

Bible Study November 1, 2023

Principles for Marriage

I Corinthians 7: 1-40

I Cor 7: 1-24 Marriage, Divorce, and Unchangeable Circumstances

Paul addresses issues raised in the letter to him from the church. It appears many had decided not to have any relations with their spouse, as a form of holiness. However, Paul addresses this by stating that God designed marriage as the place for the expression of human sexuality, giving the marriage couple opportunity for both relational and spiritual benefits. He restates that marriage is between one man and one woman. And that the man and the woman belong to each other, in actuality are “one flesh.” Mutual decisions are made concerning abstinence, and the wellbeing of each is to be considered. Temptation to others is limited when the well being of the marriage is given primary importance. Paul is unmarried and is content, but that is not for all people.

Paul now addresses divorce. In Roman times the woman or the man could ask for a divorce, basically a “no-fault” situation. This is not the case for the Christian. Even if married to an unbeliever, the marriage should be maintained at all costs. In due course, by staying together, the unbelieving spouse has a much higher probability of coming to Christ, and the children of the marriage are covenant children. However, if the couple can find no reconciliation, and the unbelieving spouse will not convert, and divorce does occur, especially in cases of infidelity and/or abandonment, re-marriage is permitted.

The Christian is to live out the life they have and in the calling they received. Some became believers as slaves, as freedmen, as Jews or Gentiles, and we are to see how God uses our situations for His glory.

I Cor 7: 25-40

The Unmarried and the Widowed

Paul suggests each individual look at the situation they find themselves, and to seek contentment in their calling. Each Christian should find contentment in Christ, and let their decisions be tempered by their eternal destination. Many decide they wish to re-marry, and that is good. But remaining single is good as well. If one marries, it is always to be “in the Lord,” that is to marry a fellow believer.