1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verse 17

* Paul, continuing his answer to the church, says here no matter where you are at in life, if ***now*** you’re a Christian, then be it *married, single, divorced, widowed, remarried, employed, unemployed, retired or middle schooler* and so on, that really makes **no difference** and has **no affect** on the degree which God can use you. Don’t take up the thinking that *“Man, God could really use me if I was just older…”* God can use you and bless you and is just fine with you right now…
* And I like this especially right here because Paul says **God has given everyone something**, *some sort of distribution*, something they can do and no one else can do…and God has called ***each one***…and literally the implication there is **by name.** That makes a difference. God hasn’t called everyone and you got swept up in that net. God hasn’t shouted forth a call to responsibility because you are creation and He is God…***God has rather called you by name.*** You. For something specific between you and Him. **Something specific for you. Distinct, exact, specialized…** *I like that!*

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verses 18 – 19

* Hey, if you are a Jew and now you’re saved, **great!** Don’t seek to be *un-Jewish!* Are you a gentile? **Great!** Don’t seek to become a Jew! Are you a skater, a painter, a bail-bondsmen, ***wherever God has you, He has you!*** They need Christians there and God has deployed you! ***You ARE Jason Born-Again!*** HA! ***Be where you are and be filled with the Holy Spirit!!***
* How do you unlock the *bull’s eye specifics* between you and God? **Right here**, ***the entire skeleton key to all the doors of God’s will for your life is right here!*** *Keeping the commandments of God is what matters!* What are the commandments of God? Simple! **Love and love!** Love the Lord with all your heart (heart first), soul (how you administrate your life), mind (how you frame the world) and strength (and do it with grit). If you do that then you will love others as you love yourself!
* Extremely simple in concept and yet the institutionalization of it can be very challenging. But as you spend time in the Word, on your own, in small groups and at services like this one and you learn and take in more and more of the truth of God and then apply it to your life, ***God will teach you His ways very personally.*** And as you serve the Lord by serving those around you (because He said, *“Hey if you’ve done this to the least of these, you’ve done it to Me”)* then He will teach you His ways ***very personally.*** And loving Him and growing in Him will just happen, man…and while that is all going on…God will tell you, you will understand like a language man, what He has specifically and especially for you.

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verses 20 – 24

* ***You were bought at a price.*** Your freedom has been secured. Freedom of *heart, peace of purpose, strength of success*…don’t make yourself a slave to any man…and last time I checked, that included **me!** If you are saved now, then God has most certainly called you out of and enabled you to grow out of being a slave to the flesh! Don’t stay as you are in that circumstance, grow! How!? Rewind the track! HA!

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verses 25 – 28

* Side point on *trustworthy.* I cannot be perfect. But I CAN be trustworthy. For that matter…I CAN be kind. I CAN be involved. I CAN be on time… As Christians, we aren’t supposed to be perfect…what we are supposed to do is honor God!
* I love Paul’s absolute honesty. There were some that were married, men and women, that had remained virgins thinking themselves spiritual. Paul sorts it all out for them here and says something I think is funny, essentially ***stay single***, but if you marry, *“Nevertheless that’s gonna test you, but I would spare you.”* In other words, ***“But I digress.”*** HA! **It’s true!** Marriage tests you. Sharing life with another person brings to the surface the shortcomings of both people…but marriage also brings to reality the Godly potential for ***love, humility and service.***
* Check this out…before the fall God saw Adam and that he was not complete. Something was missing. Genesis 2:20 says that no other element of creation truly helped man. So, the Lord made Eve and when Adam saw her, he broke out into **romantic poetry!** *“This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! She shall be called Wo-man because* ***whoa****-man!”* HA! But as soon as sin entered in Adam became nothing but selfish, *“This woman that You gave me! She gave me of the tree and I ate!”* What happened to the poetry, man!?
* ***Marriage exposes the depth of selfishness that IS the very nature of a fallen man.*** BUT, because of the inward dwelling of God in us, the Holy Spirit conquering the heart of the husband through salvation and sanctification, **the poet comes back**…***or can.*** And Eve, created to help Adam, came to him to ***help Him*** but when sin entered God said to the woman, *“Your desire shall be for your husband* (to be him, to direct him), *and he shall rule over you!”* ***Marriage exposes the depth of selfishness that IS the very nature of a fallen woman***…but, because of the inward dwelling of the God in us, the Holy Spirit conquering the heart of the wife through salvation and sanctification, the helper…**someone that helps**…**comes back**…***or can***. Paul says, this is quite the process…*trouble in the flesh.* (Awesome joke) (Kids too! Link did the *truck thing* to cars and asked me *“How’s it going?”)*

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verses 29 – 31

* (Side note on *“time is short.”* When you see things in place for after the rapture and during the Great Tribulation, then you know the time is close). Context, context, context. Taken out of context this passage can be ***very dangerous***… Paul identifies a few things here that can entangle your mind and heart to the point that serving God simply ***doesn’t happen*** in your life. And if you get there then the specifics between you and God will **never** be known to you. *(Not able to hug my family while sick example)* The enemy would love that and frankly I see it all the time….but remember, Paul says, the time is short. Perhaps the Lord returns today, perhaps He does not…the time for you on this earth is still very very short…
* The first potential pitfall is in the area of **relationships.** *I will serve the Lord when I find a wife. That’s really when I’m going to answer this call on my life to ministry.* But then when you get married it becomes, *“well just as soon as we get little Freddy out of diapers and we have some more time…then we’re really going to serve the Lord.”* Then it’s school, sports, scouts…and winning souls out of the grip of hell **never becomes even close** to a priority. Just one example of *here and now perspective* being placed higher in importance than the *eternal perspective.* And no wonder you aren’t in heart/mind alignment with God…His approach is always the eternal approach…
* The second pitfall to serving the Lord is serving **emotions.** No soap box needed here…emotions are so powerful and yet they’re like little children that haven’t learned discipline, just running about and making a ruckus, **running out in the street and putting paper clips in power sockets!** HA! That’s really what emotions are! So focus on them and what they’re saying and the more you look into yourself the more depressed you’ll become. Paul gave the answer in Romans 12:15. Come alongside others in helping them teach their emotions discipline. ***You’re set free when you get your eyes off of yourself and start to serve others.***
* Finally, the **material world.** Possessions and the gaining of wealth can certainly be an obstacle to seeing the big picture of eternity. Preoccupation with what you own or *could own* can pull you right out of ministry. If you’re not in ministry today, ask yourself, is it because that’s what God wants or is it because of your seeking of wealth?
* That’s one reason why tithing is so important. Courson says it this way, *every time you tithe or put money in the tithe box, you’re giving away a part of your stinginess, shortsightedness and selfishness.*
* These three things, God instructing us to not be focused on relationships, on emotions or on your possessions is not because God wants you to be miserable…***its actually the complete opposite!*** If you focus on the Lord with eternal perspective, that’s when things begin to fit and that’s when you begin to experience the freedom and joy you’re looking for in all of those things anyway!

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verses 32 – 35

* Absolutely amazing! Here is the ***foundation for a godly husband or a godly wife!*** If you’re unmarried, when an option comes along, look for these things! Is she holy both in body and in spirit? Does she care for the things of the Lord? Are they distracted by the world in their walks…? Madison, Link, B…**listen up!** HA!

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verse 36

* Most likely speaking to a father who has a daughter and doesn’t know if he should allow her to marry.

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verses 37 – 40

* Many have concluded from this chapter that Paul fundamentally has a dislike for marriage but they fail to consider the entirety of Paul’s counsel. In Ephesians Paul elevates marriage to even being an illustration of Christ’s relationship with the church. The fact is many folks ***won’t come to church***…can’t endure a **blunt Bible study** and don’t know God…so God ***sends the sermon*** to them seen on every street in every city across the world in how a husband loves his wife and she loves him back with *superior* respect.
* That causes the world to wonder…because neither of those things happen without some sort of power, something have been overcome in their hearts…selfishness has been disciplined…and ***that power isn’t found in earthly relationship, emotions or riches.*** 1 Timothy 6:6 says, *“Godliness with contentment is great gain.”* The Bible does not say that Great gain with Godliness is contentment. It doesn’t work that way…
* Marriages don’t have to be perfect, just something ***remarkably different*** than what is seen in society…Same thing with your walk…not perfect…but man I want a remarkable walk with God. Trustworthy, kind, involved, on time…and so did Paul and so should you…Paul says here, “*I have the Spirit of God…”* **Do you?**
* That’s the key man to the specific reason for you in the first place. That one super power that God has distributed to you that no one else has…Man God has so much for you…