

1 Corinthians: The Body of Christ vs. A Body in Crisis  
New Pilgrim Baptist Church Bible Study  
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5/1/24

Unity Over Ethics (1 Cor 5-7)

“Commandments concerning Godly Relationships” Pt. 2 (1 Cor 7:17-40)

### **Historical Background**

At the time Paul wrote this letter, Paul believed in the imminent return of Jesus. His mind changed in subsequent letters like Philippians where Paul thought he might die in prison. *His* instructions reflected in the counsel of vv. 17-40 reflect this mindset. The instructions will, therefore, reflect a situational tone. These are situational guidelines based on absolute commandments. As the shepherd helping this flock which was completely ignorant of the ways of God, it was essential for Paul to give them directions on how they should relate to others based on the precepts Paul had learned from Jesus.

### **Handling Community Relationships (vv. 17-24)**

- In this time, stay in the position the Lord called you in, do not seek to rock the boat, if it is unnecessary.
  - Circumcision should not be removed and uncircumcised people should not be circumcised.
  - If you are a slave, do not worry about it. But if you can be free, get free. But also, do not sell yourself into slavery to pay debts.

### **Handling Singleness (vv. 25-40)**

- People who are single, never been married (virgins), or people who are widowed or divorced.
- Here is why, the Lord’s immediate return makes the commotion of getting married superfluous. It also divides your attention from what really matters waiting for the coming of Jesus.
- **But** if you feel like you cannot hold out until the Lord’s return, and you find yourself ready to sleep with your fiancé, get married. It is better, however, if you choose to say single.
- A person is bound to the person he or she marries as long as that person is living but if he or she dies, then that person is free to marry whoever he or she wants **in the Lord**. Christians should not be marrying non-Christians. This is against the will of God.