

# Studies in 1 Corinthians

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## Lesson XX: *Marriage, Divorce, and Moving Forward*

**TEXT:** 1 Cor. 7:10-19 (ESV)

**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?

**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.

## Questions for Thought & Discussion

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1. REVIEW: Must a Christian be married to be pleasing to God? Is a person more “spiritual” because they are single? What are the advantages of marriage? (cf. vv 1-9)

2. Is Paul's instruction regarding marriage and divorce intended to address every situation or is he responding to specific situations the Corinthians had asked him about? (see verse 1)
3. What kind of marriage issues does Paul focus on in verses 10-16?
4. In verse 10, the apostle states that the counsel he is giving to the married is not from himself but from the Lord. However, a few verses later he says that his next instruction is from himself and not from the Lord (verses 12). Are we to imply that verses 10-11 are divine revelation, but verses 12-16 are only Paul's personal opinion? Why or why not?
5. Is it acceptable for a believer to divorce his/her spouse solely because the spouse is spiritually incompatible? (see vv 12-13)
6. What is meant by the unbelieving spouse or children being sanctified by the believing partner? (verse 14)
7. A Christian woman has an unbelieving husband who abandons her. What is Paul's advice in this situation? (verse 15-16)
8. How should we approach "tough cases" of divorce and remarriage that the Bible is silent on?
9. What is the bottom line, as far as Paul is concerned? (see vv 17-19)