

First Corinthians 7 Bound in Marriage “In the Lord”

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1-Corinthians 7:1: “Now concerning the things that you wrote to me, *saying...*” Here’s the perfect *human* solution: *If there is a sin abstain from everything!* This is what they’re saying.

“...‘*It is good for a man not to touch a woman, I say this*’” (v 1). I mean, if you’re going to have sexual problems in the world, a man should touch a woman, and a woman shouldn’t touch a man. That’s an obvious solution. Of course, that doesn’t work!

Read Col. 2—it talks about all those things of *will worship!* Do not hold back the lust of the flesh! It doesn’t work! They have a show of wisdom in *will worship*.

Paul says, v 2: “Rather, to avoid sexual immorality...”—*porneia*—any kind of sexual sin—*period!* The broad spectrum of all sexual sins. From that word we have *pornography!* to avoid ‘*porneia*’:

“...let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.... [that is the will of God] ...Let the husband render *his* conjugal dues to *his* wife, and in the same way also the wife to *her* husband. The wife does not have power over her own body...” (vs 2-4). That’s an interesting statement because *power* come from the Greek ‘*exousia*’ that means *authority* “...over her own body...”

That would be a key Scripture to use for those who believe in abortion, because the whole premise of abortion—especially in our day an age—is when the court gave the decision that a woman has power over her own body. The Scriptures say that she doesn’t!

“...but the husband; and in the same way also, the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife” (v 4). That’s how to solve fornication and adultery; you have a good marriage, you understand.

Verse 5: “Do not deprive one another of *conjugal dues*, except it be by consent for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to fasting and prayer; and *then* come together again as one, so that Satan will not tempt you through your lack of self-control. Now I say this by permission, and not by command” (vs 5-6). There is no command that when you’re praying and fasting that you necessarily have to.

Verse 7: “For I wish *that* all men might be

even as myself...” Why would he make that statement? The Catholics would sure enough turn here and say, ‘This is where we get the authority for all the priests to be celibate. This is where we get the authority for all the virgins to remain perpetually virginous throughout their entire life, and to accept a vow of chastity.

Here is the whole key and here, for us, it has been written in Scripture very clearly to prove that no one knows the day, the time or the hour—how long or how short—Paul says:

Verse 29: “Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close...” When Paul wrote that he didn’t feel that was a mistake. Looking back on it, you would have to say that he was not correct. So therefore, some of the things that Paul says here is based upon the time being short. However, I’ve also seen ministers in this end-time say the time is short and start to lay upon the brethren a lot of things that should not be by using the same situation. So, it works both ways.

What we’re going to find, as I’ve said, that we’re going to live and walk by faith, draw close to God and develop the fruits of the Spirit so that we can do the things that are pleasing in God’s eyes. There is the key, right there! That’s why he says some of these things.

Obviously, if every man were as he was, there would be no pro-creation of children, I mean, taken to the extreme. Obviously it’s based upon the fact that they felt the time was short. Then Paul corrects himself a little bit by saying,

Verse 7: “...But each one has his own gift from God; one *is* this way, and another *is* that way. Now I say to the unmarried and to the widows *that* it is good for them if they can remain even as I *am...*” (vs 7-8)—because the time is short. Not necessarily that if you’re a widow that you should never marry.

We’re going to a wedding where this is widow and a widower. I’m sure there is someone who will say you shouldn’t marry. I remember a widower who married a 35-year-old woman when he was nearly 80. We had a little bit of defiance on his part toward us because he wanted to do so. Well, what happens with all 80-year-old men who marry 35-year-old women?

I heard a report by Dr. Dean Edell that says 85% of those who do that have heart attacks. So, what happened? *Heart attack!* Obviously, this

statement in v 8 is based upon the fact that he sincerely thought the time was short. This tells us two things"

1. there will come a time when the time is short, and this would be a good thing to follow
2. this also tells us that God clearly tells us, so there's no shame

No minister of God has to stand up and defend his errors. They make an error in prophecy and all they have to do is look here and say, 'Paul did...' I'm sorry, let's go back and see if we can understand it correctly, and it's part of the inspired Scripture.

Does the inspire Scripture in the Old Testament show the sins of David? *Sure!* I've heard people use this Scripture, v 4: "...power over her... [the wife's] own body..." and just absolutely almost destroy people with it.

I've also heard that there was a deacon in a Baptist Church that read the Scripture that one of the things that was Godly to do was to feed the poor, clothe the naked and relieve the widows. In going around and relieving the widows, he was relieving them of their sexual abstinence, and thought he was doing the will of God. He was a deacon in the church, and being a deacon he was authorized to do it. I don't know if that was the church of Gomorrah or not, but it may have been.

People will take and twist the Scriptures. We will see that. I've seen where the extremes have been carried that if you marry someone who is a whoremonger you are bound! Does God bind people to whoremongers? Does He really? *We'll see!*

Again, Paul gives himself a little way out, v 9: "But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; because it is better to marry than to burn *with sexual desire.*" Their solution was, 'Don't any man touch a woman; we are waiting on the Lord.' Now you've got all this lust going on in the mind. So, Paul says, 'No! Don't let that go on and burn.'

Verse 10: "And to those who are married I *give this* charge, *yet*, not I, but the Lord: Do not let *the* wife be separated from *her* husband. (But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband.)..." (vs 10-11). We're talking about two people who are in the Church who are baptized and know the Truth, that if there happens to be a separation, don't run off and get married again. *Be reconciled!*

"...And *the* husband is not to divorce *his* wife" (v 11). So, there's not going to be grounds for a divorce and remarriage for those truly converted in

the Church, as we have seen has happened.

And carried to an extreme, I know of two who were ministers, who when they were outside of the Church, they just decided to swap wives. Just get a divorce and 'I'll marry your wife, and you marry my wife, and we'll go on and be friends.' That is beyond my mental comprehension. There must be some screw loose up there to have that happen, but people will do goofy things!

Verse 12: "Now to the rest, I, not the Lord, say *this*: If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her." No divorce! Don't divorce her. Just because a person is a non-believer, does not mean that you divorce them. You don't say, 'You don't agree with my church and 'here's a bill of divorcement.' That doesn't work and you marry some do-do in the Church and he ends up being a goofball and you have to divorce him.

That's happened, too! I've seen the whole thing! We can have a little humor in this, but that is what has happened. So, now you have three or four people's lives destroyed!

Verse 13: "And *if* a woman has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to dwell with her, let her not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they are Holy. But if the unbelieving *husband or wife* separates, let him *or her* separate. The *believing* brother or sister is not bound in such *cases*... [Paul is saying that would not be a binding situation] ...for God has called us to peace" (vs 13-15).

- What are the grounds for divorce and re-marriage in the Bible?
- What does it mean to be *in the Lord*?
- Does that mean that both are converted?
- Does that mean that one can be converted, but accepting of the other and they are married in the name of the Lord?
- Are they then in the Lord?

I would have to conclude that they would be! If they're free to marry and if they decide to marry and one is a believer and one is not converted, but not an unbeliever, then that would be a binding marriage if they decided to marry.

You have a situation that you're not always going to have a prospective mate in a Church of God given the small numbers and the strangeness of what God's Church is.

Can converted people have terrible marriages even though they're converted? They love God, they love each other, but they fight all the time,

but they still love each other. It can be a terrible marriage, but they can still be converted.

Can non-converted people have a good marriage? Sure! Non-converted people can have good marriages! It doesn't depend, necessarily, on conversion. God will let you do what you choose to do. When you choose to do it—if it's in the area of good or bad—it's going to go good or bad and you've made the decision.

We had a terrible tragedy in Texas where these people were coming out of camps on busses. They came to the river and made the decision to cross the river. There was a terrible tragedy that happened because they chose to cross the river. God didn't cause the tragedy, nor did He necessarily intervene to lessen it. However, it wasn't a total wipeout. Most of them were saved.

Likewise in a marriage. If you are baptized and in the Church, and you go ahead and treat your mate to a living hell, then you're responsible for what you're doing. God isn't going to relieve you of that necessarily so that you can run off and marry someone else. We'll see what the grounds for divorce are.

I want you to understand the word 'porneia,' because there are people who will say that the word 'porneia' is translated *fornication* and only involves sexual activity before marriage, and that any sexual activity after marriage is adultery.

Matthew 5:27: “You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you, everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (vs 27-28).

These are the ones, 2-Peter 2:14: “Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, *they are engaged in* seducing unstable souls, having a heart trained in *lustful* cravings—cursed children.”

Those are the ones who just wander about and are whoremongers. They are cursed children, absolutely! All you have to do is just look at the situation with homosexuals and AIDS. Would you say they're cursed? *Yes, they are cursed children* whose eyes are full of lust and adultery and 'porneia.' Some of them so many sexual partners that they've totally lost track, in the hundreds. They are completely obsessed with it.

So, Jesus is showing that it's in the mind; Matthew 5:29: “So then, if your right eye shall cause you to offend, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is better for you that one of your members should perish than *that* your whole body be cast into Gehenna.” Some ministers should have read that before they started out on their little escapades! They

would have been a whole lot better off.

Verse 30: “And if your right hand shall cause you to offend, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is better for you that one of your members should perish than *that* your whole body be cast into Gehenna. It was also said *in ancient times*, ‘Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.’ But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except for the cause of sexual immorality... [‘porneia’—any kind of sexual uncleanness] ...causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery” (vs 30-32).

We live in such an evil and adulteress generation that it's incredible! It's all going to come back on them.

There can be divorce for the cause of sexual uncleanness, which brings up the problem of what if the guy was a total idiot and whoremonger and never told the gal he was marrying what he was and what he had done.

In one case that I had to deal with several years ago, the fellow had gonorrhea and sexual diseases and he was going to marry this nice, sweet young thing and never tell her anything about it. There has to be that disclosure.

What if after they're married and the guy or woman goes out and just lays with everything that comes along? *You can put them away! And the marriage is loosed because that is sexual uncleanness!*

Matthew 19:3 “Then the Pharisees came to Him and tempted Him, saying to Him, ‘Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?’” You can read about the cause (Deut. 24). It's some uncleanness. Does that mean that if she burns your biscuits you can put her away? *Some would!*

What about wife-beating? *Yes, you get into that area, too!* If there's great bodily harm. The husband can say that the marriage is binding until death. People are crazy! Someone would read the Scripture and say that they want to get out of this marriage and go and commit some adultery and come back and confess it.

I've had all these things brought up to me. I had one man bring up that 12 years ago, before you baptized us, 'my wife and I were ready to get a divorce' and then we came into the Church. I said, 'That's your answer.' He wanted to be loosed from her, and he said, 'I'll find a minister who will.' So, he did; he called around and found one who would. As it ended up, he became a whoremonger. His wife ended up staying the Church and being faithful and loyal and taking care of the children. He was a total

walking disaster, because he was cursed for doing what he did! You can't put a wife for every cause

Verse 4: "But He answered them, saying, 'Have you not read...'" It's interesting that Jesus uses that many times. Here are these guys who are supposed to know the Scriptures. What He's really saying is 'you have not read.'

"...that He Who made *them* from the beginning made them male and female" (v 4). This is telling us that God made them male and female for the purpose of marriage.

I need to interject right here: There are more and more women having children outside of marriage to the tune about 22% nationwide at the present time, which is about 80% of minorities. That means that out of that they are being burdened down with built-in poverty. God designed the husband/wife family unit for not only the children and love, but also for economic well-being. Any system that does not have economic well-being in their community or nation... Look at any nation that's on the face of the earth. When you get into a tribal/communal type of thing like they have in many of these primitive countries and peoples, you have degradation, demon-worship and all that sort of thing. No one knows whose kid is whose. That's why God created the family unit, and it is a good thing! It is good!

Verse 5: "And said, 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and **the two shall become one flesh**?' So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh...." (vs 5-6). This is how God looks upon a marriage. Even though they are two individuals, **God views them as one flesh!**

That is why in the marriage estate there is never venereal disease, providing neither of them had it previously, because the one flesh unites! Therefore, that's why I believe that venereal disease comes with gross promiscuity, because the chemical, spiritual and physical intermixing of so many peoples *creates* the disease and hence is passed on. That's my own theory of it.

You have to back and see that Adam and Eve were pure. If they were pure then you come down the line and ask: How did all these terrible diseases start? Where did they come from? I think it's because of all of the chemical mixtures between peoples; everybody's own body chemistry is different. You can reach a point where there is an irritation and you're going to start it off and it is going to develop into whatever! That's my little soapbox on venereal disease.

"...Therefore, what God has joined together,

let not man separate" (v 6). I submit to you that God is not necessarily talking about just converted people. How many converted people was Jesus talking to? *Actually, none!* He was quoting Scripture that goes way back. Are there people in the world that don't know God, but are bound by God in their marriage? *Sure! Yes, they are!*

I heard one minister say, 'How can God be in every marriage in the world?'

- Does God know when a sparrow falls? *Yes!*
- Could God have an involvement in every marriage if He so chooses to do so? *Yes!*
- Does that mean they're converted? *No!*

Someone would say, 'Would God honor a marriage of two natives who had a pagan witchdoctor marry them? If they, in their own hearts, intended to stay together and be loyal and faithful to one another, then are they obeying a Law of God? Though a witchdoctor did it? *Yes, they are!* When a person obeys a Law of God, do they have a blessing because of obedience? *Yes, they do!* They may not be blessed in everything they do, simply because of the country they are living in, or because they're breaking other laws of God, but in that one thing they are blessed.

Can you go to some countries where they have fidelity in marriage? And they have long life and fine children? And they are no more Christian and a tree? *Yes, because God is no respecter of persons!* He's talking about a whole general thing.

Verse 7. They said to Him, 'Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?' He said to them, 'Because of your hardheartedness, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.... [it was not God's intention] ...And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except *it be* for sexual immorality, and shall marry another, is committing adultery; and the one who marries her who has been divorced is committing adultery'" (vs 7-9).

You have to start out with a binding marriage in the first place. If you have anything that makes the marriage non-binding—which then would be fornication, adultery, homosexuality, anything before marriage, and any of those things during marriage—then the marriage is loosed. And loosed upon that marriage when they find or have the knowledge that that is so.

If after that they still accept them, then you live with it. Now people's morals are so loose that it's turned around the other way, and live together for a few years and see how it goes, then we'll be married. A lot of them now realize that after a

couple of years that the thing isn't going to work so they go after palimony. It's screwy!

God gave marriage to human beings, not to the Church. You would have to conclude that Adam and Eve were not in the Church. That was a command given to them to go after all the progeny of human beings. It was given to mankind.

Deuteronomy 24:1: “When a man has taken a wife and married her, and it comes to pass that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her...” The Jews had great debates. Does this mean for any little thing that she did? For any cause? That's what they were arguing about with Jesus. Or that this had to do with some sort of sexual uncleanness. It doesn't make it clear here, but it says:

“...then let him write her a bill of divorce and put *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she has departed from his house, she goes and becomes another man's; and the latter husband hates her and writes her a bill of divorce and puts *it* in her hand and sends her out of his house; or if the latter husband dies, the one who took her to be his wife, her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife...” (vs 1-4)—and start the stupidity all over again.

Some people become very bizarre in their behavior. They will desire to marry and hold a woman in bondage just to have power, having nothing to do with love. There are those cases, and under this, this would apply. But he can't go back and intimidate her and say, ‘Come back’ again.

“...after she is defiled, **for that is an abomination before the LORD**. And you shall not cause the land to sin which the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance” (v 4). In other words, where there's a lot of divorce and re-marriage it causes the land to sin. When there is sin it affects everything!

Verse 5: “When a man has taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any duty. He shall be free at home one year and shall cheer up his wife whom he has taken.” I might add to cheer him up, too. At that time the man had the final decision.

I'm sure that when you get into the other societies, like in the Greek and Roman cultures, I'm sure there was more equality at that time, so women would put away their husbands. Then, at that point, you have to make a decision on how to handle it. That's why Paul mentions about ‘putting away their wives.’

All they had to do is write a bill of divorcement, but I am sure—because you read about

the law and judges that were there—that she had to go to the court to get the official seal on it. Then it became official, but not necessarily go to court. This is what you call no-fault divorce in this particular case.

Because there is the absence of a church ceremony, does this mean that the marriage is not binding? *No, it doesn't mean that it's not binding!* It means that if two people decide in their own minds that they're going to be married and there's not a preacher around. You kneel down and say, ‘Lord, we come and ask You to marry us. We're married! Amen!’ They're married! Two witnesses are for legal purposes. Before God they are married.

There are some people who really feel strange about the law. They don't want to go and take out a wedding license. They say, ‘We're just going to go out here and go before God and accept each other, and we're bound. We both understand that it's for life.’ They're bound before God; that's a binding relationship.

They don't require AIDS-testing for marriage, yet. But I tell you what, I would absolutely guarantee you that if, in this age, you had any inkling that the person was promiscuous and refused to take a test for AIDS, you better set your love way back up on the shelf and walk away. Because your love is not love! Maybe your love is just infatuation and anticipation of sexual gratification. That is not necessarily love.

- Is a marriage binding only upon people in the Church?
- Does ‘in the Lord’ mean that two people have to be baptized?
- What if you assume that because a person is baptized that they're converted?
- Are they necessarily converted?

Romans 7:1: “Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law)... [not *the* Law necessarily] ...that the Law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?” This has nothing to do with being converted or not converted.

Do the Laws of God have dominion over people as long as they live? *Yes, they do, irrespective of persons!*

Verse 2: “For the woman who is married is bound by law to the husband as long as he is living...” This is where the Bible teaches that marriage is binding until broken by death, with the exception of ‘porneia’ where there is sexual uncleanness. What if you go along and you have a wonderful marriage for ten years and then you mate comes home and has a venereal disease, because you didn't know ‘fooling around’?

I won't use the thing of AIDS, because by the time you find out the person has AIDS and you're married to him, chances are you already have it. Does God bind you to it? *or* Do you have the right, before God, to put away that individual? Man or woman, because of their breaking of the vows of the marriage? *When you break it, then God gives you the right to loose it!* However, you don't just go along and say, 'I want to marry this woman over here, she's got lots of money...' *or* 'she's really a good looking woman and you're an old 'battle axe and you're not as good looking as when I married you ten years ago.'

It doesn't say that you can put them away, because they gain or lose weight, or because they happen to be pretty or ugly, or whatever. *No! There is a specific cause having to do with sexual immorality*, which looses a marriage, because after all marriage is for the purpose of sex that is blessed by God for love, pro-creation of children and for the two to become one flesh.

Otherwise, you could have just all kinds of different roommates and no sexual activity involved at all. Well, you can have roommates, but God did not create the marriage estate to have roommates.

If everything is right concerning the marriage, that marriage is bound by law until death.

"...but if the husband should die, she is released from **the law that bound her to the husband**" (v 2). That's an interesting phrase. So, therefore it's okay for widows and widowers to marry.

Go back and read what it was for the priests. The priest could only marry a woman who was a Levite, if his wife died. Then there were certain other restrictions for physical appearance and things like that: they couldn't marry a humpback or a dwarf or someone who had something wrong with one of their limbs and so forth, because they had to be unblemished before God and waiting on the service of the temple.

Verse 3: "So then, if she should marry another man as long as the husband is living, she shall be called an adulteress..." There are probably plenty of adulteress unions around.

"...but if the husband should die she is free from the law *that bound her to the husband*, so that she is no longer an adulteress if she is married to another man" (v 3). That's clearly talking about the marriage estate.

This is why Paul said that if the marriage separates, they are to remain unmarried or reconciled. He is talking about a binding marriage in

the first place. Now then, he talks about the unbeliever: Don't divorce them because they are non-believer. They are sanctified; the husband sanctifies the wife who is a non-believer, and the wife sanctifies the husband who is a non-believer.

1-Corinthians 7:15: "But if the unbelieving husband or wife separates, let him or her separate. The *believing* brother or sister is not bound in such cases; for God has called us to peace. But how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband?... [the unbeliever] ...Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife? Let each one walk only as **God has apportioned to him**... [everyone; showing that there are individual circumstances involved] ...according as the Lord has called him; and this is what I command in all the churches. Was anyone called being circumcised? Do not let him be uncircumcised. Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Do not let him be circumcised. *For* circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; rather, the keeping of God's commandments *is essential*" (vs 15-19).

That's what is the important thing in life, not the other things that we have mentioned here.

Verse 20: "Let each one abide in the calling in which he was called. Were you called *as* a slave? Don't let yourself fret. But if you are able to become free, by all means do so" (vs 20-21). Go ahead and get it, it's all right! If you can become a free person, go ahead.

Verse 22: "For he who has been called in *the Lord*, *though he be* a slave, is a free man in *the Lord*. In the same way also, he who has been called as a free man is a slave of Christ; *for* you were bought with a price. Do not become slaves of man. Brethren, in whatever *state* each one was called, let him remain in that with God. Now concerning virgins, I do not have a command from *the Lord*; but I give *my* judgment, as one who has received mercy from *the Lord* to be faithful. Therefore, I think this *judgment* is good because of the present distress: that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is. Have you been bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed..." (vs 22-27).

That shows that there was divorce, otherwise why would he say, "Do not seek to be loosed..."

"...Have you been loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. However, if you have married, you have not sinned..." (vs 27-28). Even though he thought the time was short, he still gave a way out so that people wouldn't be living under the condemnation of sin.

"...and if a virgin has married, she has not

sinned. Yet, those *who marry* shall have distress in the flesh, but I *wish* to spare you” (v 28).

You would have to conclude, and over the long haul there is trouble in the flesh. There’s trouble just living! There’s trouble in the flesh, just ask any woman who has had children. I know why when we’re all old and gray, when it’s all over and done with, because after we get done rearing all these children, we’re exhausted.

Verse 29: “Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close. For the *time that* remains, let those who have wives be as if they did not have wives; and those who weep, as if they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as if they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as if they did not possess; and those who use this world, as if they did not use *it* as their own; for this world in its present form is passing away. Now I desire you to be without anxiety. The man who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord. But he who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how he may please *his* wife” (vs 29-33). Unless he’s consumed in his own desire for marriage.

Verse 34: There is *also* a difference in *attitude* between a wife and a virgin. An unmarried woman is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be Holy both in body and *in* spirit. But she who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how she may please *her* husband.... [and her own children] ...Now I am telling you this for your own benefit; not to place a snare in your way, but to *show you* what *is* suitable, *so that you may be* devoted to the Lord without distraction. But if anyone thinks *that his* behavior toward his virgin is not right, and if she is in *the prime of life*, and so *thinks* he ought to *marry*, let him do as he desires; he is not sinning. Let them marry. However, he does well who remains steadfast in *his* heart, not having the need *to marry*, but has control over his own desire, and has determined in his *own* heart to keep himself chaste. So then, the one who marries does well, but the one who does not marry does better. A wife is bound by law for as long a time as her husband may live. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she desires, (***but only in the Lord***). However, she is happier if she continues to abide by my judgment; and I think *that* I also have God’s Spirit *in this*” (vs 34-40).

What is “...in *the Lord*”? If two people are bound by God in a marriage situation, which we’ve just read, they are bound by God! That is *a binding in the Lord!* Whether a person is not in the Church or in the Church, if they divorce and marry another, they are committing adultery. That is *in the Law of the Lord!*

- Does the phrase “...in *the Lord*” mean that a person has to be baptized?
- If someone in the Church marries someone who is not baptized, are they a disbeliever?
- What is a dis-believer? *or* an unbeliever?

It would be one who:

- does not believe in God
- does not believe in the sanctity of marriage
- does not believe in doing the things that are reasonably right concerning the things in the Bible

If they didn’t believe that and you married someone like that, you’re in for a lot of trouble. But what if you have someone that God has not yet called, and he’s in the category of ‘who knows whether you will save him or not’—and he does believe in the existence of God, he honors God, he has in his lifetime followed the basic laws of God, and say he meets someone in the Church, and there’s no one else around for either one of them to marry—would it be a sin if they married? That’s the question. *No, it would not be a sin if they married! It would not be a sin!*

What if the person in the Church says that they see that they’re very attracted to each other, and ‘it would be good if we got married’? ‘However, I want to sit down and explain to you about my life. My life is going to be dedicated to God above everything else, and I want you to understand what that is going to require. I want you to know that this is how we believe and what we’re going to follow.’

And the person says, ‘That’s a good idea, and I believe in the same basic things; however, I’ve never gone to church and have never been a church person. You can worship God, you can keep all the things of God and anyway that I step out of line you let me know. I’m not going to eat pork, shrimp, lobster or that kind of thing. I understand that going into the marriage.’

I would say in that sense that that is sufficiently in tune, that if you asked them to be married and asked God to bind them, that they are in fact *in the Lord!* If you ask God to bind them as husband and wife, they are *in the Lord!*

Hopefully, the person who is not necessarily baptized will some time down the road be baptized. What other way can you do some of these things? The question really remains, does *in the Lord* mean that you both come to God and recognized that this marriage is under God? *or* Does it mean that they are in the Church? It doesn’t say *in the Church*, it says, *in*

the Lord!

Since God's Church is small, and even in one place it says 'where two or three are gathered together in My name, there will I be in the midst of you,' what are you going to do to find a mate? Be you young or old? What if you're in your 20s but your folks absolutely insist that you marry someone in the Church and all there are, are the most undesirable things to you that you can ever imagine that walked the face of the earth? So, your parents drive you out of the Church because you won't marry someone in the Church, and there is no one that God has provided in the Church.

Could God provide someone attending the Church to be your wife or your husband? Who later could be converted by God? *Yes!*

The biggest problems to doctrines within the Church were the manmade rules concerning the doctrines, which drove people away. When you get down to it and if you explain to them that God is love and is concerned for them and what we do is what God wants us to do; we want to be loving and loyal in our marriage, we want to eat clean and proper food, we want to worship God on the days that He says so, and govern our lives by the Laws of God.

Is there anything wrong with that? If it would have been put that way, it would have been a whole lot different, and I suppose that there would be a whole lot more people in the Church.

Let's take this another step further: Look at what the Jews and the Catholics do. If you're Catholic you can only marry a Catholic. What do they do, they browbeat them to become Catholic. But do they believe it? The same way with being a Jew!

Is that person in the Church? They may attend; they may be there; they may be there bodily but not be there in soul, spirit and mind. Are they in the Church because they physically attend? *Not necessarily!*

So, the key thing that's important in a marriage is what is in the heart toward the people involved or who are getting married, because they have to live with each other. Whether baptized or not, they are still bound by God!

In the Lord, to me when you believe the whole Bible, is that you have to marry someone who believes in God. If you don't, you might as well expect to be betrayed the first day out of the shoot.

- obviously, you have decided that your marriage is going to be binding until death

- obviously, you have decided that you're going to follow the laws of God

Especially the one who is baptized, and the other one says that's fine with me, I will do the same thing with you. As far as I'm concerned, I see nothing in the Scripture which prevents that from being a binding marriage before God.

Whether it's happy or not depends on how they deal with each other. Just because a person is married, bound by God, does not guarantee happiness. *In the Lord* that they have *asked God to bind the marriage*.

Those who were casting out demons in the name of Jesus, and the disciples asked, 'Lord, should we stop them.' He said, 'No, those who are not against us, are for us.' So, the same principle would apply here. Though a person may not be a disciple of God, as long as they are for God, they are not against Him. So therefore, you can have a marriage *in the Lord* under those circumstances. Surely you can!

Can a person, by the constraint of marrying within the Church, be constrained into marrying someone he really doesn't want to marry? *Yes!* So therefore, down the road—and there are going to be rocky spots in the Church—guess what's going to happen? *The marriage is all ca-blooy!* They're looking for that one escape hatch that since the Church is not now what it claimed to be, therefore, 'I'm not stuck with this person.' And run off and break the vow anyway, because their whole intent of getting into it was really not pure before God, but only a matter of convenience and necessity.

This modern thing of love is the only thing for marriage. Look at how many marriage have fallen apart because they were only based on love. Love was not enduring. Whereas, you have to consider all these other things.

Unless it is approached properly, you can have problems within the Church, without the Church, based upon having the mate selected for you, or based upon 'falling in love.' Everyone of those things has a certain set of problems inherent in it. When you have to take each of those circumstances as they come along, and you have to handle it on an individual basis. As Paul say, 'Each one as God has called them.' However God handles the circumstances in your particular life, that's what you have to deal with.

Obviously, if you're the only one who is a Christian in a certain area, and you have no other place, and you've scoured as far as you can to try and find someone, and there's no one to marry, what

you have to do is ask God to provide the one. Who knows, God can convert them at a later time. Or maybe because of your behavior they will be.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Corinthians 7:1-7, 29, 7-8, 4-15
- 2) Matthew 5:27-28
- 3) 2 Peter 2:14
- 4) Matthew 5:27-32
- 5) Matthew 19:3-9
- 6) Deuteronomy 24:1-5
- 7) Romans 7:1-3
- 8) 1 Corinthians 7:15-40

FRC: bo
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