1 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife.*
    - (3) **Lawsuits - 1 Corinthians 6:1 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints?*
    - (4) **Religious Prostitution - 1 Corinthians 6:15 (ESV)** <sup>15</sup> *Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!*
  - b. Requests (Chs 7-16)
    - (1) Specific Topic the Corinthian Christians Have Queried Paul Concerning
    - (2) Each in introduced by the phrase "Now concerning," (ESV)
      - (a) He raises the specified concern
      - (b) Then answers that concern and includes other applications of the spiritual principle
2. Requested Concerns
  - a. Ch. 7 Marriage, Celibacy, Divorce, and Christian Love
  - b. Ch. 8 Food, Freedom, and Christian Love
  - c. Ch. 12 Spiritual Gifts, Worship, and Christian Love
  - d. Ch 16 Generosity, Resources, and Christian Love
  - e. Ch 16 Friendship, God's Will, and Christian Love

### B. Paul's Ultimate Concern 7.35

1. Ch 7: What do we do now that we are Christians?
  - a. It is good for a person to remain
    - (1) Jesus' command
      - (a) **John 15:4-9 (ESV)** <sup>4</sup> *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.* <sup>5</sup> *I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do*

*nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. <sup>9</sup> As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.*

(b) Paul expands the application to their intimate relations.”

b. It is good

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

(2) Paul: It is good for a person to remain

(a) It is good for a person to remain within the bounds of conjugal love. vv. 1-5

(b) It is good for a person to remain within the bounds of self-control vv. 6-9

(c) It is good for a person to remain within the bounds of covenant marriage vv. 10-16

(d) It is good for a person to remain within the bounds of God’s calling vv. 17-24

(e) It is good for a person to remain within the bounds of devoted commitment vv. 25-38

(f) It is good for a person to remain within the bounds of focused concentration vv. 39-40

2. Paul’s ultimate concern 7:35

a. ***I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint on you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord***

(1) To promote good order

(2) To secure your undivided devotion to the Lord

b. **To have the same kind of love for Jesus that Jesus has for the Father!**

(1) The example of Jesus

(a) **John 17:4 (ESV) <sup>4</sup> I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.**

(b) **John 4:34 (ESV) <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.**

(2) Marked by

(a) Priority

i) Luke 14:25-33

ii) **“So therefore, any one of you that does not**

*renounce all that he has cannot be my  
disciple.*

- (b) Transformation
  - i) Romans 12:1-2
  - ii) *Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
- (c) Filling
  - i) Ephesians 5:18
  - ii) *Do not be drunk with wine for that is debauchery but be filled with the Spirit*

**II. Do you have an undivided heart utterly devoted to Christ?**