

Marriage

(Part 2)
1 Corinthians 7

We must remember that truth always harmonizes with truth.

Matthew 5:32 “But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication...”

Matthew 19:9 “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication...”

Context

- ▶ CORINTH: Its culture and history:
 - Immoral: Worship of Aphrodite (Greek); Venus (Roman)
- ▶ Hence, arose dangers to the purity of the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 5–7).

Context Of 1 Corinthians 7

“Now concerning the things about which you wrote...”

7:25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1

- a. Paul wrote on this specifically to answer the Corinthians’ questions about marriage and celibacy.

Context Of 1 Corinthians 7

The issue is: *Is it right for one to marry, or if already married, to remain married?*

The issue is not the same as that addressed by Jesus, “*Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for every cause?*”

The issue is not whether the put away fornicator may remarry. The issue is not whether unscriptural marriages contracted before conversion may continue.

The issue is not eligibility for marriage.
(cf. Matthew 14:4)

Context Of 1 Corinthians 7

The Corinthians had questions regarding the morality of marriage itself.

1. Some evidently doubted that a Christian could marry and engage in sexual relations, and were inclined toward celibacy (verses 1–7).
 - a. Some who were married were abstaining from sexual relations (cf. verse 5)
2. Others were considering separating from their mates (verses 10–11).
3. Some were confused as to what they should do if they were married to an unbeliever (verses 12–15)
4. May a Christian widow marry? (verses 39–40)

The Case For Celibacy And Marriage verses 1–7

1. Celibacy is not wrong (cf. verse 26)
2. Nor is it morally superior to marriage (verse 2; cf. Hebrews 13:4)
 - a. Mutual obligations in marriage (verses 3–7)

The Sanctity Of Marriage verses 1–7

Verse 4 "The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife."

▶ (Greek *exousía*) "to be master of the body, i. e. to have full and entire authority over the body, to hold the body subject to one's will, 1 Corinthians 7:4." (Thayer)

▶ CORRECTION: Romans 1:16 (Greek *dunamis*) "universally, inherent power..." (Thayer)

▶ CORRECT: Matthew 21:23 (Greek *exousía*) "the power of authority (influence) and of right" (Thayer)

To Unmarried And Widows Verses 8–9

Verse 9 "But if they have not continency, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."

Issue is: Marriage versus Celibacy.

Issue is NOT: Are divorcees eligible for remarriage? NOTE: verse 11; cf. Matthew 19:9

To The Married verses 10–11

The instructions here are simple:

1. DON'T DIVORCE (Sinful)
2. If you do:
 - a. REMAIN UNMARRIED
 - (1) Someone described here must live the rest of their life without getting married. cf. verse 2
 - b. BE RECONCILED.

The Lord versus Paul (verses 10–11)

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| ▶ <i>Verse 3 "Is it lawful (for a man) to put away his wife for every cause?"</i> | ▶ <i>Verse 10 "That the wife depart not from her husband..."</i> |
| ▶ Divorce for ANY cause? | ▶ Divorce for ANY cause? |
| ◦ Lord said, "NO!" Verses 5–6 | ◦ Some say : |
| | ◦ "Yes! As long as you don't remarry." |
| ▶ Divorce for ONE cause? | ▶ Divorce for ONE cause? |
| ◦ Yes, Verse 9 | ◦ Yes, Matthew 19:9 |
| ◦ Fornication (only). | ◦ Fornication (only). |

LORD, Matthew 19:9

PAUL, 1 Corinthians 7:10–11

Instructions To Believers Married To Unbelievers

1 Corinthians 7:12–16

Desertion and remarriage? Verse 15

CONTEXT: To answer the questions and concerns of the Corinthians.

1. Should a Christian man married to a non-Christian woman sever the relationship? (verse 12)
2. Should a Christian woman married to a non-Christian man sever the relationship? (verse 13)
3. Are Christians defiled by such a relationship, as they were in the O.T.? (verse 14)
4. Are children born to this relationship illegitimate? (verse 14)
5. Is the Christian guilty of sin if the non-Christian leaves? (verses 15-16)

Verse 12 *"But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her."*

No Conflict:

cf. Verses 10-11

"But unto the married I give charge, (yea) not I, but the Lord, That the wife depart not from her husband (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband); and that the husband leave not his wife."

Verse 12 *"But to the rest say I, not the Lord: If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her. And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband."*

- The Lord addressed marriage in general. Matthew 5:32; Matthew 19:9 (1 Corinthians 7:10-11)
- Paul addressing the legitimacy of mixed marriages. 1 Corinthians 7:12-16
- Paul testifies by inspiration. (verse 40)

Verse 12 *"But to the rest say I, not the Lord:*

If any brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her."

- Lord said, *"And that the husband leave not his wife."* (verse 11)

Verse 13 *"And the woman that hath an unbelieving husband, and he is content to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband."*

- Lord said, *"The wife depart not from her husband."* (verse 10)

Verse 14 *"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother"*

- Not discussing personal sanctification from sin based on his mate's faith. (cf. Ezekiel 18:20)

"Hagiazo, to set apart, to hallow, to sanctify. ...Clearly he only means that the marriage relation is sanctified so that there is no need of a divorce. If either husband or wife is a believer and the other agrees to remain, the marriage is holy and need not be set aside." (Robertson's Word Pictures)

Verse 14 *"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother"*

- Explanation:

"...else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

*"...Otherwise, your children are illegitimate (*akatharta*). If the relations of the parents be holy, the child's birth must be holy also (not illegitimate)." (Robertson's Word Pictures)*

Verse 15 "Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart"

Two supporting reasons offered:

1. "the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such (cases)"
2. "but God hath called us in peace."

Verse 15 "Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such (cases): but God hath called us in peace."

"NOT UNDER BONDAGE..." What is the bondage mentioned here?

- ▶ It is assumed by some that it refers to the bond of marriage as in Romans 7:2-3 and 1 Corinthians 7:27, 39.

Verse 15 "NOT UNDER BONDAGE..."

Evidence that it does not refer to the bond of marriage.

- ▶ "The passages that obviously refer to the bond of marriage used the Gk. word deo (Rom. 7:2-3; 1 Cor. 7:27,39). However in our text it is not the word deo, but douloo ... douloo is never used to refer to the bond of marriage. The word means slavery or enslavement." (DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE by Donnie Rader, page 104)

Verse 15 "NOT UNDER BONDAGE..."

This is supported by lexicons...

- (1) "To make a slave of, reduce to bondage" - (Thayer, page 158.)
- (2) "To enslave" - (Strongs, # 1402)
- (3) "To enslave" - (Youngs, page 103)
- (4) "Signifies to make a slave of, to bring into bondage" - (Vines, Volume 1, page 139.)
- (5) "To be a slave ... to be a slave to another, be subject to, to serve, obey" - (Liddell and Scott, page 179.)

Verse 15 "NOT UNDER BONDAGE..."

The tense of the word translated "not under bondage" suggests that he has never been under this bondage.

- (1) This is perfect tense in the Greek. "The Greek perfect tense denotes the present state resultant upon a past action" (New Testament Greek For Beginners, J. Gresham Machen, page 187)

Verse 15 "NOT UNDER BONDAGE..."

Does it allow remarriage?

- ▶ We are "not under bondage" to give up Christ to please our mate (or anyone else), but that does not mean we are no longer married & can marry another mate. (cf. verses 22-23)

Verse 15 “NOT UNDER BONDAGE...”

Does it allow remarriage?

- Christ’s servant is not to become the servant of men. (verse 22–23)
 - Did that mean they could leave the slave relationship? NO!
- Does “not under bondage” (verse 15) mean they can leave the marriage relationship and marry another?
- **Does mean** that they cannot subject their faith to an unbelieving mate any more than a slave does to his unbelieving master!

Scholars on 1 Corinthians 7:15 Remarriage?

- A.T. Robertson – Word Pictures, Volume 4, page 128, “The text does not say the believer may marry again.”
- Alford – Greek New Testament, Volume 2, page 525, “This does not deal with remarrying after such a separation.”
- Nestle’s Expositors Greek Testament, page 827, “Freedom of remarriage is not suggested.”

David Lipscomb, J.W. Shepherd, Commentary on 1 Corinthians, page 102 “...While yet in such cases remarriage is not approved.”

H. Leo Boles, Commentary on Luke, “1 Cor. 7:15 allows separation, but not the privilege to marry another.”

Albert Barnes, Commentary on 1 Corinthians, page 119, “Many have supposed that this means that they would be at liberty to marry again when the unbelieving wife or husband had gone away, ... but this is contrary to the strain of the argument of the apostle.”

“Pauline Privilege”

Puts a premium on mixed marriages.

- Why would Paul make it acceptable for a Christian to remarry after a non-Christian departs?
- Yet, in verses 10–11 he forbids the married couple from divorcing or from remarrying?

“Pauline Privilege”

Denies the universality of God’s marriage law.

Matthew 19:9, “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.”