

I. Fornication Prevention—Spouses Commanded: Possess, Fulfill, & Do Not Deprive  
Now for the matters you wrote about: **“It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.”**

<sup>2</sup>But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. <sup>3</sup>The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup>The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife. <sup>5</sup>Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. <sup>6</sup>I say this as a concession, not as a command. <sup>7</sup>I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

*Fornication is prevented when spouses help each other; singles have a solution for passion as well.*

II. Passion Prevention—Singles Commanded: Marry and Do Not Burn

<sup>8</sup>Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: **It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do.** <sup>9</sup>But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

*Spouses battle sexual sin by not depriving each other; singles battle sexual sin by getting a spouse; but what should spouses do when the marriage goes bad?*

III. Separation Prevention—Spouses Commanded: Do Not Separate, But If So, Stay Single, Or Reconcile

<sup>10</sup>To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): **A wife must not separate from her husband.**

<sup>11</sup>But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

*Spouses, do not deprive each other; singles do not burn; spouses, do not divorce; finally, stick with your present status.*

IV. Variation Prevention—"The Rest" Commanded: Do Not Seek a Status Change

<sup>12</sup>To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. <sup>13</sup>And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. <sup>14</sup>For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. <sup>15</sup>But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace. <sup>16</sup>How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? <sup>17</sup>Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. <sup>18</sup>Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. <sup>19</sup>Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts. <sup>20</sup>Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them. <sup>21</sup>Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so. <sup>22</sup>For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord's freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ's slave. <sup>23</sup>You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings. <sup>24</sup>Brothers and sisters, each person, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.

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The Sermon-in-a-Sentence: When we obey God's commands on marriage, marital problem prevention is in place.

The Big Story: The Lord God established marriage (Gen 2), Moses regulated marriage (Deut 24), Malachi has questions and commands to lead you out of marital unfaithfulness that destroys your *worship* (Mal 2), Jesus proclaims the Creator's intention for marriage and our corruption of it (Matt 19); and Paul—inspired by God—perfectly summarizes it all.

The Big Question: Will you follow Paul's commands for the prevention of fornication, passion, separation, and variation?

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