

Marriage and Singleness Part 5

1 Corinthians 7; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 8-14-22

What About Marriage? (1 Corinthians 7)

The Christian and Marital Intimacy (1-6)

Our experience and cultural attitudes can make sexual intimacy seem at best, a hindrance, and, at worst, a sin. (1)

Sexual intimacy is important in marriage. (2-6)

The Christian and Celibacy (7-9)

Some are gifted to be celibate (content to not be married and not have physical intimacy). (7)

Those who are not gifted to be celibate should get married. (8-9)

The Christian and Divorce (10-16)

Christians should not divorce one another. (10-11)

Someone who becomes a believer should not divorce the unbelieving spouse. (12-14)

But someone who becomes a believer should not resist being divorced by the unbelieving spouse. (15-16)

The Christian and Circumstances (17-24)

Believers should not try to change their circumstances in order to find the ideal spiritual condition. (17-24)

The Christian and Wisdom regarding Marriage and Singleness (25-40)

1. Circumstances (25-31)

Circumstances should be considered regarding the 'if and when' of marriage. 'Circumstance' is from the Latin, 'to stand around.' Circumstances are the real life events and people and conditions that surround us in the midst of our decision-making and bring certain pressures to bear upon us. How we look at our circumstances is important! We are to live wisely without being paralyzed by fear or laziness! – Proverbs 27:12; 26:13

2. Devotion to the Lord (32-35)

Devotion to the Lord should be considered regarding the 'if and when' of marriage. 'Devotion' comes from the Latin, 'to vow'; it is the taking and keeping of a vow or commitment. There are 'ruts' (patterns of devotion/life) that you want to get in and stay in! – Psalm 23:5

3. Sexual Temptation (36-38)

Sexual temptation should be considered regarding the ‘if and when’ of marriage. These verses have been interpreted in three basic ways: (1) as a reference to a father and his daughter (2) as a reference to a husband and wife in a marriage in which they have taken a vow of celibacy or (3) as a reference to an engaged man and his fiancée. The arguments for the second view are the weakest. In light of verses 1-6, it is unlikely that Paul would support such a practice. There are arguments to commend the first view, but the arguments for the third view appear to be the strongest, such as: to ‘act unbecomingly’ could be a reference to sexual temptation [‘not behaving properly’ in ESV]; an alternative translation of ‘if she is past her youth’ [‘if his passions are strong’ in ESV]; a translation of the last phrase, ‘let her marry’, that is consistent with the plural form of the verb in the Greek [‘let them marry’ in ESV]; ‘to give in marriage’ can legitimately be translated ‘to marry’ [‘he who marries’ in ESV]. Paul is giving an engaged man who is struggling in the area of sexual purity (in light of verse 9) the freedom to make the choice he wants to make and to go ahead and marry his fiancée, even in view of the present distress and the troubles it will bring.

Do you have a category for doing ‘well’ and doing ‘better’? Can you imagine that God is pleased with those who do ‘well’ and with those who do ‘better’? Does it sound bad to simply to do ‘well’ when you could do ‘better’? Can you imagine as a parent giving your children the option of doing ‘well’ and doing ‘better’ and being happy with whatever choice they made? Why or why not? Paul challenges our ‘black and white thinking’ to the core! – Romans 14:1-9

4. Desirable Partners (39-40)

Desirable partners should be considered regarding the ‘if and when’ of marriage. Paul repeats the marriage rule: one man and one woman for life. But he makes it clear that once a spouse has died, the living spouse is free to remarry. There are two guidelines here: (1) she is free to marry someone she really wants to marry and (2) she must marry someone she wants to marry who is also a Christian.

Our decisions need to be evaluated in light of three categories:

What is *right*? (19) What is right or wrong in light of clear and specific commands in God’s written Word, the Bible?

What is *wise*? (26) When it is not a simple matter of what is right and wrong, what is wise according to Scriptural principles, all things considered?

What is *good*? (39) When it is not a matter of right or wrong or even wisdom, what do I prefer or what seems good to me personally?