

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Peter 3:1-9**.
- B. The Bible Question Box statement (#8) read: **Please prepare a sermon on some of the comforts of the Scriptures concerning those who are married.** Another statement (#9) read: **Please talk about how Christians are to reach out to divorced people.**
- C. This sermon is NOT about the doctrinal implications of divorce, and remarriage.
- D. Today's lesson IS to look at several passages of scripture that deal with the marriage relationship. This lesson is always applicable because no matter the time, people are getting married, being divorced from marriage, and some feeling the separation of death in marriage.

## I. ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE MARRIED--THE WIVES.

- A. See **1Pet. 3:1-6**.
  - 1. These are special instructions to Xian wives who have husbands who are not members of the church. Peter has given explicit instructions as to how Xian women are to behave in this situation.
  - 2. Preaching, nagging, begging, etc., are not productive in winning the non-Xian to X.
  - 3. But a consistent lifestyle of godliness and service will actually be more productive in trying to convert one's unbelieving mate.
  - 4. That which the husband should see is found in **3:2, 4**.
- B. See Eph. 5:22-24.

**Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.**

  - 1. Subjection is a Biblical topic. Everyone is to subject to the authority of X. Therefore it should not be a strange thing for Paul to ask that wives be subject to their husbands.
  - 2. Wives who are actively seeking how to better be in subjection to X will also be those who will most easily be in subjection to their husbands.
  - 3. God has set His arrangement for the home and in that arrangement the husband has been given the responsibility in the home.
  - 4. Wives who are domineering, bossy, etc., are not following God's plan. The home will be more peaceful and more spiritual when the wife assumes the role God has designed for her.
  - 5. Wives, there are two things you can do for your husbands and they will worship the ground you walk on. Ask me in private, and I'll tell you what they are. If you know and he doesn't it is more advantageous for you!
- C. See 1Cor. 7:1-6.

Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. **2** But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. **3 Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 But this I say by way of concession, not of command.**

  - 1. Marriage is a social, spiritual, and sexual relationship. Marriage gives people sexual access without guilt or sin. Marriage is the place for children to be raised in a family atmosphere.
  - 2. It is the mutual responsibility for husband and wife to please each other sexually.
  - 3. Communication between husband and wife in this area is of extreme importance. Tell your spouse how you feel about sexual matters so that each of you may be satisfied and not tempted to sin.

D. See 1Cor. 7:12-14.

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, let him not send her away. **13 And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, let her not send her husband away.** **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.

1. Divorce is not the answer. As long as a mixed marriage (Xian/non-Xian) can exist peacefully and without spiritual harm to the believer it is to continue.
2. While a mixed marriage is not a spiritually ideal situation, this alone is not ground for breaking up the home. First Peter 3:1-6 would be a good commentary here.

II. **ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE MARRIED--THE HUSBANDS.**

A. See 1Pet. 3:7.

You husbands likewise, **live with your wives in an understanding way**, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

1. If the woman is the "weaker vessel" that makes the man the "weak vessel." Husbands are not to be "lord over" their wives, but live with their wives in an understanding way.
2. Husbands, your wife will look at life differently than you do. Not everything will be seen just as you see it, according to your wife. You must learn to see life through her eyes, and learn to appreciate her concept of your relationship.
3. She will see problems, successes, relationships differently. You must work hard to listen to her and truly hear what she is saying. Find out what is important to your wife.

B. See Eph. 5:25, 28.

Husbands, **love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;... 28** So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;...

1. The husband's love for his wife is not tyrannical or head-strong, it is self-sacrificing.
2. The husband's love for his wife is one of servant-leadership and not a dictatorship.
3. Christ knows and blesses the church exactly how it is in need. Good husbands know and give their wives exactly what they need.

C. See again 1Cor. 7:3-5.

**Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. 4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time...**

1. Men, women do not want to be used, they want to be romanced.
2. Gentlemen, love your wife, don't just make love to her.

D. See again 1Cor. 7:12.

**...if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, let him not send her away.**

1. Divorce is not the answer when one is married to a non-believer.
2. Do all you can to be a good husband and keep the marriage together.

III. **ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE DIVORCED.**

A. See **Jn. 4:13-30**.

1. Jesus spoke to/ministered to a woman who was married and divorced five times. She was currently living in a relationship that was not sanctioned by marriage. I'm afraid many of us today would not even bother with this woman. But Jesus did.
2. Jesus wanted her to realize that she could find everlasting life in Him. He was the water that could truly quench her thirst. She was obviously longing for something that she thought marriage could satisfy. Her real longing was spiritual in nature and truly finding God in her life.
3. May we, like Jesus, encourage those about us, who are struggling in divorced and separated situations, to seek the Lord and to worship Him. We may not have all the answers for their

particular situation, but the Lord does. One of the best things a person who is hurting from a divorce can do is keep their relationship with the Lord strong.

B. See Jn. 8:7-11.

<7 But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." 8 And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And when they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst. 10 And straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" 11 And she said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "**Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more.**">

1. As terrible as the sin of adultery is, Jesus wanted the crowd to realize that everyone is a sinner in God's eyes.
2. Let us not be so quick to condemn, because others could be quick to condemn us.
3. Remember to hate the sin, but love the sinner. This is especially true with those who have to live with the shame of things like murder, adultery, divorce, and fornication.

C. See 1Cor. 6:9.

Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,

1. The reason I point out this text is that divorce and adultery are forgivable sins.
2. I'm not going to get involved with the sorting out of who can divorce and remarry in this lesson. My point is that those who were in that situation because Xians in Corinth and we have a responsibility to minister to those people.

D. See 1Cor. 7:26-27.

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. 27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

1. Because of the "present distress" in Corinth Paul wanted people to remain in the calling in which they were called (1Cor. 7:20).
2. If mistakes and sins were made in the past it might be better to remain in your present marital condition than changing it and regretting it later.

#### IV. ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE WIDOWED.

A. See 1Tim. 5:14.

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

1. Once a person enjoys the blessings of marriage and then loses those blessings through the death of mate, Paul argues that it is spiritually good for the younger widows to get married again.
2. It is better to marry, than to burn with passion (1Cor. 7:9).

B. See 1Cor. 7:39-40.

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.

1. Widows are free to remarry--only in the Lord.
2. It makes good sense that if one is to enter into the marriage relationship for a second time, that it needs to be with someone who is eligible to be married and of like precious faith.

C. A reading of 1Tim. 5:1-16 is a must for Elders, because there are cases where the church has a responsibility to widows and their daily care. Families need to be familiar with the text so that when they have such a situation the church will not be unnecessarily burdened.

#### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

A. Everyone needs encouragement, especially those affected by the marriage relationship.

B. May we encourage:

1. The men of our congregation to be better husbands.
2. The women of our congregation to be better wives.

3. The single and divorced of our congregation to worship and serve the Lord.
  4. The widows of our congregation to do what is right in the sight of God.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.