

## "Getting Smart about Remarriage"

### I Corinthians 7

#### I. Introduction

- A. The Holy Spirit knows exactly where to tinker in our lives, even when we don't
- B. Think of God's principles as protection
  - 1. These are not prohibitions to make your life miserable
  - 2. They are meant to protect what God invented and designed for your benefit
- C. Paul wrote I Corinthians for two reasons:
  - 1. To address problems in the church
  - 2. To answer the new believers' questions
- D. The New Testament principle: all those properly divorced can get remarried
  - 1. A biblical divorce brings with it the biblical permission to remarry
  - 2. When a divorce occurs for the following reasons, remarriage is legitimate:
    - a. When a spouse dies
    - b. When divorced prior to salvation
    - c. When an unbeliever deserts the marriage
    - d. When sexual immorality has prevailed

#### II. When a Spouse Dies (vv. 8-9, 39)

- A. "Till death do us part"
  - 1. Once death has occurred and they are parted, then they are free to get remarried, with one caveat—"in the Lord" (v. 39)
  - 2. There is a biblical precedent for this: Abraham and Keturah (see Genesis 25:1)
- B. Every human, especially the Christian, longs to be loved and to love someone

#### III. When Divorced Prior to Salvation (vv. 8-9)

- A. The Greek word Paul used for *unmarried* is *agamos*—which literally means *without a marriage*
  - 1. This word is used only four times in the New Testament, and all four references can be found in this chapter
  - 2. It could mean someone who has never been married, but Paul also used the word *virgin* to refer to someone who is young and unmarried
- B. Paul used this word to refer to those who were married and divorced before salvation
  - 1. Until we know God, we don't know God's will for our lives
  - 2. Whatever is in your past, when you come to Christ, you are made new—*kainos*
    - a. 2 Corinthians 5:17
    - b. Romans 8:28

#### IV. When an Unbeliever Deserts the Marriage (vv. 10-15)

- A. Not all of the Corinthian believers fit into those first two categories
  - 1. After becoming believers, many found themselves unequally yoked with an unbeliever
  - 2. 2 Corinthians 6:14

- B. Verses 10 and 12 can be misinterpreted
  - 1. In verse 10, Paul said, "Yet not I but the Lord"; this is a reference to the fact that Jesus had spoken directly to this issue
  - 2. In verse 12, he was simply saying that Jesus didn't directly teach on this particular issue
- C. There were apparently unsaved spouses who were upset that their partners had come to Christ
  - 1. Some unbelievers wanted out of those marriages
  - 2. Romans 12:18
  - 3. Matthew 10:34
- D. The unbelieving spouse is not automatically saved because they're married to a Christian
  - 1. The believing spouse is the influencer for salvation
  - 2. Just one saved person in the home can start a chain reaction; the gospel has now penetrated that household
  - 3. The conversation between God and Abraham concerning Sodom
    - a. Genesis 18:16-33
    - b. Thousands of evil people would have been spared for the sake of ten sanctifying people
- E. The best thing for an unbeliever to have is a believing spouse as an influence, although it's not easy for the believer in that situation
- V. When Sexual Immorality Has Prevailed (vv. 10-11; Matthew 19)
  - A. This refers to continual, unrepentant sexual immorality
    - 1. Matthew 19:9: the exception clause
    - 2. Every state in the US, except South Dakota, allows for no-fault divorces; people are getting divorced for any reason
    - 3. Stay married, work through the problems, and you'll show the world that God's plan for marriage works
  - B. If you've been divorced without the presence of unrepentant sexual immorality, there are two options:
    - 1. Stay unmarried
    - 2. Reconcile with your spouse
  - C. Even when sin prevails, God's highest heart is reconciliation
    - 1. Hosea and Gomer
    - 2. God used this as an example of what He was doing with regard to His relationship with prodigal Israel
- VI. Conclusion
  - A. If you are involved in a sinful relationship or have had an unbiblical divorce:
    - 1. Remember what we are dealing with—the gospel
    - 2. Psalm 103:8-12
  - B. God is faithful to forgive
    - 1. 1 John 1:9
    - 2. The past is the past—accept His grace and forgiveness and move forward
  - C. As a married couple, decide to work things out, to honor God through your marriage

**Cross references:** Genesis 18:16-33; 25:1; Psalm 103:8-12; Matthew 10:34; 19:9; Romans 8:28; 12:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 6:14; 1 John 1:9

**Greek words:** agamos, kainos

**Topic:** remarriage

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