

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

Commitment is hard for people today. We like to keep our options open. That is why we feel comfortable with trial memberships, short-term contracts, and money-back guarantees. They protect us in “what if” moments. Sometimes we are even willing to pay a penalty just to get out of a deal. Sadly, that same mindset can creep into marriage. At the wedding, couples say, “I do.” But when the sweetness turns sour, some later say, “I don’t.” But while people’s words can change, God’s promises never do. They last forever. Blessed are those who put their trust in Him. In today’s passage, Paul addresses the difficult and sometimes uncomfortable topics of marriage and divorce. You may not walk away with answers to every question. But my hope is that you will gain God’s wisdom and apply it to your own situation. In the issues Paul raises, his general advice can be summed up in four simple words: stay as you are. In other words, do not rush to change your situation unless the Lord clearly leads you to do so.

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 渴望 Desire

The first subject Paul introduces is the desire for intimacy. He assures us that this desire is both normal and good. Let us look at verses 1 to 2: **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.** Bible scholars debate whether the statement in verse 1 was written by Paul or quoted from the Corinthian believers. From the context, most likely it came from the Corinthians themselves. Even though Paul remained single his entire life, he understood that intimacy is an important part of marriage. By affirming this, Paul corrects an unbiblical idea that had crept into the Corinthian church: the belief that sexual relations are somehow bad. We mentioned last week that some people at that time held a dualistic view of life. They believed physical matters were temporary and inferior, while spiritual things were eternal and superior. Due to that thinking, some people promoted abstinence even within marriage. They thought avoiding sex would keep their minds focused on spiritual matters and prevent their bodies from being “polluted” by physical contact. Does that sound familiar? Similar ideas appear in Buddhism, and to some extent in Catholic practices. Some of those believers choose not to marry and live a life of isolation. But for most married couples, withholding intimacy is extremely difficult—if not impossible. In verse 2, when Paul says each person should have a spouse, he is not saying everyone must get married. The phrase “have own spouse” is actually a Greek idiom referring to sexual union. Paul’s point is that avoiding intimacy in marriage can lead to temptation and immorality. This connects to the issue we studied last week, where some men went to temple prostitutes to satisfy their needs. The author affirms that sexual relation is a duty in marriage, as he says in verses 3 to 4: **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. Notice the words “rights” and “authority.” Paul is not saying husbands have complete control over their wives. Instead, these privileges are shared by both spouses. The idea is not just “you owe me.” It is also “I owe you.” As you can see, God gives sexual intimacy a higher and more honorable place than our culture often does. The world often treats sex as a husband’s entitlement and a wife’s obligation. But Paul says both husband and wife have equal rights in this area. Just like decisions about dinner, vacations, or when to have children, couples should communicate openly about their sexual needs and expectations. Sex may feel awkward or even shameful to talk about for some people, but in God’s eyes it is sacred. With those general principles in mind, Paul presents three specific situations. First, a couple may temporarily pause intimacy under a particular condition. Look at verse 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.** Here Paul says that a husband and wife may abstain by mutual agreement if they want to focus on prayer. But it must be for a short time only. Otherwise, the lack of intimacy may open the door to temptation. Again, Paul emphasizes caring for the needs of your spouse. The second situation appears in verse 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.** Here Paul shares his personal experience of being single. Later in the chapter he will elaborate this topic further. One important point is that Paul calls singleness a gift from God. It is the same word used for spiritual gifts. While most people will marry, but remaining single can be a special calling from God. In Paul’s case, it allowed him to focus fully on gospel ministry. He could travel freely without worrying about the safety and needs of his wife. Paul was single by God’s calling. The third situation involves people who become single after their spouse died. Look at verses 8 to 9: **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.** The word “unmarried” here may refer to men who have lost their wives through death. Paul suggests two possible solutions: Option one: remain single for the rest of their lives; Option two: remarry in order to avoid temptation. Up to this point, we can summarize that the desire for intimacy is a normal human need. God placed that desire in us when He created us. Unfortunately, the fallen world has distorted this gift. Some people say sex is trivial—just a physical urge like eating when we are hungry. Others think sex is dirty or shameful. Both extremes deviate from God’s original design. To understand intimacy properly, we must return to the Bible. Like every other area of life, we find true meaning and real enjoyment when we follow God’s instructions. Sexual intimacy creates a deep bond between husband and wife—not only physically, but also emotionally and spiritually. It is truly a precious gift from God. Husbands, remember: your wife is not your slave. A true gentleman is a real man. Cherish her like a priceless Italian sports car. Wives, remember: your husband is not an animal. It is perfectly normal for him to think about sex more often than you do. Please do not use intimacy as a reward, and do not withhold it as a punishment. If both of you put God first, your spouse second, and yourself last, you will build a marriage that is far more fulfilling.

## 2. 分歧 Divide

Paul makes it clear that the desire for intimacy is normal and it can strengthen a healthy marriage. Unfortunately, not every couple lives happily ever after the wedding ceremony. Some of them divide due to differences in beliefs. In this passage, Paul gives guidance for three

situations. Case 1: A general principle — stay in the marriage. Look at verses 10 to 11: **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.** Here Paul repeats the Lord’s command that divorce is not God’s desire. In Matthew 19:6, Jesus quotes Genesis 2:24 and explains God’s design for marriage: the two shall become one. Because of that, Paul instructs wives not to separate from their husbands. The Greek word for “separate” can mean divorce, which appears in verse 11. But it may also refer to a situation where a wife moves out without formally ending the marriage. One possible reason is the philosophical idea we mentioned earlier—some people thought they could stay more “spiritual” by avoiding intimacy. Paul says if a wife insists on separating, she should remain unmarried, leaving open the possibility of reconciliation later. But what happens when one spouse is not a Christian? That leads to the next two scenarios. Case 2: The unbelieving spouse wants to stay. Verses 12–14 say: **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.** Here Paul shares his pastoral guidance based on the same principle of no divorce. If the unbelieving spouse is willing to stay in the marriage, then the couple should remain together. Verse 14 says the unbelieving spouse and the children are made holy through the believer. This does not mean they are automatically saved. Salvation is not something that spreads like a contagious disease. Each person must respond to God’s call personally. But a believer can still bless the family. A Christian spouse can serve as a moral compass at home and demonstrate godly character through words and actions. Case 3: The unbelieving spouse wants out. Verse 15 tells us: **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.** Paul says if the unbelieving spouse insists on leaving, it is wiser to let the person go. After all, no one can force the spouse to change. The one who initiates the separation will ultimately be accountable before God. This is Paul’s teaching on marriage, separation, and divorce. Notice that he does not address remarriage after divorce. There are members in our church who endure a difficult marriage. As a faith community, we should respond with compassion, not judgment. Some divorced people may actually be victims—perhaps because of abuse, adultery or addictions. We should show grace to them rather than inflicting guilt. The truth is, when a marriage breaks down, everyone suffers—both spouses, the children, and even the extended families. So how can we reduce the damage or even prevent it? Couples who are struggling should seek help from Christian counselors who give guidance based on the Bible. But an even wiser step is prevention. To our single brothers and sisters: date only believers. The person you date should be someone you would be willing to marry if the Lord leads you in that direction. Now, marrying a Christian does not guarantee a trouble-free marriage. After all, marriage brings together two sinners! But a non-believing spouse may not accept a biblical view of money, career, life goals, parenting, or how to use time. Gradually, you may feel pressured to compromise your faith. What if your spouse asks you to bow to idols? What if he or she refuses to let you and your children attend church? To avoid conflict, you might give in. That will begin a downward spiral on your faith. It is usually easier for someone to push you away from God than for you to pull another person toward God. Still, if you are already married to an unbeliever, do not lose hope. Keep praying and trust that God can still work in your spouse’s heart. For our single believers, God’s will is

clear: marry a believer. If your future spouse loves the Lord wholeheartedly, that person will also learn to love you sacrificially. As a church, we will only officiate marriages between two Christians of opposite genders. We follow God's way, not the world's way. In addition, couples who wish to marry in our church must go through premarital counseling. This helps them understand God's design for marriage. So please plan ahead. If someone tells me, "Pastor, we're getting married next week—can you officiate our wedding?" the answer will probably be no. A wedding ceremony takes about an hour. But a marriage lasts a lifetime. Should we not think carefully before making such a commitment?

### 3. 忠誠 Devote

After giving his advice about intimacy, marriage, and divorce, Paul shifts to two new topics: circumcision and slavery. He asks the readers to devote themselves to God's calling. At first, those subjects may seem unrelated. But they actually connect to the same guiding principle Paul has been emphasizing: stay as you are. First, regarding circumcision, Paul says in verses 17 to 19: **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.** Here Paul uses circumcision to distinguish between Jewish and Gentile believers in the church. His point is simple: Jewish Christians do not need to give up their Jewish identity, and Gentile Christians do not need to become Jews. Jewish believers could still celebrate their traditional festivals and avoid certain foods if they wished. At the same time, Gentile believers did not have to be circumcised. This was a controversial issue in the early church. Some members insisted that Gentiles had to become Jews first before they could be saved. Church leaders later clarified that circumcision and keeping the Old Testament Law are not required for salvation. Instead, Paul says in verse 19 that what truly matters is keeping the commandments of God, namely, the Bible. Today, whether Jews or non-Jews can become children of God through Jesus Christ. We are no longer obligated to follow the Jewish laws. Jesus once summarized the entire Law with two commands: Love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself. When we live by those two principles, we actually fulfill the spirit of God's Law. Besides circumcision, Paul also touches on the issue of slavery in verses 20 to 24: **20 Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. 21 Were you a bondservant 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, in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God.**

Historians tell us that slaves made up as much as one-third of the population in some major Roman cities. People became slaves for various reasons: they were prisoners of war, they could not repay debts, or they were born into slave families. When we hear the word slavery, we usually think of severe oppression. While that certainly existed, the situation in the Roman world was more complex. Some slaves were actually skilled professionals—teachers, accountants, even doctors. Others worked as construction laborers or household servants. Some could earn wages, and eventually they might buy their freedom. Even after being set free, some former slaves chose to stay with their masters as employees because it provided stable income, food, and shelter. Paul

did not attempt to abolish the slavery system, even though many slaves suffered under cruel masters. Instead, he focused on something deeper: their identity in God's Kingdom. Paul reminds them that believers were bought with a price—the blood of Jesus Christ. In that sense, every Christian is now a servant of Christ. A slave who belongs to Christ is truly free in the Lord, while a free person who believes in Christ becomes a servant of Christ. In other words, our spiritual identity matters more than our social status. Paul concludes by returning to the same principle: stay as you are. We can apply this idea to our careers today. Your job is not just something you chose. It can also be part of God's calling for you. God puts you in your workplace so you can represent Him there. Do not become proud if you have a high-paying job. Do not look down on yourself either if you earn a modest salary. Of course, this does not mean you should not aspire a higher position. You may learn new skills, earn another degree, or work toward a promotion. But we should avoid constantly comparing ourselves with others, because God gives each person a different calling. Paul says we are servants of Christ. Sometimes you may feel like you are a slave of your boss! But in reality, Jesus is your ultimate Master, no matter what job title you have. Our satisfaction should not come only from paychecks or promotions. We can still have joy when we truly understand that we are serving the Lord, even when we face a difficult boss, extra workload, or tight deadlines.

## 結論 CONCLUSION

Paul encourages us to stay as we are, unless the Lord leads us to make a change. God desires to bless us in every stage of life. But if we want to experience His blessings, we must obey His will. The world tells us that life is like a giant buffet—just pick whatever you want. After all, we are told that we are our own masters. But life does not really work that way. Unless you live alone on a deserted island, your decisions will always affect other people. That is especially true in relationships. Relationships require more than just going through the motions. They call for us to give our hearts and invest our lives in others. And that requires commitment. Commitment means choosing to do what God says is right, regardless of the circumstances or the choices other people make. God Himself is the perfect model of commitment. Our feelings may change, but God never changes. He remains faithful to us no matter what. He promises to love us with an everlasting love. God is an “all-in” God. There is nothing we can do to earn His love, and there is nothing we can do to end His love either. That is the security we have in Christ. Once we become God's children, nothing can undo that relationship. So we should learn from His example, especially when we find ourselves in difficult relationships. When we lean on God, He gives us the wisdom and strength to carry out His will.

## 引言 INTRODUCTION

對現代人來說，委身並不容易。我們總喜歡為自己留後路。因此，我們對試用會員、短期合約，以及「不滿意可退款」的保證感到很安心。在意料不到的情況下，這些方案可以保障我們的損失。有時候，我們甚至願意被罰錢而選擇毀約。很可惜，有些人把這種心態帶進婚姻裡。在婚禮上，新人彼此說：「我願意。」但當甜蜜變成酸澀之時，有些人卻改口說：「我不願意。」雖然人的話語可能會改變，但神的應許卻永不改變。凡是信靠祂的人都是有福的。在今天的經文裡，保羅談到婚姻和離婚這些困難、甚至有時令人感到不自在的課題。你今天離開時，或許得不到所有答案。但我盼望，你能從信息中得著神的智慧，並把這些領受應用在你的處境中。在保羅提出的幾個情況中，他的建議可以用四個字來概括：保持原狀。換句話說，不要急著改變你目前的處境，除非主給你清楚的指示。

## 解釋 EXPLANATION

### 1. 渴望 Desire

保羅首先談到關於對親密關係的渴望。他告訴我們，這樣的渴望是正常而且美好的。讓我們來看第 1 到 2 節：**1 論到你們信上所提的事，我說男不近女倒好。2 但要免淫亂的事，男子當各有自己的妻子；女子也當各有自己的丈夫。**聖經學者辯論，第 1 節這句話究竟是保羅自己說的，還是他引用哥林多信徒的說法。從上下文來看，很可能是哥林多信徒自己的觀點。雖然保羅一生都單身，但他明白親密關係是婚姻中重要的一部分。透過肯定這一點，保羅也糾正了一種錯誤的觀念：有些人認為性關係是不好的。我們上週提到，當時有些人主張一種二元論的思想。他們認為，物質的事情是短暫而低一等的，而屬靈的事情才是永恆而高尚的。基於這種想法，有些人甚至提倡在婚姻中禁慾。他們覺得，避免性生活可以使人專心於屬靈的事，也能避免身體因與他人接觸而被「污染」。這聽起來熟悉嗎？類似的觀念在佛教中可以找到，在某些天主教傳統中也有類似的做法。有些信徒選擇不結婚，過一種與世隔絕的生活。然而，對大多數已婚夫婦來說，長期禁止親密關係是非常困難的，甚至是不可能的。在第 2 節中，保羅說每個人應當有自己的配偶，但他的意思並不是說每個人都必須結婚。「各有自己的配偶」其實是希臘文的俚語，指的是夫妻之間的性關係。保羅的重點是：在婚姻中刻意避免親密關係，可能會導致試探和不道德的行為。這也和我們上週談論的內容相呼應：有些男人到廟宇裡找妓女來滿足自己的需要。因此，保羅強調性生活在婚姻中是一種責任。他在第 3 到 4 節這樣

說：3 丈夫當用合宜之分待妻子；妻子待丈夫也要如此。4 妻子沒有權柄主張自己的身子，乃在丈夫；丈夫也沒有權柄主張自己的身子，乃在妻子。保羅使用「權柄」這個字。他並不是說丈夫對妻子擁有完全的控制權，而是指出：這些權利是夫妻共同分享的。意思不只是「你欠我」，同時也是「我欠你」。因此，神看親密關係，比世界看得更重要、更高貴。世界常常把性看作是丈夫的權利、妻子的義務。但保羅說，在這件事上，夫妻是有同等權利的。因此夫妻也應該坦誠地溝通彼此在親密關係上的需要和期望，就像討論晚餐吃什麼、去哪裡渡假、什麼時候生孩子一樣。很多人可能不好意思與配偶談論性；但在神的眼中，性是神聖的。在這些原則之下，保羅接著提出三種情況。第一，夫妻在某種情況下可以暫時停止親密關係。請看第 5 節：不可彼此虧負，除非兩相情願，暫時分房，為要專心禱告；以後仍要同房，免得撒但趁著你們情不自禁，引誘你們。保羅的意思是：若夫妻雙方同意，為了專心禱告，可以暫時禁慾。但這必須是短暫的。否則，長期缺乏親密關係可能會讓人落入試探。在這裡，保羅再次強調：要顧念對方的需要。第二種情況是在第 7 節：我願意眾人像我一樣；只是各人領受神的恩賜，一個是這樣，一個是那樣。保羅分享自己單身的經驗，他在這一章後半段會進一步說明。保羅把單身看作是神的恩賜。這個「恩賜」和聖經中所說的屬靈恩賜是同一個字。雖然大多數人會結婚，但保持單身也可能是神特別的呼召。對保羅來說，單身使他能夠專心做福音事工，也能自由旅行，而不必擔心妻子的需要與安全。保羅的單身，是出於神的呼召。但是第三種情況，有些人因為配偶去世而變成單身。請看第 8 到 9 節：8 我對著沒有嫁娶的和寡婦說，若他們常像我就好。9 倘若自己禁止不住，就可以嫁娶。與其慾火攻心，倒不如嫁娶為妙。這裡「沒有嫁娶」也可能指那些太太已經過世的人。保羅提出兩種可行的方案：第一：終身保持單身。第二：再婚，以避免落入試探。到目前為止，我們可以做一個小小的總結：對親密關係的渴望，是人正常的需要。這是神在創造人時放在我們裡面的。很可惜墮落的世界扭曲了這份禮物。有些人認為性是平常的生理需要，就像肚子餓了要吃飯一樣。也有人覺得性是骯髒、羞恥的事情。這兩種極端都偏離了神原來的設計。要正確理解親密關係，我們必須回到聖經。就像人生其他問題一樣，當我們遵行神的指示時，才能找到真正的意義與喜樂。夫妻之間的性關係建立深入的連結——不只是身體上的，也是情感和屬靈上的。這確實是神所賜的一份寶貴禮物。丈夫們要記得：你的妻子不是你的奴隸。一個真正的男人應該是個紳士。你要像珍惜一輛義大利跑車一樣珍惜太太。妻子們也要記得：你的丈夫不是野獸。他比你更經常想到性的事情，不表示他的頭腦有問題。另外，請不要把親密關係當作獎賞，也不要把它看為懲罰的手段。如果夫妻雙方都把神放在第一位，配偶放在第二位，自己放在最後一位，你們的婚姻一定會更加美滿。

## 2. 分歧 Divide

保羅清楚指出，對親密關係的渴望是正常的，而且它能夠增進健康的婚姻關係。然而，很可惜，不是每一對夫妻在婚禮之後都過著幸福快樂的生活。有些婚姻會因為信仰上的差異而產生分歧。在這段經文中，保羅提出了三種情況的指引。情況一：一般原則是維持婚姻。讓我們看第 10 到 11 節：**10 至於那已經嫁娶的，我吩咐他們；其實不是我吩咐，乃是主吩咐說：妻子不可離開丈夫，11 若是離開了，不可再嫁，或是仍同丈夫和好。丈夫也不可離棄妻子。**在這裡，保羅再次重申主的命令：離婚不是神的心意。在馬太福音 19:6，耶穌引用創世記 2:24 來說明神對婚姻的設計：二人成為一體。因此，保羅勸勉妻子不要離開丈夫。這裡「離開」的希臘文也可以指離婚，而這個意思在第 11 節中出現。但它也可能指妻子搬出去住，但是沒有結束婚姻。其中一個可能的原因，是我們之前提到的哲學思想—有些人認為，避免親密關係可以讓自己更加「屬靈」。保羅說，如果妻子堅持離開丈夫，她就應當保持原狀，這樣將來仍有機會與丈夫和好。那麼，如果夫妻其中一方不是基督徒，又該怎麼辦呢？接下來的兩種情況就談到這個問題。情況二：不信主的配偶願意維持婚姻。第 12 到 14 節說：**12 我對其餘的人說，不是主說，倘若某弟兄有不信的妻子，妻子也情願和他同住，他就不要離棄妻子。13 妻子有不信的丈夫，丈夫也情願和他同住，他就不要離棄丈夫。14 因為不信的丈夫就因著妻子成了聖潔，並且不信的妻子就因著丈夫成了聖潔；不然，你們的兒女就不潔淨，但如今他們是聖潔的了。**在這裡，保羅根據不離婚的原則提出他作為傳道人的建議。如果不信主的配偶願意維持婚姻，那麼夫妻應該繼續在一起生活。第 14 節說，不信主的配偶和孩子會因為信主的人而「成為聖潔」。這並不表示他們自動得救。救恩並不是像傳染病一樣會傳給別人。每一個人人都必須親自回應神的呼召。不過，信主的人可以為家庭帶來祝福。基督徒可以在家裡成為道德的指南針，並且在言語和行為上表現出敬虔的榜樣。情況三：不信主的配偶堅持離開。第 15 節指出：**倘若那不信的人要離去，就由他離去吧！無論是弟兄，是姐妹，遇著這樣的事都不必拘束。神召我們原是要我們和睦。**保羅說，如果不信主的配偶堅持要離開，讓他離開可能是更明智的選擇。畢竟，沒有人能夠強迫他改變心意。而那位主動提出分開的人，最終要在神面前負責任。這就是保羅關於婚姻、分居與離婚的教導。請注意，在這段經文中，他並沒有談到離婚之後再婚的安排。在我們的教會裡，有一些弟兄姐妹正在面對困難的婚姻。作為一個信仰群體，我們應該以憐憫與關懷來回應，而不是批評。有些離婚的人其實可能是受害者—例如遭遇家庭暴力、外遇，或是配偶成癮的問題。我們應當向他們施恩典，而不是增加他們的罪疚感。事實是，當婚姻破裂時，所有人都會受傷—夫妻二人、孩子，甚至雙方的家庭。那麼，我們如何減少傷害，甚至避免這樣的情況發生呢？陷入困境的夫妻可以尋求基督徒輔導員的幫助，他們會根據聖經提供建議。但更智慧的做法，其實是提前預防。我勸勉單身的弟兄姐妹：只與信主的人交往。你所約會的人應該是你願意與他結婚的人，如果主這樣帶領你們的話。當然，與基督徒結婚並不代表就一定沒有問題。畢竟，婚姻是把兩

個罪人放在一起！但一個不信主的配偶，很可能不會接受聖經對於金錢、事業、人生日標、教養兒女、時間運用等方面的教導。慢慢地，你可能會感到壓力，必須在信仰上妥協。如果你的配偶要求你向偶像叩頭，或是他不允許你和孩子去教會，你會怎麼辦？為了避免衝突，你可能會選擇讓步。很可能會讓你的信仰逐漸走下坡。通常來說，把一個人拉離開神，比把一個人帶到神面前要容易得多。然而，如果你的配偶仍然沒有信主，也不要因此灰心。繼續為你的配偶禱告，相信神仍然可以在他的心中動工。對於單身的基督徒來說，神的心意是很明顯的：與信主的人結婚。如果你未來的配偶全心愛主，他也會學習無私地愛你。作為教會，我們只會為一男一女、兩位基督徒主持婚禮。我們按照神的方式，而不是世界的方式做事。此外，想要在我們教會結婚的人，必須先完成婚前輔導課程。這能幫助他們更清楚地了解神對婚姻的設計。所以請你提前計畫。如果有人對我說：「牧師，我們下週就要結婚了，你可以幫我們主持婚禮嗎？」那麼我的回答很可能是：對不起，不行。婚禮儀式大約只需要一個小時。但一段婚姻卻是一生的事。在做出這樣的承諾之前，我們難道不應該慎重思考嗎？

### 3. 忠誠 Devote

保羅給予關於親密關係、婚姻與離婚的教導之後，轉而談到另外兩個主題：割禮與奴隸制度。他要求他的讀者對主的呼召保持忠誠。乍看之下，這些話題似乎與前面的討論沒有關聯，但其實它們都連結到保羅一直強調的一個原則：保持原狀。首先，關於割禮，保羅在第 17 到 19 節這樣說：**17 只要照主所分給各人的，和神所召各人的而行。我吩咐各教會都是這樣。18 有人已受割禮蒙召呢，就不要廢割禮；有人未受割禮蒙召呢，就不要受割禮。19 受割禮算不得什麼，不受割禮也算不得什麼，只要守神的誡命就是了。**在這裡，保羅用割禮來區分教會中的猶太信徒與外邦信徒。他的重點很簡單：猶太基督徒不需要放棄自己的猶太身份，而外邦基督徒也不需要變成猶太人。猶太信徒仍然可以遵守他們的節期，也可以避免吃某些食物。同時，外邦信徒並不需要接受割禮。在初期教會，這其實是一個爭議性的問題。有些成員堅持認為，外邦人必須先成為猶太人，才能得救。後來教會領袖澄清：割禮以及遵守舊約律法，並不是得救的條件。保羅在第 19 節也指出，真正重要的是遵守神的誡命，意思是遵行神的話語。今天，不論是猶太人還是外邦人，都可以藉著耶穌基督成為神的兒女。我們不需要遵守猶太人的律法。耶穌曾經把整個律法總結為兩條誡命：全心愛神，並且愛人如己。當我們活出這兩個原則時，其實就已經成全了律法的精神。除了割禮之外，保羅也在第 20 到 24 節談到奴隸的問題：**20 各人蒙召的時候是什麼身分，仍要守住這身分。21 你是作奴隸蒙召的嗎？不要因此憂慮；若能以自由，就求自由更好。22 因為作奴僕蒙召於主的，就是主所釋放的人；作自由之人蒙召的，就是基督的奴僕。23 你們是重價買來的，不要作人的奴僕。24 弟兄們，你們各人蒙召的時候是什麼身分，仍要在神面前守住這身分。**歷史學家告訴我們，在一些羅馬的主要城市中，可能有三分之一的人口是奴

隸。人們成為奴隸有幾個可能的原因：戰爭中的俘虜、無法償還債務，或是出生在奴隸家庭。當我們聽到「奴隸」這個字的時候，通常會想到壓迫與剝削。這樣的情況確實存在，但在羅馬社會裡，實際情況比較複雜。有些奴隸其實是受過專業訓練的人，例如老師、會計，甚至醫生。另一些人則是建築工人或家庭僕人。有些奴隸可以領取工資，並且逐漸積蓄金錢贖回自由。即使後來獲得自由，有些人仍然選擇留在原來的主人家裡工作，因為那能確保穩定的收入、食物與住所。保羅並沒有試圖廢除奴隸制度，雖然許多奴隸確實在主人的手下受苦。他關注的是更深層的事情：人在神國度中的身份。保羅提醒信徒：我們都是耶穌基督用寶血重價買來的。從這個意義上說，每一個基督徒都是主的僕人。一個做奴隸的基督徒，在主裡其實是自由的人；而一個原本自由的人，信主之後也成為基督的僕人。因此我們在屬靈上的身份，比社會地位更重要。保羅在結束討論時再次回到那個核心原則：保持原狀。這個原則也可以應用在我們今天的工作上。你的工作不只是你自己的選擇，也是神給你的呼召。神把你放在工作場所，是要你在那裡為祂作見證。如果你有一份高薪的工作，不要因此驕傲；如果你的收入比較微薄，也不要自卑。當然，這並不表示我們不能有上進心。你可以學習新的技能、取得更高的學位，或努力爭取升職。但我們不應該一直與別人比較，因為神給每一個人的呼召都不一樣。保羅說，我們是基督的僕人。有時候，你可能覺得自己好像是老闆的奴隸！但無論你的職位是什麼，耶穌才是你真正的主人。我們的滿足感不應該只來自薪水或升職。當我們真正明白自己是在為主而工作時，就算面對難相處的上司、額外的工作量，或緊迫的截止日期，我們仍然可以心裡有喜樂。

## 結論 CONCLUSION

保羅鼓勵我們保持原狀，除非主帶領我們作出改變。神願意在人生的每一個階段賜福給我們。但如果我們想真正經歷祂的祝福，就必須遵行祂的旨意。這個世界常告訴我們，人生就像一個超大的自助餐—想要什麼就拿什麼。畢竟，人們常說我們是自己的主人。但現實並不是這樣。除非你一個人住在荒島上，否則你的決定往往會影響到別人。在人際關係中尤其如此。關係不只是敷衍地把事情做完而已。我們需要把心交出去，並且把生命投資在別人身上。而這一切都需要委身。所謂委身，就是在任何情況下，無論別人的選擇如何，仍然決定去做神看為正確的事。神自己就是委身最完美的榜樣。我們的感覺都會改變，但神永遠不會改變。無論發生什麼事，祂都對我們保持信實。祂應許要以永遠的愛來愛我們。神是一位完全投入的神。我們無法做任何事情來賺取祂的愛，同樣地，也沒有任何事情可以終止祂的愛。這就是我們在基督裡所擁有的安全感。當我們成為神的兒女之後，沒有任何事能夠改變這個身份。因此，我們應當學習祂的榜樣，特別是在我們面對困難的人際關係時。當我們依靠神時，祂就會賜給我們智慧與力量去完成祂的心意。