

SUBJECT :
The Married Relationship

BIBLE BASIS:
Lesson Scripture: 1Corinthians 7:1-13

BIBLE TRUTH:
Marriage is honorable in all. Heb 13:4

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Cor. 7:7

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.

Lesson Aim

**To come to terms with the married
relationship according to the Word of
God**

Introduction

- Believers must understand God's concept of the married relationship, for marriage is God's institution. He created both man and woman and gave them the union of marriage. Gen. 2:24-25
- Even if society falls apart in the divorce courts of the world, and immorality and shacking up is the rule of the day, the church must hold high the truth of the marriage relationship. Matt. 19:2-12.
- Corinth was a cesspool of immorality, one of the most immoral cities in the world of its day. All forms of sexual deviations ran rampant and were openly displayed. Loose living was the practice of spouse and neighbor. There was nothing sacred, not even their own bodies.
- A decent person could not walk down the street without being eyed and thought about as a sex object. Sex was the god of the Corinthian society. It permeated the government, commerce, recreation, and the religious practices of the Corinthian.
- The matter of handling the temptation of fornication and of celibacy had become such an issue that the church needed guidance. Therefore, they wrote and asked Paul what the Lord had taught regarding fornication, celibacy, and marriage. This passage answers some very practical questions that often cause problems both for the single adult and the married partner. In our lesson today, Paul is answering specific questions the church had written and asked him.

To Marry Or Not To Marry

- 1 Cor. 7:1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.
- There are special situations for not marrying. There are situations that require celibacy. The word “good” means advisable, advantageous, expedient, profitable, wholesome. There are times when it is wise not to marry and to take on the responsibilities of marriage. Paul mentions two of the situations in this chapter. 1Cor. 7:25-26
- First reason, Some present distress made it advisable for the unmarried believers not to marry. What the distress was is not known, but the application to us is clearly seen. There are times when marriage is unwise because of situations arising from the persecutions of Christians, world wars, economic collapse, revolutions, death, obligations, disease, sicknesses, and accidents.
- Second reason, God calls some men and women to remain unmarried. Paul says, ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. 1Cor.7:35
- Jesus taught celibacy in obedience to God’s call: Matt. 19:12
- Now note Paul’s exact words: “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.” This deals with all touching and not just celibacy. It means that single men and women are not to go too far on dates or to cohabit with each other. There is to be no immoral slip ups between the singles of God’s church. 1Thes. 4:3-8

Here Is Some Good Advice

- [2] Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.
- There is a condition necessitating marriage. Note three points.
- This verse is a command; it is to be the rule of the church. Every man and every woman is to be married. The reason is clearly stated: to avoid fornication.
- Sex is the gift of God; it is the way God has made us. It is the way God has ordained for a man to propagate and carry on the human race, to be intimate, building solid families, Gen 2:24, Jer. 29:6, 1Tim. 3:12
- Therefore, every believer is commanded to marry. There are only two exceptions to the rule, both of which are given in; 1 Cor. 7:1
- This teaching is not a low view of marriage; it is extremely wise advice. Paul is not discussing his doctrine on marriage. His doctrine on marriage is of the highest character. Eph.5:22-33,
- In this particular passage Paul is dealing with specific problems of temptation and fornication, and how to handle the temptation in a most immoral society. Pro. 18:22
- Is celibacy or marriage the better answer? It is extremely wise for every man and woman to marry unless God has given them control over sexual desire. Paul commanded marriage to avoid fornication.

Duties Of Husband And Wife

- [3] Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband [4] The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.
- There are mutual duties within marriage. Note two significant points.
- The words “due benevolence” mean the debt; to render what is due. The husband and wife owe some things to the other.
- Both have rights; each can expect to receive some things from the other. Both have the responsibility to pay to the other what is due.
- The word “render” is continuous action. The rights and duties of each are to be continually fulfilled. (Note: this verse is usually interpreted to refer only to sexual rights and duties within marriage. This point is extremely important because it recognizes each partners sex drive is different. Therefore each partner is to give the authority over his or her own body to the other partner. This principle is certainly applicable to all the other rights and duties of husband and wife.
- Some of the Scriptures that speak to the duties of husbands are these: Mar 10:7, Deu. 24:5, 1Cor. 7:11, Eph. 5:25, Ecc. 9:9, Col. 3:19, Eph. 6:4, 1Pet. 3:7, 2Cor.12:14, Deut. 6:7, Prov. 22:6,
- Some of the Scriptures that speak to the duties of wives are these: 1Cor. 7:10, Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18, 1Tim. 3:11, Titus 2:3-4, 1Peter 3:1

The Sin Of Omission

- [5] **Defraud** ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. [6] But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.
- Note the clarity and forcefulness of this verse. The reason is obvious to withhold is an act of *fraud*, of cheating the other of what he is due.
- Far too many marriages have dissatisfying sexual relationships; therefore, seeking sexual satisfaction elsewhere has become so common that it has become an acceptable practice in some circles and societies. Heb 13:4
- Both the husband and wife belong to each other so fully that. For both the husband and wife to abstain from marital sexual expression require three conditions; both parties must consent to abstain, must be a limited period of time, and only for fasting and prayer, due to no doubt a crisis in the family. This is the only exception given by Scripture. When did we began incorporating other reasons such as, I have a headache, I am tired, I don't feel like it, etc? James 4:17
- So long as health allows, the married couple is to cleave together, fulfilling God's purpose of building strong intimate families that is so desperately needed by our children, by our churches, by the community. Matt. 19:5-6
- A husband and wife must not stay apart for too long a period because of temptations, especially in a sex crazed society. Yet, this is a common mistake made in many marriages. Gen 2:18

To Marry Or Not To Marry

- [7] 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. [8] I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide **even as I.**
- There is God's gift of marriage and God's gift of being single. God is the One who determines if a believer should marry or stay single. Paul had remained single because of God's gift, and in light of the present distress, he wished every person could be as he was, single. However, every man must do as God gifts him. Rev. 14:4
- The unmarried most likely refers to widowed men and to the divorced men and women of the congregation. Virgins and unmarried men are dealt with elsewhere in this chapter. 1 Cor. 7:25-38
- The church had a question about what was the best way for these to combat temptation in a sex-crazed society? The best course of action would be for them to remain single. Because they would be able to give the Lord their full attention without distraction. 1 Cor. 7:26,35
- Paul says that he was unmarried in the context of this discussion. Does this mean that he was either widowed or divorced? Probably, for Paul was a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews, and all members of the Sanhedrin were required by law to be married Phil. 3:3-9

Marry, Don't Burn

- [9] But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.
- The unmarried and widows were to marry if they burned with passion. This is a command; it is a duty, an obligation for Christians to marry if they cannot control their passion.
- There is only one exception for not marrying: God's will. God calls some men and women to live a single and dedicated life for His service. But if God calls a person to live a life of dedication, He will give the person the power to control his passion. Again, if God has not called and given us the power to control our passion, the believer is to marry. Matt. 19:12
- To burn with passion for the opposite sex is not wrong. God designed us that way. It's God's way of assuring his original plan of procreation would be carried out. Remember that it was God who instituted marriage, and it too is a gift. Gen 2:18, 21-24.
- However, believers must not marry unbelievers. 2 Cor. 6:14-18

Are You Willing To Be Celibate?

- [10] And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: [11] But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.
- The question concerning married couples and divorce. The command for married people to stay married did not originate with Paul it came from the Lord Himself. Matt 5:32; Matt 19:3-9
- Any person who contemplates leaving his or her spouse needs to realize that this is a violation of Gods commandment.
- The Christian wife is not to divorce her Christian husband. They are both believers with Christ at the center of their married relationship, therefore, have the capacity to workout their differences. God will not violate our will, so we must be willing to work things out.
- Scripture recognizes that not every one, including believers, will seek the Lord enough to work out their differences If we have given up on our marriage, the Bible gives us but two alternatives; remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. Remarriage is forbidden to the Christian wife. Mar. 10:7-9, Gen 2:23-24,
- Divorce is forbidden to the Christian husband. Although it is not spelled out, all that has been said concerning the Christian wife applies to the Christian husband. 1Peter 3:7, Ecc. 9:9,

Charity Begins At Home

- [12] But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. [13] And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.
- To the question concerning Christians who are married to unbelieving, Paul says that this particular issue was never discussed by the Lord. However, he would speak to this issue, which he made clear was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. 1Cor. 7:40.
- Apparently there were many mixed marriages in the Corinthian church. They were not believers marrying unbelievers. They were heathen who had become believers. Scripture never approved of a Christian marrying an unbeliever. 1Cor. 7:39
- It seems that some in the church were saying once a person gave his life to Christ, he was not thereafter to live with an unbeliever. They were saying that the new believer was to divorce the unbelieving wife or husband.
- What should a Christian who is married to an unbeliever do: stay married or divorce? Scripture gives three instructions.
- Stay together. The believing spouse should stay, but *only* if the unbelieving spouse is willing. Why? 1Pet 3:1, 1Cor. 9:19

You Can Win Them

- [14] For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. [15] But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.
- The believer will influence his or her spouse for Christ. The word sanctified does not mean that the believer's faith saves the unbelieving spouse.
- The word "sanctified" means that the marriage is set apart unto God. If the unbeliever is willing to remain with the believer, the marriage is not to be dissolved. The unbeliever must support his spouse in her loyalty to Christ and His church.
- The believer will influence the children. If God did not accept the marriage, then the children would be illegitimate in God's eyes. However, since the unbeliever supports his Christian spouse, God accepts his support as "sanctification" of the marriage and family.
- The whole family is accepted by God as a legitimate family, a family set apart for Him and His cause. Act 16:31
- Separate if the unbelieving spouse wishes. If the unbelieving spouse leaves the believer, the believer is to let him leave. The bond of marriage is broken. The point is that God has called us to *peace*. The reason the believer is to cooperate with the unbelieving spouse is clear: the unbelieving spouse may be won to Christ by the believer.