

# REMARRIAGE

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## Introduction

There seems to be much controversy in contemporary Christendom concerning the subject of marriage, divorce and remarriage. The controversy is not due to Scriptures being insufficient or inadequate on the subject because there is more than ample Scripture to address this in both Old and New Testaments. The issue is the willingness to accept the clear teachings of God on the subject.

The real abomination has to do with the propensity of God's shepherds to manipulate God's Word to satisfy or gratify the hardened heart of man. This is nothing short of wickedness on the part of those entrusted to preserve the right and proper teaching of the Word of God. If the shepherds would only fulfill the teachings of God's laws and God's ways, the problems concerning marriage and divorces, I believe, would be greatly diminished.

Under Old Covenant Law, designed to regulate behavior, worship and customs of God's chosen people, a father could sell his daughter (dowry) to another Israelite upon the promise of marriage to himself or to one of his sons. This *betrothal* is a binding contract and the master of the maidservant is under obligation to fulfill the terms of the contract, for the money of her purchase is the money of her *espousal*.

Exodus 21:7-10

- 7 "If a man **sells his daughter as a female slave**, she is not to go free as the male slaves do. "**If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master who designated her for himself**, then he shall let her be redeemed. He does not have authority to sell her to a foreign people because of his unfairness to her. "**If he designates her for his son**, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters." "**If he takes to himself another woman**, he may not reduce her food, her clothing, or her conjugal rights. "**If he will not do these three things for her**, then she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

## Betrothal and Espousal

**Betrothal** is the promise of marriage and carries many rights and privileges to the betrothed female. In fact, one might consider a betrothal a quasi-marriage in the sense it contractually binds both parties. At the time of betrothal, the man is considered to be the *lawful* husband (house-band, the keeping together of the whole family) and the woman is his *lawful* wife. This status is conferred to bring about certain protections for both parties, but especially for the woman. The formal agreement and ceremony between the betrothed is referred to as the *Espousal*.

**Espousal** is the formal betrothal agreement and ceremony where both parties come under obligation for the purpose of marriage. Espousals in Eastern culture frequently contracts one or more years before the marriage is actually celebrated. Espousal and betrothal is used in both New and Old Testaments to illustrate the relations between God and his chosen people.

Jeremiah 2:2

"Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth, The love of your betrothals, Your following after Me in the wilderness, Through a land not sown.

Matthew 1:18

¶ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 11:2

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For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin.

Returning to the Scripture in Exodus above, If the man does not seek to formalize the wedding, the betrothed woman has the right of *redemption*, to be bought back by her father or some other acting in his stead. The woman has the right not to be sold to a non-Israelite, a foreigner.

The regulations concerning the failure to fulfill the betrothal and espousal requirements carry many of the rights afforded to husbands and wives. In fact, marriage laws under Western society probably resemble biblical betrothal and espousal regulations more so than it does biblical marriage regulations. Western society has utterly trampled under foot God's design for marriage, and this includes most, if not all Christian churches.

### Marriage

We have already studied God's design for marriage, so we will not go in-depth on the subject here. Marriage represents the completion of the image and likeness of God in man. It is a finite representation of the infinite relationship that exists in the Godhead between The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. We are created in His image and in His likeness as male and female and the joining in marriage represents the completion of God's image in man.

The image of God is completed in man by His creation of marriage and family. We were created with the purpose of coming into a special and unique relationship with God. In fact, *all* relationships are forged from the marriage standard. There is a threefold purpose in the creation of marriage and family. First, God created marriage to help us learn and understand the relationship that exists within Himself, the Triune Godhead. This understanding of marriage appears to be lost as a biblical teaching by the church. Nowhere do I hear this being taught today.

Second, God created marriage to help us learn and understand the relationship of man with man. Marriage and family are the building blocks of societies, nations and civilizations. Marriage was created to help us learn how to relate to each other individually, as neighbors, and as nations within the community of humanity. Thirdly, God created marriage to help us to learn and understand the relationship that exists between God and His chosen people. While this latter teaching has not been lost due to the clarity of the Scriptures on this subject, it is greatly diminished due to man's sin nature, our incapacity to learn and teach godly love and the fact that God's design for marriage is not being taught nor practiced in His church. It seems that only the secular application of marriage is being taught without any knowledge or application of the essential spiritual and godly characteristics that constitute the image and likeness of God in marriage. This marriage travesty is a tragedy!

### The Murder of Marriage

There are only two things that can kill marriage. The first is the death of a spouse and the second is divorce. The first is a natural act while the latter is a murderous one. The bible speaks of all death as separation. Physical Death is the separation of the spirit of man from the man; Spiritual Death is the separation of the spirit of man from the Spirit of God and Eternal Death is the separation of man from God for all eternity ... hell.

Divorce is a *separation*, a ripping apart of the one flesh that God has joined together. Separation is death ... and a willful, premeditated death is murder. Divorce is the murder of the image and likeness of God in marriage. The cost and penalty for the murder of the image of God is enormous. Divorce is the antithesis of who and what God is ... God is ONE, ETERNAL, LIFE and LOVE. Divorce defiles the image and likeness of God for it represents everything that God is not ... DIVISION, TEMPORAL, DEATH and

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EMNITY. Though the state of humanity is temporal, the image and likeness of God in marriage demands permanence. Permanence in marriage represents the eternal nature of God.

If Divorce is the murder of marriage, then adultery is its weapon of choice. There are other venomous instruments of death in marriage but none more lethal and defiling to the image and likeness of God than that of adultery and sexual immorality. Even a small dose has the capacity to destroy and murder marriage.

But what about the status of the parties in the death of marriage? Are they free to remarry?

Now here's where the ugliness and darkness in people manifests greatly ... when God's conditions for remarriage is disclosed. In my 20 or so years as a born again Christian, I can only recall only one person ... just ONE person ... who readily acknowledges that if they were to remarry, they would be committing adultery. Let's examine what God has to say concerning all instances of remarriage.

### Biblical Conditions For Remarriage

Let's examine the various conditions Scriptures give concerning legal and permissible remarriages and sinful or adulterous remarriages..

#### Death of A Spouse

The Scriptures are quite clear concerning the legality and permissibility of a remarriage after the death of a spouse in both Old and New Covenants.

Romans 7:2

For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; **but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.**

1 Corinthians 7:39

¶ A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; **but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes**, only in the Lord.

Under the Old Covenant, the woman of a deceased husband who died childless was under obligation to marry her deceased husband's brother and bear children, with the firstborn carrying the name of her deceased husband.

Genesis 38:8

Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother."

Deuteronomy 25:5-7

"When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, **the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man.** Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. **"It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother,** so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel. "But if the man does not desire to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.'

There is no such teaching under the New Covenant whatsoever though there are several references. That's the reason I've included the Scriptures here. The regulation and requirements under Mosaic Law is replaced by Jesus. Jesus and the teachings of Jesus is superior to Moses, the Law, the regulations under

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the Law, principalities, powers and all created things. When the novice reads Old Covenant regulations, they usually deem them to be archaic and frivolous regulations, but God, in His infinite wisdom had noble and spiritual purposes for each and every law, ordinance and regulation ... even if they remain a mystery to us.

### Remarriage After Divorce

There is quite a different scenario when we enter the New Covenant. Many in contemporary Christianity are quite contentious concerning this issue just as those in the time of Jesus and the days of Moses were. Under Mosaic Law, most thought a divorced party who received a certificate of divorce had the right to remarry after divorce (verse 2)

Deuteronomy 24:1-5

- 1 ¶ "When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that **she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts [it] in her hand and sends her out from his house,**
- 2 and **she leaves his house and goes and becomes another man's wife,**
- 3 and **if the latter husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce** and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, **or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife,**
- 4 then **her former husband who sent her away is not allowed to take her again to be his wife,** since **she has been defiled;** for **that is an abomination before the LORD,** and **you shall not bring sin on the land** which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance.
- 5 ¶ "When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out with the army nor be charged with any duty; **he shall be free at home one year and shall give happiness to his wife whom he has taken.**

However, God said differently even then. No wonder Jesus refers to the purveyors of righteousness as blind guides. If the woman remarried, she was **defiled** and forbidden to return to her former husband as commanded under the Law. **Remarriage after divorce has always been a defilement in the eyes of God.** God allowed divorce because of the hardness of heart in His people. Defilement due to divorce and remarriage pollutes the land in the eyes of our holy God for remarriage after divorce defiles the image of God. The person defiling God then becomes defiled themselves. A divorced woman who did not remarry is permitted to return to her former husband for she has not defiled God.

Jeremiah 3:1-3

- 1 ¶ [God] says, "**If a husband divorces his wife And she goes from him And belongs to another man, Will he still return to her? Will not that land be completely polluted?** But you are a harlot [with] many lovers; Yet you turn to Me," declares the LORD.
- 2 "Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see; Where have you not been violated? **By the roads you have sat for them Like an Arab in the desert, And you have polluted a land With your harlotry and with your wickedness.**
- 3 "Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no spring rain. Yet you had a harlot's forehead; You refused to be ashamed.

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We see a clearer yet consistent scenario developing under the New Covenant teaching of Jesus and the Apostles. Jesus came to magnify the Law of God and to enhance the *spiritual intent* of God's Law for His followers, and that includes those who follow Jesus even today. The teachings of Jesus are for all humanity, but especially for the New Covenant believers with an indwelling of God's Holy Spirit.

Matthew 5:31-32

31 "It was said, 'WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE';

**32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced**

**woman commits adultery.**

This is a clear and powerful teaching of Jesus. Unchastity, sexual immorality and adultery is the *only* condition mentioned by Jesus as grounds for divorce. There is *no condition* for remarriage mentioned in the above verse.

Matthew 19:3-10

3 ¶ **Some Pharisees came to Jesus**, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?"

4 And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,

5 and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'?

6 "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

7 They \*said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY?"

8 He \*said to them, "**Because of your hardness of heart** Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but **from the beginning it has not been this way.**

9 "**And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.**"

10 **The disciples \*said to Him, "If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry."**

Hardness of heart is the reason God granted divorce. We, in the New Covenant by the power and might of God's Holy Spirit indwelling us have a circumcised heart of flesh, though one is hard pressed to see the evidence of such a heart especially when we see the abysmal failure of Christian marriages, divorces and remarriages. There is no discernible difference between Christian marriages and those of the world. Christians mirror divorce and remarriage rates in lockstep with the world. Something is seriously gone awry and the accountability rests squarely with the lack of leadership and godly teaching of the church.

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The disciples, who have as yet not received the Holy Spirit, brought Jesus into their home and questioned him further on this teaching. The disciples, the students and pupils of Jesus, are having an extremely hard time accepting His teaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage. This was never something easy to swallow for a fallen and sinful humanity, for godly love has always been elusive to man ... then and now.

Mark 10:2-12

- 2 Some **Pharisees came up to Jesus**, testing Him, and began to question Him **whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife**.
- 3 And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?"
- 4 They said, "Moses permitted a man TO WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY."
- 5 But Jesus said to them, "**Because of your hardness of heart** he wrote you this commandment.
- 6 "But from the beginning of creation, God **MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE**.
- 7 "**FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER**,
- 8 **AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH**; so **they are no longer two, but one flesh**.
- 9 "**What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate**."
- 10 In the house the **disciples began questioning Him about this again**.
- 11 And He \*said to them, "**Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her**;
- 12 **and if she herself divorces her husband and marries another man, she is committing adultery**."

The account in Mark is less ambiguous than Matthew's account. Adultery, which includes fornication and sexual immorality is clearly the only condition stated for divorce. It is adultery for a divorced person to remarry. Anyone marrying a divorced person is committing adultery.

**Luke 16:18**

**"Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.**

Luke is focused and directly to the point. Paul is equally clear on this point as well.

Romans 7:2-3

For **the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living**; but **if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband**. So then, **if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress**; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

1 Corinthians 7:39

**A wife is bound as long as her husband lives**; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

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The Word of God is teaching us that if a divorced man or woman remarries while their divorced spouse remains alive, they commit adultery, and anyone marrying a divorced person also commits adultery. Jesus replaced Mosaic law and is the standard for us to live by. The commandments of Jesus supersede Moses, the angels and all principalities and power. That is well established in the New Covenant writings and will not be examined here for it is thoroughly examined in several other studies. Jesus restored the sanctity of marriage to its original condition and state of holiness. Jesus came to clarify and restore the spiritual intent of God's Law to man. The Scriptures of the New Covenant bear this out completely, without deviation.

Paul, gave instructions for marriage to the Corinthian church. He promoted several principles and commandments that we should take note of. We will examine the entirety of First Corinthians 7 for it is highly significant and revealing.

### 1. It is Better For A Man Not To Marry

1 Corinthians 7:1-2

Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But **because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband.**

Paul is not prohibiting marriage, for marriage is created and ordained by God. The joining of one man and one woman completes the image and likeness of God in man. Marriage was created to help man understand the love relationship within the Godhead, expressed by the Scripture, God "is" love. Marriage is also the standard God uses to describe the relationship between He and His people. Divorce, conflict, separation, remarriage all serve to defile the image and likeness of God. Marriage is a good, right and proper as the Scriptures bear out.

Proverbs 18:22

¶ **He who finds a wife finds a good thing And obtains favor from the LORD.**

Hosea 2:19-20

**"I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, In lovingkindness and in compassion, And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then you will know the LORD.**

1 Timothy 5:14

**Therefore, I want younger [widows] to get married,** bear children, keep house, [and] give the enemy no occasion for reproach;

Hebrews 13:4

**Marriage [is to be held] in honor among all,** and the [marriage] bed [is to be] undefiled; for **fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**

Marriage is created for us to learn to know the Lord by learning to love each other. It seems people, even those claiming to be born again believers in the household of God, are more concerned with their "right" to defile the image and likeness of God in marriage, divorce and remarriage than they are with their "privilege" of serving God in holiness, peace and love. How sad.

Let's continue with the New Covenant teaching in First Corinthians. Paul was simply stating that because humanity, including God's chosen people and born again believers, has a history and propensity toward defilement it would be better not to marry. He is teaching his second principle that all should remain as you are called rather than defile God in marriage, divorce and remarriage.

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### 2 Remain As You Are

The call of all Christians is to serve God, deny self and to carry our cross daily. In verses 3-6, Paul discusses the Godly duties and responsibilities of husbands and wives to each other. Let's pick up God's teaching starting in verse 7.

1 Corinthians 7:7-11

**Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am.** However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that. But I say to the **unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I.** But **if they do not have self-control, let them marry**; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion. **But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband (but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife.**

The teaching is very consistent and without deviation to any Scripture. A believer is commanded not to divorce (verse 10) but if a divorce must take place, the believer is not free to remarry (verse 11.) **God is clearly teaching that a divorced person is not free to remarry.** It is better to remain as you are and serve God as you are rather than to defile God by an adulterous and defiling marriage, divorce or remarriage. Paul is unmarried, probably a widower. That's what Paul means when he states they should "remain even as I" in verse 8. Paul is not bound by any marriage obligations and free to serve the Lord fully, unencumbered by marital responsibilities. Remember, Paul is responding to a letter he received from the Corinthian overseers (verse 1) to give instruction on a number of problems and issues related to marriage, divorce and remarriage, especially concerning those married to non-believers.

1 Corinthians 7:12

But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any **brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her.**

Divorce is prohibited by a believer. The believer is commanded not to divorce his wife, even if she is an unbelieving wife. The very same standard holds true for the believing wife, she is not permitted to divorce her husband.

1 Corinthians 7:13

And a **woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away.**

Complete and total consistency with both Old and New Covenants in the case of those who "have become" unequally yoked. In verse 14, Paul gives his reason why the believers are bound to remain as one flesh with their unbelieving spouse.

1 Corinthians 7:14

For the **unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband**; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.

*Sanctification* occurs through the power of the joining ... one flesh ... in the marriage covenant. The believer sanctifies their spouse and children. This is the teaching for those who were married *at the time* they've come to the knowledge of the truth and accepted the atoning sacrifice of Jesus as their Lord for Salvation. There are many other Scriptures that teach a believer must not to be joined with a non-believer. Dating and marriage are not evangelistic tools. We simply do not, nor should we attempt to convert or evangelize through dating and marriage. This is, unfortunately, all too common a problem in

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contemporary Christendom. God continues to teach His people through the Apostle Paul another valuable command.

### 3. Remarriage After Divorce Is Adultery

Verse 15 of First Corinthians 7 is by far the most maligned and twisted verse concerning the obligations and duties of the believer abandoned or divorced by a non-believing spouse.

1 Corinthians 7:15

**Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such [cases,] but God has called us to peace.**

The wickedness and evil lurking within their heart of those who teach that this verse justifies remarriage is nothing short of an abomination to our Holy God. Not being bound in such a case means **not being bound as one flesh in marriage**. If the unbelieving spouse leaves, through abandonment or divorce, let them leave. A divorce in such a case will not be sin in the eyes of God. The believer is not forced to remain bound to their spouse in the marriage covenant. However, to twist this to mean that the believer is free to remarry ... is an *abomination* to God for they are NOT free to remarry. **The believing spouse who remarries after divorce commits adultery!** This granting of a divorce does not nullify the clear teachings of Jesus, God and what the Apostles. To interpret that it does clearly contradicts what is being taught only four verses earlier.

1 Corinthians 7:10-11

**But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife.**

The believer is not to divorce their spouse. If a believer is divorced, whether by their spouse or by what God grants as a reason to separate, they are not free to remarry. Let's review once again the clear teaching of God concerning remarriage after divorce. God calls all divorced people who remarry adulterers.

Matthew 5:32

but I say to you that **everyone who divorces his wife**, except for [the] reason of unchastity, **makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.**

Luke 16:18

**"Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.**

Romans 7:3

So then, **if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress;** but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

Mark 10:11

And He \*said to them, **"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her;**

Matthew 19:9

"And I say to you, **whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.**"

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God is clearly teaching the command to REMAIN AS YOU ARE. Marriage is a one shot deal. If you blow it, you've blown it. If your desire is to be joined with another, don't blow it ... make it work. God explains why this is so a second time through the Apostle Paul ... why a believer is not permitted to divorce their unbelieving spouse.

1 Corinthians 7:16

**For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?**

God may very well be exercising His Divine Sovereignty to save the unbelieving spouse through the believing spouse. There are also many other reasons given in Scripture for the believing spouse to remain married to the non-believing spouse. We'll save those for another study for that subject is not focused upon marriage.

1 Corinthians 7:17

**¶ Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches.**

The command to remain as you are is clearly taught in Scriptures. God grants an exception for divorce where the **non-believer** chooses to abandon the marriage. However, the cross for the believer to bear is to remain as you are ... a divorced person not free to remarry for as long as their divorced spouse remains alive. If the believer is not able to remain an unmarried person, he or she must do everything in their power to remain married to their current spouse. There is no opportunity for remarriage as long as your divorced spouse lives.

Paul continues to strongly reinforce this truth throughout the remainder of chapter seven. God is teaching us that it is better for us to remain as we are called.

1 Corinthians 7:18-19

Was any man called when he was already circumcised? He is not to become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but **what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.**

What matters is keeping the commandments of God! The commandment of God clearly teach that divorce, except for adultery and abandonment by the non-believing spouse, defiles the image and likeness of God in marriage. To remarry after divorce or abandonment is to commit adultery. God permits separation, not remarriage.

1 Corinthians 7:20-24

18 **Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called.**

19 Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.

20 For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

21 **You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.**

22 **Brethren, each one is to remain with God in that condition in which he was called.**

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We cannot interpret Scripture in one place that clearly contradicts Scripture in another. So why is it that so many continue to do so? Let's continue.

1 Corinthians 7:25

¶ **Now concerning virgins I have no command of the Lord, but I give an opinion as one who by the mercy of the Lord is trustworthy.**

This too was a question posed to Paul by the Corinthian Elders. What about the virgins that never married? Are they free to marry? Though Paul's humility is admirable by stating this is his opinion, it indeed the mind of God for all Scripture is God breathed. This became a command for the people of Corinth and the other churches during this time of great tribulation and persecution against the church.

1 Corinthians 7:26

I think then that this is good **in view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is.**

The virgins Paul is referring to in verse 25 are men as well as women. Why the surprise? God has no double standard. Paul is shifting gears a bit here. While there is no command of God preventing virgins to marry, the Corinthian church as well as most of the churches were in a great period of persecution and distress. Fleeing and hiding was commonplace during this time of this great persecution. Paul is once again not forbidding marriage, but is stating in light of the persecution it is better for the well being of the church as a whole that there not be any marriages. This is clearly a temporary command due to the persecution of God's people. Paul again reinforces the command to remain as you are. It was a command for the churches then and is a solid principle for us to live by today.

1 Corinthians 7:27-31

- 27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife.
- 28 **But if you marry, you have not sinned;** and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.
- 29 But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, **so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none;**
- 30 and those who weep, as though they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess;
- 31 and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.

What God is telling His people through Paul is ... time to hunker down. These were extraordinary times requiring extraordinary measures for the very survival of the church from the perils of Satan and his minions. Keep your life as simple as possible and don't get yourself entangled with the affairs of life. Satan is roaming about, devouring the church of God. Let things settle down first, but in the mean time, do not continue to live the way you were accustomed to living. Simplify your life as a soldier of Christ. Be concerned for the things of the Lord and not the things of the flesh. Do not encumber yourself with anything beyond absolute necessity. After all, where's your treasure?

1 Corinthians 7:32-40

## REMARRIAGE

- 32 **But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord;**
- 33 **but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife,**
- 34 **and his interests are divided.** The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband.
- 35 **This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.**
- 36 ¶ **But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter,** if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, **he does not sin; let her marry.**
- 37 **But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will,** and has decided this in his own heart, **to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well.**
- 38 So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better.

Paul is giving a principle that to avoid temptation and sin due to weakness in spirit and will power, do what your heart mandates you do to avoid sinning, even if it is contrary to his suggested course of action. It is better to encumber rather than sin, if the temptation to sin is beyond your capacity to overcome.

1 Corinthians 7:39-40

- 39 ¶ **A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.**

- 40 **But in my opinion she is happier if she remains as she is;** and I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

In verse 39, God clearly restates His command that remarriage after divorce is adultery as long as the divorced spouse remains alive. There is no sin if a divorced woman remarries after her divorced spouse dies. Verse 40 refers to remaining as you are under the current distress of persecutions being leveled against the church. Under this circumstance, it is better for the woman (or man) not to marry, though not prevented from doing so by command, the exercise of self-restraint is prudent for the sake of preservation.

There we have it. This is most certainly not what most people want to hear, but this is the clear, honest and truthful teaching of God concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage. This standard is for all people, but especially for the spiritual born again believers of God. The standard for ordained church leaders is even more stringent than what is written here, but that too will be a topic for another study.

## SUMMARY

**100% of the Scriptures on Marriage, teach 100% of the time, the following truths.**

- 1 MARRIAGE IS A ONE TIME, PERMANENT INSTITUTION ORDAINED BY GOD

## **REMARRIAGE**

- 2 BELIEVERS ARE DUTY BOUND TO FULFILL THEIR OBLIGATIONS AND MARRIAGE COVENANT WHETHER MARRIED TO A BELIEVER OR NONBELIEVER
- 3 DIVORCE MAY NOT BE INITIATED BY A BELIEVER EXCEPT FOR THE CASE OF ADULTERY AND ABANDONMENT
- 4 REMARRIAGE AFTER DIVORCE IS ADULTERY AND NEVER PERMITTED BY GOD SO LONG AS THE DIVORCED SPOUSE LIVES. THIS STANDARD APPLIES TO THE BELIEVER WHOSE SPOUSE COMMITS ADULTERY AND/OR ABANDONMENT
- 5 REMARRIAGE AFTER THE DEATH OF YOUR SPOUSE IS PERMITTED
- 6 REMARRIAGE AFTER THE DEATH OF YOUR DIVORCED SPOUSE IS PERMISSABLE
- 7 ANYONE MARRYING A DIVORCED PERSON COMMITS ADULTERY