

# 1 Corinthians 7:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

## Analysis

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**I say therefore to the unmarried and widows**—Paul addresses agamois (ἀγάμοις, "unmarried"), likely referring to those never married, divorced, or widowed. Including chērais (χήραις, "widows") specifically acknowledges their situation. His counsel is **It is good for them if they abide even as I**—remaining single like Paul himself.

The term kalón (καλόν, "good") again indicates practical advantage rather than moral superiority (cf. v. 1). Paul's recommendation reflects the benefits of singleness for focused ministry and the avoidance of "trouble in the flesh" (v. 28). This verse anticipates his fuller discussion of the advantages of singleness for undistracted devotion to the Lord (vv. 32-35).

Paul does not forbid remarriage for widows (v. 39) or demand permanent singleness for the never-married. Rather, he offers pastoral counsel that singleness can be "good" when accepted as God's gift. The conditional "if they abide" suggests this is a viable path for those with the gift of celibacy, not a universal prescription.

## Historical Context

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Widows faced economic vulnerability in the ancient world, making remarriage often necessary for survival. Paul's counsel that widows may remain single (if able)

and his instructions for church support of widows (1 Timothy 5:3-16) reflect Christian community's responsibility to care for the vulnerable.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. Why might Paul recommend singleness to widows and the never-married, given his positive view of marriage?
2. How does the church support single believers so that singleness is a viable and honored calling?
3. What "advantages" of singleness does Paul have in mind when he calls it "good"?

## Interlinear Text

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λέγω	δὲ	τοῖς	ἀγάμοις	καὶ	ταῖς	χήραις	καλὸν
<b>I say</b>	<b>therefore</b>	G3588	<b>to the unmarried</b>	<b>and</b>	G3588	<b>widows</b>	<b>good</b>
G3004	G1161		G22	G2532		G5503	G2570
αὐτοῖς	ἐστὶν	ἐὰν	μείνωσιν	ὥς	ἐγώ·		
<b>for them</b>	<b>It is</b>	<b>if</b>	<b>they abide</b>	<b>as</b>	<b>I</b>		
G846	G2076	G1437	G3306	G5613	G2504		

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 7:32** (Parallel theme): But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

**1 Corinthians 7:7** (Parallel theme): For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

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