

I Corinthians 7 – 5 December 2021

“Should You Be Married?”

Introduction

*We're in a very practical book, teaching us about:

- Divisions & unity (*Chapters 1-4*)
- Solving Christian disputes in-house (*Chap 5-6*)
- Christian marriage when ideal is lost (*Chap 7*)
- Conscience issues ie eating of meats (*Chap 8-11*)
- Proper public worship (*Chap 12-14*)
- Doctrine of the Resurrection (*Chap 15-16*)

*There are several passages related to what a God-honoring married should look like

*Begins in Genesis w/ the 2 becoming one flesh

*Eph 5:21-33: Roles show Christ & His bride

*I Pet 3:1-7: Shows how to have grace for each other

*This addresses conditions used to choose to marry (or not), & if you should change your marital status

*Marriage is honorable but it's just a tool used for something bigger – to aid our life of service to God

***4 indicators for knowing if marriage is for you**

1st indicator to know if you should be married – Are you burning for physical affection, then yes (Vs 1-9)

Read Vs 1-2

1. For most there's great need for intimate physical affection, so pick ONE person & have it w/i marriage
2. But if you can go without, great. Some are made for celibacy (Read Matt 19:11-12)

Read Vs 3-4

1. This goes back to the idea of avoiding fornication outside of marriage
2. Don't assert your rights but give kindness to each other

Read Vs 5

1. An understood part of marriage is that you'll be sharing your spiritual, mental & physical presence with your partner, you shouldn't hold that back
2. Reason? B/c Satan will tempt you into sin

3. Only w/ agreement & for a time can you withhold the physical to spend that time in the spiritual

Read Vs 6-7

1. If you're gifted to marry, then do it. If you're gifted to stay single, then do it.
2. Paul wants us to see the *principle* of the teaching, not some rigid command
 - a. If you're going to be craving physical affection, don't tempt yourself w/ fornication, but get married

Read Vs 8-9

1. Stay single if you're gifted to do that, but if you're in need of marriage, then do it
2. BLUF – If you have a major distraction w/ the desire for physical affection, then marry.
 - a. Marriage is still a small distraction away from the spiritual to the earthly, but it's honorable & can be fully used for God's glory

**2nd indicator to know if you should be married –
Are you discontent w/ the state you're in, then no
(Vs 10-24)**

Read Vs 10-11

1. If there's a need to leave your spouse, the only options are to remain unmarried or reconcile.
 - a. There's no reason to divorce
 - b. Now God allowed for divorce in the Law of Moses if adultery b/c of the hardness of the heart – but even here the method is peace

Read Vs 12-14

1. If you're a Christian & you find yourself married to an unbeliever, there's no reason to divorce
2. In fact, they're a reason to stay together!
 - a. Have the kids benefit from your Christianity

Read Vs 15

1. If unbelieving spouse leaves, you haven't sinned
2. Peace is better than asserting your rights!

Read Vs 16

1. This goes back to vs 12-14 that there's another reason not to leave an unbelieving spouse
 - a. You might just win them to Jesus
 - b. Read I Pet 3:1-2
2. Notice it doesn't say to marry an unbeliever and then try winning them to Christ

Read Vs 17-20

1. The lesson is not that God wants us to live in a certain status or circumstance, but that in whatever state we're in live moral, godly lives
2. Don't be concerned w/ changing your condition, but USE your condition for God's glory

Read Vs 21-24

1. Whether you're free or a slave, don't worry about that as if it would hinder you from serving God
2. You should & can serve God in the state or condition that you're in

**3rd indicator to know if you should be married –
Can you focus on serving God regardless of state,
then yes (Vs 25-38)**

Read Vs 25-28

1. “I have no commandment” Remember, this is inspired truth of God but in principle not in specifics
2. Singles can remain single and that’s fine
 - a. But if they marry, that’s not sin, but it does bring challenges that will take your attention
 - b. The key is to continue in faithfulness to the Lord regardless of state
3. Paul never says singleness is required of anyone
 - a. He encourages singleness for those that are gifted but acknowledges that marriage is honorable (Heb 13:4)

Read Vs 29-31

1. Don’t get too grounded in the world & it’s processes that are passing away
2. Live for the eternal, while in your status

Read Vs 32-34

1. Being married will take your time & attention
2. Principle: Whether married or not, don't neglect your Christian service to God
3. Don't be consumed with being married or not, be consumed with serving God in your condition

Read Vs 35

1. Paul isn't criticizing the married or singles, he's just raising the principle of not forgetting our eternal Christian service to God in the pursuit of these things
2. Our highest duty to another will always be to God Himself

Read Vs 36-38

1. Speaking to fathers; it's ok to allow your single kids to marry, this isn't sin, but encouraging them in their gift of celibacy would be even better
2. Celibacy is an even bigger gift than marriage

4th indicator to know if you should be married – Can you keep your marriage picturing Christ and His Church, then yes (Vs 39-40)

Read Vs 39-40

1. Remarriage is allowable to another believer
2. Paul also here encourages to remain a widow
3. But remarriage is even encouraged for women under 60 years old (see I Tim 5:9-11)
4. There are MANY situations that we many find ourselves in regarding marriage
 - a. Not every situation is addressed
 - b. But the principles here addressed endure
5. The principles are all based on the spiritual picture of what Christ Jesus has with His church
 - a. In picture, we were once married & bound to the Law, but now that we have died & were raised into new life; we're free to marry another (Turn to Rom 7:1-4)
 - b. We're married & set apart to only Jesus!

Conclusion

So what about us, now and in the future, should we be married. Here are four guiding principles to know

- 1. Are you burning for physical affection (yes)**
 - a. Goal is to avoid the temptation of fornication
 - b. This minimizes distractions that would take us away from service to Christ
- 2. Are you discontent w/ the state you're in (no)**
 - a. If your focus is on changing your marital status, then it's not on serving Christ
 - b. Many godly relationships begin as 2 Christians are conducting service for God
- 3. Can you focus on serving God, regardless of the state you're in (yes)**
 - a. Whatever state you're should be used for the glory of God
- 4. Can you keep your marriage picturing Christ and His church (yes)**
 - a. It was created w/ this purpose – to show the world God's love for us!