

1 Corinthians 7:25-40

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[0 : 00] 1 Corinthians chapter 7. We're going to be verses 25 to the end of the chapter, which gets us to verse 40. 1 Corinthians chapter 7, verse 25 through 40.

The text that some of you have said, you've been waiting to see how I was going to handle it, how the Lord would deal with it. The text that some of you have read ahead of me and the text that this morning when I got through typing, my outline, I kind of pushed away from the desk for just a moment and I just let out a deep breath.

And your pastor's wife looked at me and said, well, that's not a good sound right before you preach. I said, what, breathing? I said, that's pretty, she said, that wasn't a normal breath. I said, well, there are some portions of scripture that just make you go, whew, and this is one of them.

And we'll trust that the Lord has it there. We know he has it there for a purpose and for a divine reasoning in our own life and we see applications from it. It's a difficult text nonetheless, but we don't gloss over it in its difficulty, right?

We jump right into the middle of it. But hopefully we'll see it as it was presented to the church at Corinth. And I believe as the Spirit has desired that it would be presented to us, the church here at Wartre.

[1 : 06] So if you're physically able and desire to do so, would you join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God found in 1 Corinthians chapter 7, starting in verse 25 and going down to verse 40.

Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one by the mercy of the Lord that who by the mercy of the Lord is trustworthy. I think then that it is good in view of the present distress that it is good for a man to remain as he is.

Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if you marry, you have not sinned. And if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life and I'm trying to spare you.

But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none and those who weep as though they did not weep and those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice and those who buy as though they did not possess and those who use the world as though they did not make full use of it for the form of this world is passing away.

But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife.

[2 : 21] And his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried and the virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

But this I say for your own benefit, not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord. But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter, if she is past her youth and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes.

He does not sin, let her marry. But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will and has decided this in his own heart to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well.

So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better. A wife is bound as long as her husband lives, but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes only in the Lord.

But in my opinion, she is happier if she remains as she is. And I think that I also have the spirit of God. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. We thank you for your faithfulness to us.

[3 : 38] We thank you for the opportunity we've had to come and to lift our voices up in song. Lord, the great privilege it is to open up the word of God, knowing that every part and every portion and every piece has direct application to our lives for your glory.

So Lord, may we hear a word from you. May it not be the opinions or the thoughts of man's, but may it be the very word of God that speaks to our hearts and minds, and may it be for your glory.

And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. As we have made our way through the seventh chapter and into the eighth chapter, again, in the eighth chapter, we will find this phrase, Now Concerning.

Each of these are introductions into a question that the church at Corinth was posing to Paul. If you remember, Paul is writing this letter to answer questions which they had evidently sent his way by a courier or by an individual.

And they have asked questions of Paul concerning things of how to do church. Paul was there and established the church. He would be what we call the church planner. He spent a significant amount of time in the city of Corinth.

[4 : 46] He raised up elders. He put them in place. He was concerned about them. He sent Timothy back to them. And yet, they still had some questions.

And so they're going back to their, if you will, their founder, their father in Christ, their spiritual father, and asking how to do things. Now Paul is just now, seven chapters into the letter, answering their questions because before he could answer their questions, he had some questions of his own.

He had to address their immorality. He had to address their practice because questions are all well and good. And we can split hairs all day long, but until we get the heart and the mind right, it doesn't matter what the answer to the question is.

So Paul is addressing their morality and their spiritual issues first. And then he goes into practical issues of questions because their questions pertain to how they should live in society.

Now it's kind of ironic if we think about it in the church at Corinth because the problems that Paul addresses is that they had let society live in the church and yet the church was asking how they should live in society.

[5 : 52] So the first thing Paul addresses at the very beginning of the letter is quit letting society rule in the church. That is, don't do what the world does. And now let me tell you how you should live in the world because God has put you here and placed you here.

They had asked questions evidently as it pertained to the married individual who comes to Christ. What if the other spouse, the husband or the wife, does not accept Jesus Christ? Should I stay with them?

And to that Paul says, yes. If they're willing to stay, then stay because you're giving God opportunity. You're giving him an opportunity to work in the lives of your children. You're giving him the opportunity to work in the lives of your spouse.

You are to be a light in that mission field of your home. And then Paul speaks to them about not only remaining in that condition, but also don't worry so much about your social standing.

That was what we looked at last week. Your work is a divine assignment given to you by the Lord your God. And just because you come to Christ, it doesn't mean you change your place in society. He may call you from it, but it does not necessitate that you leave it unless it is morally and ethically wrong.

[6 : 58] That if what you can do, you can do as unto the Lord, then do it as unto the Lord. He has given you a great opportunity. I love the phrase that he called you while you were that, right?

That if he called you in that position, then he can use you in that position. And now we come to the third question of the chapter. What about the unmarried individual? Is it necessary that they remain celibate or should they be married?

Many believe that they should not marry, that they should stay single. They should remain celibate. They should remain set apart. We don't have to read very much church history that we see that interpretation led into a major branch of the church.

Let's just be honest, led to great harm. Very much harm was done in that celibate lifestyle, quote unquote, because it wasn't very celibate.

And Paul is addressing really kind of the singles in this section. Now it's a difficult question for sure. But I hope that by the time we finish this portion of scripture, we will understand the question is not really should I be married or should I remain single?

[8 : 15] Because to both of those, Paul says yes. I remember when I came to Christ, my mentor in the faith, I had so many questions. As it pertained to my walk of faith, as it pertained to what I should and should not do.

And I would go to my mentor, and by the way, you need a mentor. I would go and I would ask a question. Should I do this or should I not do this? And he would say yes.

And I would say, well, to which one are you saying yes? And he would say yes. And it would drive me nuts. It would make me so mad. I'm just being honest. I wanted someone to give me a checklist of do's and don'ts.

And in his wisdom, he refused to do so. In his wisdom, he reminded me that the relationship was more important than the rules.

And that if my heart was right with Christ and I was in the word of God, then my application of that would work itself out. Several years ago, not here, several years ago while pastoring, I had someone come to me and say, Pastor, I've never heard you preach a series on tithing.

[9 : 27] And I said, you're right, I never will. They said, well, Pastor, you need to preach a series on tithing. I said, well, if we get the heart right, the wallet will follow. If I convince you to touch your wallet and we bypass the heart, it doesn't matter how much you give.

Because it's really not about the questions we ask or we don't ask. It's about the relationship with the Lord.

As we looked at this, we saw in this seventh chapter, we see the divine position on marriage, what God thinks about marriage in the first half, that marriage is of utmost importance.

I mean, God has to think marriage is important because it is the very creation of God himself. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined together to his wife, and the two shall become one.

Last time I checked, that was said before man even had a father and mother because that was declared to the first parents. God was putting something into practice that would be repeated throughout Scripture.

[10 : 31] He was setting a standard because the very first time that marriage is mentioned, that's the law of first mentioned in Scripture interpretation. There's a big long word for it, but it really just means the law of first mentioned.

You have to, if you want to define it, go back to the first place it's mentioned. That's why I think he said it there in the early pages of Genesis, for this reason. For what reason? For marriage. The joining together.

God thinks marriage is important. That's the divine position on marriage. This is a divine position in marriage or singleness. Because the question is not really, should I or shouldn't I?

The question is, where is he? Where is he? Much like when Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and he thought he had a great question, and I don't know if you've caught it, but Jesus didn't answer Nicodemus' question.

He got right to the heart of the matter. Paul does it here with great spiritual discernment and spiritual leading. So I want you to see this morning, considerations of marriage.

[11 : 43] Considerations of marriage. The first thing that we notice is the observation of the time. The observation of the time.

He says in verse 25, now concerning virgins, that's just an unmarried lady. One that's never been married before. Okay? Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord.

That is, God didn't so ordain that when Jesus came and dwelt among men that he would declare these things. We can't find it in red letters anywhere in Scripture. Now we have to be careful with our scriptural interpretation here and not say that we're reading what we think is the opinion of Paul.

While it is the opinion of Paul, quote, unquote, it's also the authorized inspired word of God. Because we believe that the men of God were moved by the spirit of God to write the word of God.

So this has authority with it. All Paul is saying is that Jesus didn't say or declare specifically concerning this subject when he walked the face of this earth for those 33 plus or minus years.

[12 : 52] You say, well, there's a lot of things he didn't say. But Paul gives us his source of authority. But I give my opinion as one who by the mercy of the Lord is trustworthy.

And then in the last verse, in verse 40, it says he also has the spirit of God. So he says, I'm coming to you with the authoritative spirit of God. And by God's mercy, I have been found trustworthy to declare this truth to you.

Now let's see what he says. He says, I think, verse 26, that it is good in view of the present distress.

I think that it is good in view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is. So the first thing when we come to this consideration of marriage is the observation of the times.

The observation of the times. Now I love what Paul does here. Because Paul says, anytime you're considering anything in your life, especially marriage, you need to also observe the time that God has so ordained you would live.

[14 : 03] We saw how God is concerned about us from the seventh chapter. Last week, we saw the big rock issue, right?

That we have a God who is so sovereign that he not only created it and spoke it into existence, he's also intimately aware of every aspect of its existence. We have a God who can control the nations.

We have a God who holds the heart of the kings in the palm of his hand. We have a God who considers man even though he's a little lower than the angels. We have a God, Paul says in Acts 17, that he has decreed and declared when and where you would live.

So the time that you live in is worth your observation. Because this is when and where God has so ordained you would live.

Now that causes us to pause and consider for just a moment. For just a moment. To say, oh, I wish we could go back to then.

[15 : 07] Oh, I wish that things were better back then. Let's not say the good old days. Say, oh, I wish it was back in the good old days. But I remind people that the good old days are what gave birth to these days.

So I don't know if they were really that good. But you say, well, I wish we could go back then. Or I wish we could go then. And I'm kind of an old soul. I would like to live in certain days in the past history.

And I look back and say, well, I'd like to live back there. I have to be careful with that longing because this is the day in which God has ordained I would live. And this is the day that he has so ordained that you would live.

So when we look with ridicule upon our time, we're saying, God, I wish you would not have put me here at this time. When God is saying, but I called you to myself at this time, for this time, in this time.

You observe your time. He said, oh, but pastor, the days are wicked. Yes, but what a day of opportunity. The light shines the brightest in the darkest moments.

[16 : 12] What a day of opportunity. You can only see the stars of heaven when you get away from the lights of the world. You get away from the city. You get away from all the confusion.

You get away from all the traffic. You get away from all the chaos. Recently, we were down at the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans. I know the same stars that hang over my house over here on 104 Hickerson Road are the same stars that are hanging over New Orleans, Louisiana, but I didn't see them there.

I saw a lot of red and blue flashing lights. I saw a lot of screaming lights. I saw a lot of all the other lights, but I didn't see the heavenly lights. I had to get away from the world's chaos before I could see the heavenly beings up there shining.

This is the time that he's called us to live. This is the time he's called us to be in, right? We observed the time, but Paul goes on. He says, I think that it is good in view of the present distress that it is good for a man to remain as he is.

This is where he says yes and yes. Look at what he says. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from wife? Do not seek a wife. Paul is saying that if you're engaged, okay, go get married.

[17 : 20] If you're not engaged, don't feel the pressure to go get married. Now, it would do us good to go back and just look at a little history of where they're at in their present time. If the letter of 1 Corinthians was written when most people believe that it was written, there's an emperor over the Roman Empire at this time called Nero.

Nero is a wonderful guy, but not so much so in church history, right? Nero did a lot of persecution against believers, something like throwing them into pools full of piranhas.

He would throw them before the lions. Nero was also known for covering believers in tar while they were alive and strapping them to a pole and setting them on fire to light his cities.

So when Paul says, in view of the present distress, he kind of knew what he was talking about. There were famines and earthquakes at that time.

Paul says, consider the day you live. Consider the day you live in. He said, you need to observe your times. And he tells us, but if you marry, you have not sinned.

[18 : 26] And if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life and I'm trying to spare you. It's going to cause trouble. It's going to be harm.

So Paul is not painting an easy believism picture here, right? He's reminding them that the Lord who called you is going to also walk with you through persecution, trials, and struggles.

It's no sin to marry. It's no sin to remain single. But then he goes on in verse 29, but this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened. The time has been shortened.

Paul lived with the imminent reality of the coming of Christ. The first letter that Paul wrote, many believe, 1 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians would be his earliest writings.

1 and 2 Thessalonians have this common theme. I know I've told you that before, but it bears repeating. Every chapter of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, these two letters to the church at Thessalonica, every chapter makes a mentioning of the coming of Jesus Christ.

[19 : 29] Everyone. From his earliest writings, Paul's greatest concern was the coming of Christ. The coming of Christ. The coming of Christ. And he lived in view of his time, observing his time with the reality that the days had been shortened.

Now, that was Paul's reality because Paul's days were shortened. He died a martyr's death. We understand that. Paul, in observation of his time and the consideration of everything that God had called him to, wanted to live for the fullness of the time in which he was at.

Now, stay with me. And he did not just go into whatever would feel good to the flesh. He began to look outwardly at the time in which God had ordained he would live.

So the first considerations were given as an observation of the time. Second consideration that we're giving is an opportunity of service. An opportunity of service. He goes on.

Since the time is shortened, he says in verse 32, but I want you to be free from concern. Some translations say care.

[20 : 37] The little wording there is concern. I want you to be free from concern. In view of the time, I want you to be free from concern. Now, this is not a selfish ambition.

This is not a selfish motive like I don't want anybody else to deal with because the free from concern is to open the individual up for greater service. Don't lose sight of that, right?

This isn't, well, it would be better for me if I stayed single so that I could live to the best of the way I wanted to live. That's what Paul, Paul is not implying that nor is he stating that. He says in view of the time and since the days are shortened, he says one who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord, but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife and his interests are divided.

The woman who is unmarried and the virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord and she may be holy both in body and spirit, but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. Hey, friend, listen to me.

This is a factual statement. If you are married, you ought to be concerned about how you can provide and please your spouse.

[21 : 47] That's actually a God-given command. Right? They all have to love and to respect one another. And since it's God-given, it's not wrong.

Paul's not saying it's wrong to be concerned. He is just stating the facts. And so don't let the statement of the facts be used as a declaration against. The word of God will never contradict itself.

You go ahead and settle that. So if you find a contradiction, the problem is not with the word. The problem is with the interpretation. It will never contradict itself.

So what God declares good, marriage and right and ordains and establishes cannot be bad, even though it does carry with it these facts of concern.

You have to be concerned about the things of the world. If you're a husband, you need to be concerned about the things of the world because you don't want to just look at your wife and say, hey baby, everything's going to be okay. You know, I know I'm not really working or any of that other stuff and I don't have a job.

[22 : 48] We're just going to, God has called us to be workers and called us to be laborers and called us to do all these things, right? And called us to be providers and sustainers and equippers and all these things. We ought to be those things. You need to be concerned about those things.

And wives, don't look at your husbands and say, you know, I know it's okay. Everything will be okay. You know, I know, I'm going to be careful. I'm not even going to go there. Don't do it, Billy Joe. You're going to get in trouble. I'm spoiled.

I know I'm spoiled. I'm not going there. Don't just say things that work themselves out because see, I would say things that operate my household and I promise you when some of you go to the back door, you'd get upset at me and say, well, that shouldn't be that.

That was wrong. That was, no, that's just, that's the way my household's been blessed. Okay. Let me say, if my wife looked at me and said, do the clothes will get clean somehow or the food will be there somehow? I would say, well, that's a problem because I don't know how to do any of that stuff.

You say, you don't know how to wash clothes? I told you I'm spoiled. Okay. And that's not, I've never looked at her and said, hey, you're washing the clothes and I'm not. Never done that. She actually looked at me and said, you're not washing the clothes.

[23 : 47] That's how that works. Don't touch the clothes. Okay. Yes, ma'am. You know, but there has to be this concern, right? There has to be this concern and you have to be concerned with things in the world because you're called to be concerned about one another for one another's good.

However you work it out, you don't have to work it out the way we work it out, but however you work it out as a husband and wife, you're called to work it out and to be concerned and you ought to and you need to and you're commanded to. But what Paul is saying here is the greater emphasis whether married or single should not be a concern about the things of the world but how we can serve.

And this is something in pre-marriage counseling I try to address. I don't always address the best that I should. Maybe I need to come to this text and really look at it because what Paul is saying here, he says you don't want your interests divided, right?

He says in verse 35, this I say for your own benefit not to put a restraint upon you but to promote what is appropriate and to secure, look at this, undistracted devotion to the Lord.

You know one of the considerations you have if you're single or if you're looking at it, I know we don't have a lot of singles in our, but if we do we have some singles or even this thing and this is something anytime a couple comes down and wants to talk to me about this and you're looking at marriage and things, can you serve the Lord better married?

[25 : 09] What gives you the greater devotion to the Lord? That's essentially what Paul is getting down to. Paul says, if you cannot remain single because of the burning desires that's in your life that God's given you and you don't have control of these desires and these longings and these wants, then you need to be married because you cannot serve him by sinning, you have to serve him in marriage because you have these God-given desires.

But some people, as God has told us throughout scripture, he's called some to be eunuchs, he's called some to be celibate, some people can control those things and some people have no desire for that and he says, great, you have a greater service than the Lord single, but however you have the grandest opportunity to serve is how you should live.

I'm going to tell you, I serve the Lord better as a married individual than I ever would have as a single. There are some pastors throughout church history so neglected their homes that they forgot.

Some great church fathers that their wives might as well have been single mothers. They neglected their wives and neglected their homes.

I'm not going to name names and they just kind of left them, by the way, some, their wives left them because of this because the husbands were serving better as single individuals than they would have as married.

[26 : 29] And there are some who need that helpmate, who need that wife to walk beside them, to serve them. Charles Spurgeon's wife was a great helpmate to him.

There are others. Hudson Taylor, when he went to the mission field, many, many, many great helpmates. So you have to ask yourself, what is the avenue that God has called me to to offer the greater service for the kingdom?

See, the question is not really should I get married, would that be beneficial to me? The question is, what is he calling me to to serve him in a greater way? Because in case you missed it, the Bible's not about you and I.

Right? It's not really, history's not about us. Scripture's not about us. These people are asking Paul, what should I do? And Paul says, well, the question is, what do you need to do to serve your Lord better?

And that's how you address that, because of his calling on your life, and this time, what would be better? There are some, you can read Fox's Book of Martyrs, you can read DC Talks, Jesus Freaks, Volumes 1 and 2, those two are in the church library and they're in my personal library.

[27 : 46] You can read all these books of persecution, you can go to Voice of Martyrs and read all their books. There are some people that knowing they're facing persecution have to get married. There are some people that knowing they're facing persecution refuse to get married.

It's all a matter of calling. How do you best serve the Lord? It's really about Him. Third and finally, there's observation of time, there's opportunity to serve us, there's obedience to the Lord.

The grand question is a matter of obedience. It says in verse 36, but if any man thinks that he is acting unbecoming and good towards his virgin daughter. Now, I'm going to tell you translations here vary a little bit depending on which translation you have.

If you have the New American Standard, like I'm reading from, it says virgin daughter. If you have King James, New King James, it just says towards his virgin. And it's really technical, there's Bible scholars really go back and forth as they're reading this.

Some see it, the wording there, there's a wording in the Greek that implies the giving away. And that's why New American Standard translates it his virgin daughter because a man would not give away his bride.

[28 : 53] A father would give away his daughter. Some translations completely, because if I'm reading this, the only reason I'm saying this is because you may have a translation that reads totally different as it applies to a man dealing with his own struggles.

Really, it's not about the man, right? So the application is the same either way. It's not about the father looking at giving away his bride or the man taking a bride or even the man, can he deal with his own struggles internally?

The question is about the convictions they hold. So the application is the same for each one. But if any man thinks he's acting unbecomingly towards his virgin daughter, if she is past her youth, that's saying, you know, he's got a daughter and she's getting of age and she's about to, you know, get beyond a meritable age or marrying age and he's concerned about that.

If it must be so, let him do what he wishes. He does not sin, let her marry. But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, that is the world is not going to dictate how he makes a decision, but has authority over his own will and has decided this in his own heart to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well.

So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well and he who does not give her in marriage will do better. What's he saying? You're not wrong either way. What he's basing it upon here is a matter of conviction.

[30 : 06] Do as the Lord brings you to conviction. The New American Standards translation is if the father of the daughter who would be the one who organized and arranged the marriage, the father of the daughter has no conviction to give his daughter away, he doesn't have to.

He doesn't have to feel compelled even though the world's in awe. She's getting beyond married age. She needs to be married. There should be no compelling, no driving because he has a conviction from the Lord that he's not going to do it.

If he feels like he needs to give his daughter away in marriage, then follow that conviction. What is it? Disobedience, right? That's all that is. A matter of conviction is a matter of obedience. What do you say?

However the Lord leads, so do. That's why the answer is yes, yes. Right? Notice here how the relationship is so much more important than the rule because Paul could have wrote a rule out and said do this, don't do that.

Paul says I'm giving you my thoughts as one of those means spirit led because these are the matters of convictions that are upon me but I'm not going to supersede my convictions upon you. Just like every couple that sits down with me, I look at them and say my wife and I have convictions on how we do our marriage.

[31 : 19] Now we have convictions that are within the bounds of what we call biblical Christianity and those decisions we made were rooted in convictions we had but your marriage doesn't have to look like our marriage.

It needs to stay within the bounds of biblical Christianity but it doesn't have to look and you don't have to make application, it doesn't have to apply just like us but you need to be convicted of whatever you decide to do because if I convince you to do something or if I convince you to live in a certain way and it becomes inconvenient later just because you were convinced of the fact by somebody else that inconvenience is going to make you change your behavior but when you're convicted that this is what the Lord has led you to do no matter how much inconvenience comes your way you're going to stay the course because it's a matter of conviction.

My friend, the crux of the matter is this, whatever you're doing in your life there is no separation between personal and spiritual.

You don't get anything more personal than marriage, right? You don't get anything more personal than that. The two become one, that's pretty personal. I mean somebody's about to step all up in your life and become part of you.

That's very personal. There's no separation between the personal and the spiritual because the spiritual always dictates to the personal how it will live.

[32 : 41] This is not just a marriage. This is not a passage about marriage. This is a passage about living. Which says this, whatever you are doing in your life, even down to marriage, ought to be dictated by conviction of this is what God has called me to do in the Lord and I'm going to obey Him.

Where you work, where you play, who you hang out with, the decisions you make, how you live in your free time, the hobbies that you create, every part of our life ought to be dictated by a matter of conviction.

Because if they're not, you're going to be like the book of James says, being tossed to and fro like the waves of the sea. If I ask you a question, just a simple question, if I ask you a question, what did you do yesterday?

And you told me what you did yesterday and I asked you why you did it. Would you have a deep-rooted conviction of obedience that's why you did it? I went to Hobby Lobby twice yesterday. I went to two different Hobby Lobbies.

You know why I did it? Because I was convicted that spending time with my wife was the thing I needed to do. Big difference. She said, I'm sorry, we have to go again.

[34 : 08] I said, I don't care, you're here, this is where I want to be. Conviction. And I'm not saying that because it's wishy-washy, I'm saying that because all week long I had been gone. I'm sorry. All week long I had been running.

All week long I had been running. All week long I had been running. And I'm not saying that to get a pat on the back or to get a hug from anybody. I'm just saying whatever you do in your life needs to be rooted in the conviction or you won't do it.

Or you'll be tossed to and fro like the waves of the sea and you'll just do whatever. Everything. I don't always get it right. Sometimes I do things by convenience.

Sometimes I do things by necessities. Right? Oh, I have to do this and I mess it up. Right? So I'm not saying this. I'm just admitting it. It's obedience to the Lord.

It goes on. A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. That's what he's saying. You know, we understand sin introduced these things. We've already addressed this. But if her husband is dead, she's free to be married.

[35 : 14] It's freedom, right? It breaks that binding. But then he adds this little tagline to whom she wishes only in the Lord. What is he saying? Even the decision to remarry needs to come under the umbrella of obedience to the Lord.

You know, I can marry who I want to only in the Lord. Why? You remember that first hymn we sang? Redeemed, redeemed, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Remember what Paul has said two times so far. You are not your own. You're not your own. He says, oh, I'm free to make a decision.

No, you're not. He gives you the ability to make the decision, but you're not free because he who redeemed you will one day call you to account and me.

He will call us to account. We see the considerations of marriage. We observe the time. We look at the opportunities for service and we live in obedience to the Lord.

[36 : 29] Let's pray. Lord, I thank you so much. Thank you for this day. Thank you for your word. God, I thank you for the power and presence of your spirit.

We pray, Lord, as your people, we would live for your glory. Lord, may our every decisions, our every action, our every motivation be dictated by who you are and who you've called us to be.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.