

# CHRISTIAN HOME IN AN UNCHRISTIAN WORLD

by

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## CHAPTER 4

### THE PHYSICAL SIDE OF MARRIAGE

#### "Marriage is Honorable in All"

It has been said that marriage is the only place where one plus one equals one.

This is GOD's design for marriage. **"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh"** (Genesis 2:24).

GOD Himself established the marriage union. He designed it, and at the close of the day pronounced everything He had done "very good." The physical union of a man and a woman in the bonds of marriage was established by GOD before the fall of man, and the fall had nothing to do with the sexual union. I emphasize this because many I have talked to have not realized this and have been living under mistaken concepts.

Since GOD is the author of intimacy and of the marriage union, I trust we are all mature in our thinking in regard to it. We need to have a wholesome attitude toward it for this is not something dirty, but holy. What GOD has created and sanctified, do not thou call unclean.

GOD created us male and female. He established the marriage union so the man would leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife. There was to be a "leaving" and then a "cleaving." One basic relationship -- that of the family -- was to be broken, and then an entirely new relationship was to be established. The new relationship was in no way a part of the old relationship. Mother and dad are now out of the picture.

The parents are only guests when they come to this new home. They are "honored guests" because of their parental relationship, but still guests. They have no right to give anything more than advice -- and then only when asked. If any ties are held on either the wife's or husband's side, the in-laws become outlaws to this new family unit.

Not only did the Lord create sex and the marriage relationship, but CHRIST Himself honored it with His presence in John 2 at the marriage feast, and honored it still further by performing the

first of his miracles there (John 2:11).

When we attend a function, our very presence at it causes us to sanction it. The Lord could sanction nothing but what was holy and true and right. So it is that the writer of Hebrews says, "**Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed**" i.e., the marriage bed, "**undefiled**" (Hebrews 13:4).

But what is holy and good, Satan will seek to misuse and pervert. He has certainly worked in this area just the same as in all other areas of GOD's creation. But it is not sex that is wrong, but the wrong use or misuse that is wrong. This is why the writer of Hebrews continues, "**but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.**" Sex is wrong outside the bonds that GOD has established.

Why speak publicly on such a subject as sex?

First of all, this is a part of "**all Scripture,**" and "**man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God**" (Matthew 4:4). While a person may read passages in his own home, he may not understand what he reads just as we shall see in I Corinthians 7 in a moment. It is, therefore, necessary to expose and teach what Scripture says upon this very important subject.

Everyone of you should know what the Scriptures teach in this regard, because you will have the opportunity to counsel not only your own children, but other young people who would never come to me [or to this site] for counseling.

Furthermore, while I could talk to our young people individually, I find that there are older ones who have never had any correct teaching in this area and would be completely overlooked apart from church instruction. Many of us who grow up with wrong attitudes as well as ideas in this area even as we do in other areas, and the only thing that can correct these misconceptions is the Word of GOD.

Finally, as I teach you what is written in I Corinthians and I Thessalonians, I do so realizing that this was written to be publicly read to the church in their own language will full understanding of its significance and its meaning. Consequently, I make no apology for speaking on this subject. If I can spare one person, young or old, from wrong attitudes, ideas or actions, it will be worth it all.

Let us go back to our starting point. Man was created a triunity of body, soul, and spirit, and the person who is saved today has these three capacities. There, the marriage of two believers should be the uniting of the two in all three areas. They should be united spiritually, socially, and physically.

We have spoken about the former two areas, and are now speaking about the third. However, besides our being a trichotomy, we are a personality. Personality is composed of intellect, emotion and will. This is the area where many problems arise between two people. There are personality conflicts because the couple is not one in intellect and/or emotion and/or will.

A particular problem may arise in any area and it affects every other area. For instance, a Christian couple may not agree on how much money to give to the Lord through the church. One "thinks" one thing, and another "thinks" something else. The problem is not resolved through communication at all. When the couple speaks about the subject, it is with their "emotions" being involved. What they "will" to do is, therefore, not one. There is no unity between them whatever.

Even though this problem was in the spiritual area, it affects the social area of human fellowship between the two of them, and it affects the physical side also.

We find then an important principle.

Physical unity is the result of spiritual and social unity and a oneness in personality.

There are no exceptions. Physical union can never establish a oneness if that oneness does not already exist in the spiritual and social relationships of the marriage.

Furthermore, the unity of the physical is directly related to the unity of the spiritual and social.

All of this is GOD's established laws of creation and there is no way we can circumvent them. GOD can make this aspect of marriage a oneness beyond anything thought possible, but it is conditional upon a oneness in other areas.

Dr. Paul R. Bauman told his students at Biola that his mother gave him this advice when he went away to school: "Son, before you marry, be sure you find a bride to whom you are spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically mated." What good advice this is. She had added a fourth element to the three we have discussed.

SPIRITUALLY -- The same devotion and consecration to the Lord.

*[\*\*\* BBB: It is good to pause here a moment and state something very important. A saved person must NEVER, under any circumstances, marry an unsaved person. There is no reason to expect or hope for GOD to bless such an union - as it is consummated in direct rebellion to the revealed will of GOD. GOD does not allow exceptions to any of his rules. It is foolhardy to expect GOD to bless a bad situation.*

*[Yet, it is also foolish for a young saved person to marry another believer -- if that other believer is not in perfect alliance with him or her on matters pertaining to their Christian walk. It would do no good for a Fundamental Bible-believing Christian to marry a saved Charismatic, or a saved anything. The truth of I Corinthians 6:14 asks "**how can two walk together except they be agreed?**" The essential starting place for that agreement is "The Faith," or "system of religious beliefs".*

*[A staunch believer in the truthfulness and veracity of the authorized King James Version that marries a Christian that is a Bible-corrector is also going to find turmoil in their lives. No, you can not separate any element from the "except they be agreed."*

*[And unfortunately - too many young people are willing to overlook these in their prospective mates - simply because there are so few godly, committed members of the opposite sex available*

*(in their opinion). Young person - they are most definitely out there and GOD will bring the right person to you - it is just that you are not willing to make the commitment as you ought to be "approved of GOD." Selah.]*

INTELLECTUALLY -- The same mental capacity, not necessarily schooling.

[\*\*\* Wisdom]

SOCIALLY -- The same standing on a social level where both may feel at ease among the same people.

PHYSICALLY -- That you have found the right one, the only one, the one for whom you would give your life.

*[\*\*\*BBB: - Unfortunately, in the world in which we live in today, the order of these are REVERSED.*

*[First, physical attraction. "Wow! She's/He's hot!" In this are we any different than animals? GOD intends better for us.*

*[And the last element is SPIRITUALLY, as mentioned before - when we are clearly instructed to "seek ye first the kingdom of GOD and his righteousness" and its certain promise of "and all these things [including a mate for life] will be added unto you!*

The physical side of marriage is important, but it is not all important. Oneness here depends upon oneness in all other areas. Everything affects the physical, and it in turn affects everything else.

Let us now look at I Corinthians 7.

This begins a new section in I Corinthians, and yet it is related to what has gone before. Through Chapter 6 Paul has been speaking about divisions that existed in the Corinthian Church.

I. DIVISIONS in the Church, 1:10-6:20  
(These they refused to acknowledge)

A. Group against group division, 1:10-4:21. (Paulites, Apollosites, Peterites, Christites)

B. Group against person divisions, 5:1-1-13. (Majority and minority: the real problem is not the man's sin, but the church's toleration of it).

C. Person against person divisions, 6:1-9a. (Lawsuits between Christians before unbelieving judges)

D. Person against himself divisions, 6:9b-20. (The sin of fornication).

**II. DIFFICULTIES in the church, 7:1-16:4.** (These are various things that the Corinthians had specifically asked about. They are so indicated by the repetition of the phrase: "Now

concerning.")

Paul ended the previous section speaking about fornication. He opens this section with the same though in 7:2.

We need to keep in mind here in I Corinthians 7 that Paul is speaking only concerning some of the physical aspects of marriage. He is not giving the complete doctrine of marriage. Since this is true, we must realize that other passages must be consulted for the complete picture on marriage.

Then, too, we only have answers to the questions that were specifically asked Paul, and not the questions themselves. This is like listening in on only one side of a telephone conversation. We have to fill in what is missing.

Finally, Paul had previously spent at least 2 years in Corinth prior to his writing this letter. During this time Paul taught them much. Here in I Corinthians 7 he is only amplifying that teaching because of specific problems that had arisen, and they had requested his advice.

## **A. Concerning Marriage, 7:1-40.**

### **1. Marriage and It's Problems, 7:1-24).**

#### **a. The relationships of a man and a woman, 7:1-9.**

##### **(1) The pre-marriage relationship, 7:1**

**"It is good for a man not to touch a woman."** What does this mean? The word touch is "to cling to" and the word for woman denotes that this woman is not the man's wife. What the Greeks would have read then is: "It is good for a man not to cling to a woman who is not his wife."

Upon this verse alone pre-marital relations stand condemned. By application, how much physical contact should a young couple, even an engaged couple, permit themselves to have before marriage? Definitely it should be limited, and it will in no wise hurt -- but will help -- the future marriage.

##### **(2) The marriage relationship, 7:2-6**

:2 -- **"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."**

This verse condemns extra-marital relations (adultery), polygamy and sodomy.

:3 -- **"Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband."**

The wife is not to claim it. She is to be rendering it (present tense continuous action), and it is the same for him and her. Paul is speaking of the physical side of marriage. He is seeking to

correct any one-sidedness: She is as much the mistress of his person as he is the master of her.

:4 -- **"The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath now power of his own body, but the wife."**

The individual's needs are to be met and satisfied by the other member.

Proverbs 5:15-19 **"Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love."**

Verse 16, **"Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets,"** should be a question of which the answer is an emphatic "NO!"

:5 -- **"Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan not tempt you for your incontinency."**

**"Defraud ye not,"** or literally the prohibition is against what they were then doing: "Stop defrauding one the other" in the marriage union. The term "defraud" is used by Paul with great significance. When you rob someone of something that is owed them, you defraud them. This may be done by the wife or the husband. The Word says, "Stop it!"

This verse shows us that the physical side of marriage is something absolutely necessary even apart from the procreation of offspring. Any stopping must be by mutual consent, must be for a stated period, and must be resumed else the consequences may be disastrous. Each partner must consider the bodily needs of the other partner lest they push the other into temptation and even sin.

"In marriage separate ownership of the person ceases."

:6 -- **"But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment."**

Paul, nor no one else, can command marriage for the Corinthians nor for anyone else. Marriage cannot be commanded, but neither can it be commanded not to marry (I Timothy 4:3), **"only in the Lord."**

### **(3) The unmarried relationship, 7:7-9**

This is only for those who do not burn, i.e., feel the physical need for marriage.

:7 -- **"For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that."**

Paul will tell later on in this chapter why he wished that others be as he is, and we will see this

next week as we look at "Paul's Advice to Young People."

Paul considered the celibate life to be a charisma, or "gift." We need to remember that this gift, as well as all other gifts, remains in the hands of GOD who sovereignly gives it. It is not in our hands. We cannot give it to ourselves. All of GOD's gifts are given according to "His will." Woe be any of us if we try to live outside of GOD's will for us.

:8 -- **"I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I."**

The word "unmarried" is masculine plural and must be in the context refer to only men, as widows are added by a separate word, and Paul takes up the subject of virgins later.

The word "good" is "noble." The verb "abide" is aorist tense and signifies a once for all decision -- a life decision -- to remain unmarried. A single life is good, it is noble. There is nothing wrong with it. No one is to look down upon it. Paul mentions in I Timothy 5:14 that his will was for younger women who were widows to marry, bear children, guide the house, etc. This was the best state for young widows, but still the single state is a good and noble state.

A person once came to me and said: "Such and such a person should not be an elder because he is not married, and Scripture says that an elder is to be **'the husband of one wife.'** He doesn't have a wife, and therefore he cannot qualify to be an elder." I said to this person who was himself an elder, married, but had never had any children: "Now just a minute. By that same method of exegesis, you are disqualified because the Scriptures also state **'one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.'** Since you have no children, you are disqualified." I never heard another word about this.

The single state is a good and noble state for one called to such a life. In is my personal opinion that Paul had been married but was a widower, because he was a member of the lesser Sanhedrin, and in this capacity "cast his vote" against the Christians (Acts 26:10).

:9 -- **"But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."**

The word "contain" is used only one other time in the New Testament. It is found in I Corinthians 9:25, and is "is temperate" i.e., "controls himself." The verse literally says that if young people cannot "control themselves," let them marry. It is better to marry than to have uncontrolled sexual passion. Being single is good and noble, but in such a case being married is better.

The noble life of remaining single can become the worst form for the wrong person. It is only for those who physically have no need for marriage that are to remained unmarried. The state of marriage would be a most difficult state for such a person.

While dealing with this area of the physical side of marriage, I feel it would be best to leave the rest of I Corinthians 7 for the next lesson, and to look in closing at I Thessalonians 4:1-8.

**"Furthermore then we beseech you brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye**

**have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.**

**For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain for fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:**

**That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. for God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.**

**He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His holy Spirit."**

"Concupiscence" is the 'passion of lust.'

One of the greatest moments in life is to be able to stand before the servant of the Lord as he unites you and your beloved one in marriage, and you stand there in all purity and holiness. You have kept yourself for one person and for one alone.

There is one way it may be done. It is just good old fashioned advice. Fellows, never allow any young lady to cling to you, and don't you cling to any young lady. If you never cling, you'll never come to the place of any regrets. Learn to acquire a wife in holiness and honor, and neither of you will ever regret it.

**"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers GOD will judge."**

[\*\*\* And young lady, don't give your treasure away until the day that you can give it to the one that truly loves you and sealed his love before GOD at that marriage altar.

~ end of chapter 4 ~

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