



TIME OF GRACE

Grace notes

guides for personal Bible study

I Have a Friend: Whose Marriage Is Falling Apart

1 Corinthians 7:1-16: ¹Now for the matters you wrote about: 'It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.' ²But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. ³The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. ⁴The 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. ⁵Do 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. ⁶I say this as a concession, not as a command. ⁷I 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. ⁸Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do. ⁹But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. ¹⁰To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. ¹¹But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. ¹²To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. ¹³And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. ¹⁴For 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. ¹⁵But 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. ¹⁶How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?"

Points to Ponder

1. Why does Paul say it is better to be single?

2. What reasons does Paul give for being married?

3. Why do you think the devil works so hard at destroying marriages and God's plan for marriage?

4. Based on this message, list some ways that you can help those who are struggling in their marriages.

5. Oftentimes we feel like we don't know what to say to friends or family in these situations. Who does God promise will help us and give us the words to say?

God's plan for marriage is timeless. He didn't intend for it to flex and change based on our opinions or societal shifts. We can share his plan with those who are struggling. In humility and love we can show others the forgiveness for marital sins that they have through Jesus and show them that God will give them strength to work things out.

What else does God say?

Matthew 19:4-6: "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Colossians 3:18,19: Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.