

A Series of Devotions About Marriage Based on 1 Corinthians Chapter 7

MARRIAGE IS GOD'S GENERAL RULE FOR MEN AND WOMEN

1 Corinthians 7:2 "Because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband."

It is good for Christians to review what God's word says about marriage. It is especially important due to the many aberrations that exist in our culture today such a man and woman living with each other as if they are husband and wife, but are not, one-night stands, homosexual relationships, and the like. Many think that "commitment" constitutes marriage. Even the laws of the states of this nation do not accept that definition. God's word says that marriage is His design for the vast majority of men and women.

There are exceptions to this rule. Celibacy (chaste singleness), while it can be good, is not God's norm. It is only for a few in special circumstances. Whatever one's status, single or married, God's concern is chastity, faithfulness, respect and proper use of God's gift of sexuality. 1 Corinthians 7 leaves no doubt as to what is normal.

God certainly instituted marriage to provide companionship, procreation and so on. Verses three through five make it clear that marriage provides the proper place for the expression of love and human sexuality and is a buffer against Satan's sexual temptations. In marriage, God fully expects husbands and wives to love each other and freely engage in a sexual relationship with one another. It is to be an unselfish act of love rather than a self-centered act for either spouse.

The key to a Christian marriage relationship is the recognition that both husband and wife are married to meet their spouse's needs. They have made a commitment to each other and to God to be one with each other in good times and difficult ones, whether rich or poor, in sickness and when healthy, to love and cherish each other until God separates them through death.

A Christian husband and wife live their commitment and relationship in connection with Christ and to God's glory. With the three (husband, wife, Jesus)

connected together, Solomon says, "a cord of three strands cannot be easily broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:12)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, bless me to be faithful to my spouse or celibate in my singleness to Your glory and honor. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Gracious Savior, grant Your blessing
To this husband and this wife,
That in peace they live together
In Your love throughout their life.
Christ, defend them from the tempter
And from all that would destroy
Love's foundation You have laid here,
And its threshold paved with joy.

Lord, if You are not the builder,
Then the house is built in vain,
For a home without Your presence
Shall without true love remain.
Yet when You within a marriage
Come and dwell with grace divine,
There You fill the love to bind them
In a perfect unity.

Cana's guest, this union hallow;
Tenderly embrace this pair.
Clothe this couple with the garments
Thy will daily need to wear;
Patience, kindness, and compassion,
Gentleness, humility;
Robe them, Lord, with love to bind them
In a perfect unity.

Make their love a living picture
Showing how You loved Your bride;
When You gave Yourself to cleanse her,
When for her You bled and died.
Jesus, You have made her holy,
Pure and fair her radiant train;
To Yourself, Your Church presenting,
Without wrinkle, spot, or stain.

Father, You created Adam,
Crafted Eve, and made them one;
Jesus, from their sin You saved us,
As God's true incarnate Son;
Holy Spirit, You forgive us;
From our sins we are released.
Bring us, Lord, at last to heaven,
To the endless wedding feast.
(LSB 860)