

The Book 1 Corinthians

EDITOR'S NOTE: *THE BIBLE IS LIKE NO OTHER BOOK, FOR IT HOLDS THE VERY WORDS OF GOD, WHICH HAVE POWER TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF ANY WHO READ IT AND PUT THEIR FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. PSALM 34:8 SAYS, "OH, TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD! BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO TAKES REFUGE IN HIM!" THROUGH THE NEBRASKA LIVING TIMES YOU MAY "TASTE" AND SEE THE GOODNESS OF GOD THROUGH HIS VERY OWN WORDS, EACH MONTH, RIGHT HERE. MAY GOD BLESS YOU WITH HIS WORD!*

(CONTINUED FROM JUNE 2020)

THE BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

CHAPTER 7

PRINCIPLES FOR MARRIAGE

1 NOW CONCERNING THE MATTERS ABOUT WHICH YOU WROTE: "IT IS GOOD FOR A MAN NOT TO HAVE SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH A WOMAN." 2 BUT BECAUSE OF THE TEMPTATION TO SEXUAL IMMORALITY, EACH MAN SHOULD HAVE HIS OWN WIFE AND EACH WOMAN HER OWN HUSBAND. 3 THE HUSBAND SHOULD GIVE TO HIS WIFE HER CONJUGAL RIGHTS, AND LIKEWISE THE WIFE TO HER HUSBAND. 4 FOR THE WIFE DOES NOT HAVE AUTHORITY OVER HER OWN BODY, BUT THE HUSBAND DOES. LIKEWISE THE HUSBAND DOES NOT HAVE AUTHORITY OVER HIS OWN BODY, BUT THE WIFE DOES. 5 DO NOT DEPRIVE ONE ANOTHER, EXCEPT PERHAPS BY AGREEMENT FOR A LIMITED TIME, THAT YOU MAY DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER; BUT THEN COME TOGETHER AGAIN, SO THAT SATAN MAY NOT TEMPT YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR LACK OF SELF-CONTROL.

6 NOW AS A CONCESSION, NOT A COMMAND, I SAY THIS. 7 I WISH THAT ALL WERE AS I MYSELF AM. BUT EACH HAS HIS OWN GIFT FROM GOD, ONE OF ONE KIND AND ONE OF ANOTHER.

8 TO THE UNMARRIED AND THE WIDOWS I SAY THAT IT IS GOOD FOR THEM TO REMAIN SINGLE, AS I AM. 9 BUT IF THEY CANNOT EXERCISE SELF-CONTROL, THEY SHOULD MARRY. FOR IT IS BETTER TO MARRY THAN TO BURN WITH PASSION.

10 TO THE MARRIED I GIVE THIS CHARGE (NOT I, BUT THE LORD): THE WIFE SHOULD NOT SEPARATE FROM HER HUSBAND 11 (BUT IF SHE DOES, SHE SHOULD REMAIN UNMARRIED OR ELSE BE RECONCILED TO HER HUSBAND), AND THE HUSBAND SHOULD NOT DIVORCE HIS WIFE.

12 TO THE REST I SAY (I, NOT THE LORD) THAT IF ANY BROTHER HAS A WIFE WHO IS AN UNBELIEVER, AND SHE CONSENTS TO LIVE WITH HIM, HE SHOULD NOT DIVORCE HER. 13 IF ANY WOMAN HAS A HUSBAND WHO IS AN UNBELIEVER, AND HE CONSENTS TO LIVE WITH HER, SHE SHOULD NOT DIVORCE HIM. 14 FOR THE UNBELIEVING HUSBAND IS MADE HOLY BECAUSE OF HIS WIFE, AND THE UNBELIEVING WIFE IS MADE HOLY BECAUSE OF HER HUSBAND. OTHERWISE YOUR CHILDREN WOULD BE UNCLEAN, BUT AS IT IS, THEY ARE HOLY. 15 BUT IF THE UNBELIEVING PARTNER SEPARATES, LET IT BE SO. IN SUCH CASES THE BROTHER OR SISTER IS NOT ENSLAVED. GOD HAS CALLED YOU

TO PEACE. 16 FOR HOW DO YOU KNOW, WIFE, WHETHER YOU WILL SAVE YOUR HUSBAND? OR HOW DO YOU KNOW, HUSBAND, WHETHER YOU WILL SAVE YOUR WIFE?

LIVE AS YOU ARE CALLED

17 ONLY LET EACH PERSON LEAD THE LIFE THAT THE LORD HAS ASSIGNED TO HIM, AND TO WHICH GOD HAS CALLED HIM. THIS IS MY RULE IN ALL THE CHURCHES. 18 WAS ANYONE AT THE TIME OF HIS CALL ALREADY CIRCUMCISED? LET HIM NOT SEEK TO REMOVE THE MARKS OF CIRCUMCISION. WAS ANYONE AT THE TIME OF HIS CALL UNCIRCUMCISED? LET HIM NOT SEEK CIRCUMCISION. 19 FOR NEITHER CIRCUMCISION COUNTS FOR ANYTHING NOR UNCIRCUMCISION, BUT KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD. 20 EACH ONE SHOULD REMAIN IN THE CONDITION IN WHICH HE WAS CALLED. 21 WERE YOU A BONDSERVANT^[FN] WHEN CALLED? DO NOT BE CONCERNED ABOUT IT. (BUT IF YOU CAN GAIN YOUR FREEDOM, AVAIL YOURSELF OF THE OPPORTUNITY.) 22 FOR HE WHO WAS CALLED IN THE LORD AS A BONDSERVANT IS A FREEDMAN OF THE LORD. LIKEWISE HE WHO WAS FREE WHEN CALLED IS A BONDSERVANT OF CHRIST. 23 YOU WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE; DO NOT BECOME BONDSERVANTS OF MEN. 24 SO, BROTHERS,^[FN] IN WHATEVER CONDITION EACH WAS CALLED, THERE LET HIM REMAIN WITH GOD.

THE UNMARRIED AND THE WIDOWED 25 NOW CONCERNING THE BETROTHED, I HAVE NO COMMAND FROM THE LORD, BUT I GIVE MY JUDGMENT AS ONE WHO BY THE LORD'S MERCY IS TRUSTWORTHY.

26 I THINK THAT IN VIEW OF THE PRESENT DISTRESS IT IS GOOD FOR A PERSON TO REMAIN AS HE IS. 27 ARE YOU BOUND TO A WIFE? DO NOT SEEK TO BE FREE. ARE YOU FREE FROM A WIFE? DO NOT SEEK A WIFE. 28 BUT IF YOU DO MARRY, YOU HAVE NOT SINNED, AND IF A BETROTHED WOMAN MARRIES, SHE HAS NOT SINNED. YET THOSE WHO MARRY WILL HAVE WORLDLY TROUBLES, AND I WOULD SPARE YOU THAT. 29 THIS IS WHAT I MEAN, BROTHERS: THE APPOINTED TIME HAS GROWN VERY SHORT. FROM NOW ON, LET THOSE WHO HAVE WIVES LIVE AS THOUGH THEY HAD NONE, 30 AND THOSE WHO MOURN AS THOUGH THEY WERE NOT MOURNING, AND THOSE WHO REJOICE AS THOUGH THEY WERE NOT REJOICING, AND THOSE WHO BUY AS THOUGH THEY HAD NO GOODS, 31 AND THOSE WHO DEAL WITH THE WORLD AS THOUGH THEY HAD NO DEALINGS WITH IT. FOR THE PRESENT FORM OF THIS WORLD IS PASSING AWAY. 32 I WANT YOU TO BE FREE FROM

ANXIETIES. THE UNMARRIED MAN IS ANXIOUS ABOUT THE THINGS OF THE LORD, HOW TO PLEASE THE LORD. 33 BUT THE MARRIED MAN IS ANXIOUS ABOUT WORLDLY THINGS, HOW TO PLEASE HIS WIFE, 34 AND HIS INTERESTS ARE DIVIDED. AND THE UNMARRIED OR BETROTHED WOMAN IS ANXIOUS ABOUT THE THINGS OF THE LORD, HOW TO BE HOLY IN BODY AND SPIRIT. BUT THE MARRIED WOMAN IS ANXIOUS ABOUT WORLDLY THINGS, HOW TO PLEASE HER HUSBAND. 35 I SAY THIS FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT, NOT TO LAY ANY RESTRAINT UPON YOU, BUT TO PROMOTE GOOD ORDER AND TO SECURE YOUR UNDIVIDED DEVOTION TO THE LORD.

36 IF ANYONE THINKS THAT HE IS NOT BEHAVING PROPERLY TOWARD HIS BETROTHED, IF HIS PASSIONS ARE STRONG, AND IT HAS TO BE, LET HIM DO AS HE WISHES: LET THEM MARRY—IT IS NO SIN. 37 BUT WHOEVER IS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN HIS HEART, BEING UNDER NO NECESSITY BUT HAVING HIS DESIRE UNDER CONTROL, AND HAS DETERMINED THIS IN HIS HEART, TO KEEP HER AS HIS BETROTHED, HE WILL DO WELL. 38 SO THEN HE WHO MARRIES HIS BETROTHED DOES WELL, AND HE WHO REFRAINS FROM MARRIAGE WILL DO EVEN BETTER.

39 A WIFE IS BOUND TO HER HUSBAND AS LONG AS HE LIVES. BUT IF HER HUSBAND DIES, SHE IS FREE TO BE MARRIED TO WHOM SHE WISHES, ONLY IN THE LORD. 40 YET IN MY JUDGMENT SHE IS HAPPIER IF SHE REMAINS AS SHE IS. AND I THINK THAT I TOO HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

CHAPTER 8

FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS

1 NOW CONCERNING FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS: WE KNOW THAT "ALL OF US POSSESS KNOWLEDGE." THIS "KNOWLEDGE" PUFFS UP, BUT LOVE BUILDS UP. 2 IF ANYONE IMAGINES THAT HE KNOWS SOMETHING, HE DOES NOT YET KNOW AS HE OUGHT TO KNOW. 3 BUT IF ANYONE LOVES GOD, HE IS KNOWN BY GOD.

4 THEREFORE, AS TO THE EATING OF FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS, WE KNOW THAT "AN IDOL HAS NO REAL EXISTENCE," AND THAT "THERE IS NO GOD BUT ONE." 5 FOR ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE SO-CALLED GODS IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH—AS INDEED THERE ARE MANY "GODS" AND MANY "LORDS"— 6 YET FOR US THERE IS ONE GOD, THE FATHER, FROM WHOM ARE ALL THINGS AND FOR WHOM WE EXIST, AND ONE LORD, JESUS CHRIST, THROUGH WHOM ARE ALL THINGS AND THROUGH WHOM WE EXIST. 7 HOWEVER, NOT ALL POSSESS THIS KNOWLEDGE. BUT SOME, THROUGH

FORMER ASSOCIATION WITH IDOLS, EAT FOOD AS REALLY OFFERED TO AN IDOL, AND THEIR CONSCIENCE, BEING WEAK, IS DEFILED. 8 FOOD WILL NOT COMMEND US TO GOD. WE ARE NO WORSE OFF IF WE DO NOT EAT, AND NO BETTER OFF IF WE DO. 9 BUT TAKE CARE THAT THIS RIGHT OF YOURS DOES NOT SOMEHOW BECOME A STUMBLING BLOCK TO THE WEAK. 10 FOR IF ANYONE SEES YOU WHO HAVE KNOWLEDGE EATING IN AN IDOL'S TEMPLE, WILL HE NOT BE ENCOURAGED, IF HIS CONSCIENCE IS WEAK, TO EAT FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS? 11 AND SO BY YOUR KNOWLEDGE THIS WEAK PERSON IS DESTROYED, THE BROTHER FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED. 12 THUS, SINNING AGAINST YOUR BROTHERS AND WOUNDING THEIR CONSCIENCE WHEN IT IS WEAK, YOU SIN AGAINST CHRIST. 13 THEREFORE, IF FOOD MAKES MY BROTHER STUMBLE, I WILL NEVER EAT MEAT, LEST I MAKE MY BROTHER STUMBLE.

CHAPTER 9

PAUL SURRENDERS HIS RIGHTS

1 AM I NOT FREE? AM I NOT AN APOSTLE? HAVE I NOT SEEN JESUS OUR LORD? ARE NOT YOU MY WORKMANSHIP IN THE LORD? 2 IF TO OTHERS I AM NOT AN APOSTLE, AT LEAST I AM TO YOU, FOR YOU ARE THE SEAL OF MY APOSTLESHIP IN THE LORD.

3 THIS IS MY DEFENSE TO THOSE WHO WOULD EXAMINE ME. 4 DO WE NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO EAT AND DRINK? 5 DO WE NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE ALONG A BELIEVING WIFE, AS DO THE OTHER APOSTLES AND THE BROTHERS OF THE LORD AND CEPHAS? 6 OR IS IT ONLY BARNABAS AND I WHO HAVE NO RIGHT TO REFRAIN FROM WORKING FOR A LIVING? 7 WHO SERVES AS A SOLDIER AT HIS OWN EXPENSE? WHO PLANTS A VINEYARD WITHOUT EATING ANY OF ITS FRUIT? OR WHO TENDS A FLOCK WITHOUT GETTING SOME OF THE MILK?

8 DO I SAY THESE THINGS ON HUMAN AUTHORITY? DOES NOT THE LAW SAY THE SAME? 9 FOR IT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW OF MOSES, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE AN OX WHEN IT TREADS OUT THE GRAIN." IS IT FOR OXEN THAT GOD IS CONCERNED? 10 DOES HE NOT CERTAINLY SPEAK FOR OUR SAKE? IT WAS WRITTEN FOR OUR SAKE, BECAUSE THE PLOWMAN SHOULD PLOW IN HOPE AND THE THRESHER THRESH IN HOPE OF SHARING IN THE CROP. 11 IF WE HAVE SOWN SPIRITUAL THINGS AMONG YOU, IS IT TOO MUCH IF WE REAP MATERIAL THINGS FROM YOU? 12 IF OTHERS SHARE THIS RIGHTFUL CLAIM ON YOU, DO NOT WE EVEN MORE?

NEVERTHELESS, WE HAVE NOT MADE

USE OF THIS RIGHT, BUT WE ENDURE ANYTHING RATHER THAN PUT AN OBSTACLE IN THE WAY OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. 13 DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED IN THE TEMPLE SERVICE GET THEIR FOOD FROM THE TEMPLE, AND THOSE WHO SERVE AT THE ALTAR SHARE IN THE SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS? 14 IN THE SAME WAY, THE LORD COMMANDED THAT THOSE WHO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL SHOULD GET THEIR LIVING BY THE GOSPEL.

15 BUT I HAVE MADE NO USE OF ANY OF THESE RIGHTS, NOR AM I WRITING THESE THINGS TO SECURE ANY SUCH PROVISION. FOR I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN HAVE ANYONE DEPRIVE ME OF MY GROUND FOR BOASTING. 16 FOR IF I PREACH THE GOSPEL, THAT GIVES ME NO GROUND FOR BOASTING. FOR NECESSITY IS LAID UPON ME. WOE TO ME IF I DO NOT PREACH THE GOSPEL! 17 FOR IF I DO THIS OF MY OWN WILL, I HAVE A REWARD, BUT IF NOT OF MY OWN WILL, I AM STILL ENTRUSTED WITH A STEWARDSHIP. 18 WHAT THEN IS MY REWARD? THAT IN MY PREACHING I MAY PRESENT THE GOSPEL FREE OF CHARGE, SO AS NOT TO MAKE FULL USE OF MY RIGHT IN THE GOSPEL.

19 FOR THOUGH I AM FREE FROM ALL, I HAVE MADE MYSELF A SERVANT TO ALL, THAT I MIGHT WIN MORE OF THEM. 20 TO THE JEWS I BECAME AS A JEW, IN ORDER TO WIN JEWS. TO THOSE UNDER THE LAW I BECAME AS ONE UNDER THE LAW (THOUGH NOT BEING MYSELF UNDER THE LAW) THAT I MIGHT WIN THOSE UNDER THE LAW. 21 TO THOSE OUTSIDE THE LAW I BECAME AS ONE OUTSIDE THE LAW (NOT BEING OUTSIDE THE LAW OF GOD BUT UNDER THE LAW OF CHRIST) THAT I MIGHT WIN THOSE OUTSIDE THE LAW. 22 TO THE WEAK I BECAME WEAK, THAT I MIGHT WIN THE WEAK. I HAVE BECOME ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE, THAT BY ALL MEANS I MIGHT SAVE SOME. 23 I DO IT ALL FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL, THAT I MAY SHARE WITH THEM IN ITS BLESSINGS.

24 DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT IN A RACE ALL THE RUNNERS RUN, BUT ONLY ONE RECEIVES THE PRIZE? SO RUN THAT YOU MAY OBTAIN IT. 25 EVERY ATHLETE EXERCISES SELF-CONTROL IN ALL THINGS. THEY DO IT TO RECEIVE A PERISHABLE WREATH, BUT WE AN IMPERISHABLE. 26 SO I DO NOT RUN AIMLESSLY; I DO NOT BOX AS ONE BEATING THE AIR. 27 BUT I DISCIPLINE MY BODY AND KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL, LEST AFTER PREACHING TO OTHERS I MYSELF SHOULD BE DISQUALIFIED.

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