

1 Corinthians Series, Lesson #23, June 24, 2018
How to be Free from Anxiety, 1 Cor. 7:24-40, David Lien

1. Introduction

- Advice varies by climate. Your clothing choices are different in the tropics than they are in the tundra
- Neither marriage or celibacy is inherently more spiritual than the other. Both are divine gifts.
- What you choose will depend on your situation and your number one priority.
- How you relate to all worldly institutions depends on your destiny in life and what makes you feel whole

Q: What climate did Corinthians live in?

A: "Distress"

1. Famine
 2. Idolatry
 3. Persecution
 4. Loyalty tests to Caesar
 5. Civil unrest/riots
- Paul's marriage advice depends on the social climate, it is drawn from the heart of God.
 - We can follow these teachings into freedom from distress in our life situations as well!
 - What circumstances cause you anxiety?
 - If it's Not circumstantial it could be spiritual (spirit of fear)

***Overview

Problem: People wanted to marry during a time of dire stress and uncertainty. So they need some advice from heaven.

Paul gives them:

1. God's Intention
2. God's Intervention
3. God's Insight

Into both their current situation and their kingdom destiny

Read Text

2. God's Intention: Peace

- The kingdom is inconsistent with frustration and stress
- I now want to pull out several purpose-statements from this chapter.

Paul explains that he wants the Corinthians to:

1. Live as the Lord assigns (v.17)
2. Remain steadfast with God (v. 24)
3. Not to seek liberty from slave masters—except by real opportunity and call (v.21-23)
4. Live free of anxieties (v. 32)—Gk.==**totally in the clear, like the soldiers who covered up the resurrection**
5. Avoid worldly troubles (v. 28)
6. Live in good order, not chaos (v.35)
7. Secure their undivided devotion to Jesus (v.34)
8. Be firmly established in heart (v.37)
9. Marry only in the Lord (v.39)
10. Remain single if so gifted

- All of these statements promote stability and peace in everyday life.
- The kingdom of God is not confused or random or chaotic—no slavish fear!
- We shouldn't be predictable, but we shouldn't be loose cannons either

3. God's Intervention: Vision

- We see what God wants for us, but our lives are still soaked with anxiety.
- God sends revelation, so we can see the reality around us.
- Spirit come and show us! — Eph. 1:17

A. See **anxiety** for what it is: FEAR

- Good anxiety: verses 32-34
- Bad anxiety—demonic faith, empowering the wrong preaching, believing a false future
- Fear is Faith in the wrong god (Will Hart)
- Fear builds strongholds in our thoughts (Kris Vallotton)

B. See the **world** as it is: VAPOR

- Wilting flower
- Look at a picture of yourself from 10 years ago
- Remember that thing called the Soviet Union? Used to be pretty important

C. See **your own tendencies**

- Martha? Ministry before godliness?
- Martha Stewart? Family or business before godliness
- Be like Mary. Jesus before anything

**Lk. 10 Slide

D. See **Christ** as He is: ALL-SATISFYING

- Brief visions bring relief—**Jn. 3:15**. You enter into peaceful relationship with God.
- Sustained vision brings peace—**Isa. 26:14**; Face shines (**Num. 6:23-27**). You experience daily peace.
- Lifelong vision brings transformation—**2 Cor. 3:18**. You become a peaceful person.
- Final vision brings glory—**1 Jn. 3:2**. You take on the perfect image of the Prince of Peace.

D. See your **new situation** in Him: SEALED

- His name is written on you
- **Rev. 7, 22**
- Your purpose of worship is eternal

Christ lets us see Him... and then He sees into us, to help us.

Therefore, this is God's Insight:

4. Insight: Refocus

Reread v. 29-31

- Live in the light of kingdom **Vision**
- This is NOT prioritizing Ministry over marriage, business, grief, fun
- THIS IS prioritizing the worship of Jesus and relationship with God over them
- What's the emphasis of your life if you rightly see yourself, the world, anxiety, Christ and your destiny?

5. Conclusion

In Corinth:

In the climate of distress, in the realm of marriage, singleness was actually the best option available. It was best for the person seeking freedom, peace and the pleasure of God. It was best to love free of anxieties.

In *your* situation, to live free of anxiety:

Engage the WILL:

1. Don't empower fear with your belief
2. Stare into Jesus (who defines LOVE)
 - For relief
 - Daily
 - Extensively—long sessions in the Word and praise and thanksgiving
3. Missile Lock everything in your life—thoughts, finances, and relationship goals—onto Christ and His kingdom.

4. Give thanks until you become thanks. Use your will, which is cold-blooded. The enemy isn't going to stick around long in an atmosphere of rejoicing and Thanksgiving (Graham Cooke).

Philippians 4:5-7: "The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication **with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God. And the **peace** of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."