

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

HE MUST BELONG TO THE LORD

1 Corinthians 7:39 “A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.”

To marry or not to marry? This is a challenging question, isn't it? On a first date few of you, if any, would propose marriage or accept such a proposal. First, you would want to get to know the person, become comfortable with them and have reasonable certainty that the two of you are able to share a life together until death parts you.

Through this series of devotions, based on 1 Corinthians 7, it is evident that for the vast majority of men and women God's word encourages marriage. At the same time, if through prayer and spiritual discernment, an individual determines that God has given them the necessary gifts to live a single life in accord with God's will, then this is the way they should live.

Verse 39 gives a strong exhortation to those who are contemplating marriage, “. . . he must belong to the Lord.” In my experience as a pastor having performed a goodly number of marriages, I must say some of the couples made spiritual compatibility a high priority. I must also say there were a goodly number of couples that were not on the same spiritual page. The spiritual individual was convinced this would not be a problem in their marriage. Unfortunately, this was not the case in many of those marriages.

With all the challenges that marriages face, Paul's exhortation is critical to a sound, solid marriage. “If God is for us, then nothing can be against us.” (Romans 8:31) “I can do all things through Him (Christ) who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13) “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine (Jesus is speaking) and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.” (Matthew 7:24-25)

In a marriage where both spouses believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and practice their faith through regular worship, reception of the Lord's Supper and incorporate devotions and prayer in their home, it is built on a solid foundation. You know the old adage, "A family that prays together, stays together." Research indicates that there is truth in these words.

Prayer: Lord, bless those who are married that they honor the vows they have spoken to one another. Guide those who are contemplating marriage granting them wisdom in the choice that they make. Be with those who are single with faith and trust in You to bless them. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
Refrain: On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale My anchor holds within the veil. Refrain:

His oath, His covenant and blood Support me in the raging flood';
When ev'ry earthly prop gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.
Refrain:

'When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh, may I then in Him be found,
Clothed in His righteousness alone, Redeemed to stand before His throne!
Refrain:
(LSB 575)