

Sunday, September 25, 2016—I Corinthians 7:4: Hath Not Power Over

Introduction

- Last Sunday we continued our study of I Corinthians by looking at chapter 7 verse 3. We observed the following regarding verse 3.
- The verb “render” is a present active imperative statement. Paul is commanding the husband to “render” i.e., return or pay back to his wife her “due benevolence.”
- Given the context it is clear that “due benevolence” is a reference to sexual intimacy. In short, Paul is using the imperative mood to instruct a husband to have sex with his wife.
- Notice how the nature of the sexual experience has changed within the confines of the marriage. Now instead of it being a sin against one’s own body it is doing good unto one’s wife. Instead of being ordered to “flee fornication” a man does good unto his wife by being physically intimate with her. Upon marriage, sex transitions from being destructive to being good. This is hard for people living within the Christian bubble.
- Gentlemen, sex with your wife is not just about you getting some; it’s about you serving her with your body.
- The same exact instructions are given unto the ladies. Ladies, sex with your husband is not just about you getting some; it’s about you serving him with your body. You serve your husband with your body.
- Given the sensitive subject matter of chapter 7, I want to say the following at the outset.
 - I am going to teach the details of the passage regardless of how uncomfortable it makes me.
 - I am not setting myself up as the perfect husband nor am I setting up Becky and I as the standard of a perfect marriage. That being said, I can only speak out the experiences I have had as a husband.
 - I am going to try and strike a balance between sharing things that have helped Becky and I, without sharing with you all the private details of our life together.
 - I have discussed what is permissible and allowable to talk about with Becky in advance.
 - I am going to endeavor to be real and frank about things without be graphic.

- This morning I want to continue our study of the passage by looking at verses 4 and 5.

I Corinthians 7:4

- **The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.**
- First notice that this is the third verse in a row where Paul has issued the same instruction to both husband and the wife.
 - Verse 2—men and women both avoid fornication by getting married.
 - Verse 3—husband and wife are each to render due benevolence unto each other.
- Now in verse 4 we observe a third reciprocating instruction. Neither the wife nor the husband has power over their own body.
- The key to verse 4 lies in understanding what it means to have power over one’s own body in the context.
- The verb “power” both times it is used in verse 4 is a present active indicative which indicates the truth of the statement while Paul is in the process of penning it. The underlying Greek word only occurs 4 times in the Greek text supporting the KJB.
 - Luke 22:25—“exercise authority upon”
 - I Corinthians 6:12—“brought under the power”
- The wife and the husband “hath not power” over their body “but” the other does.
 - Wife’s Body—power belongs to her husband.
 - Husband’s Body—power belongs to his wife.
- This is clear teaching that sexual intimacy in a marriage is not the sole domain and jurisdiction of one spouse over the other. The wife’s body belongs to the husband likewise the husband’s body belongs to the wife.
- Ephesians 5:31—Paul’s instructions in I Corinthians 7 follow logically from the Biblical definition of marriage. The result of “leaving” and “cleaving” is the establishment of a “one flesh” relationship. In that “one flesh” relationship neither party possess the right nor the authority to lord over or control the nature of the sexual intimacy in their marriage.

- I Corinthians 7:4—challenges to Duggar mentality when it comes to sexual intimacy within a marriage. It's not the wife's job to be receptive to intimacy at the beckon call of her husband any more than it's the husband job too receptive at the beckon call of his wife. Like everything else in your marriage, physical intimacy is a partnership.
- Sin and its resulting selfishness causes problems when it comes to physical intimacy in marriage. God did not create sex to be a weapon to demean, control, and manipulate your spouse.
- Ephesians 5:28-29—husbands need to take into account the emotional needs of their wives and not just their own physical urges and desires. Taking the time to build emotional intimacy with your wife is going to go a long way towards foresting the desire within her for physical intimacy.
- Husbands sex for your wife more emotional than physical.
- Genesis 2:21-25—I don't know if you have ever noticed this before but men and woman are different. God set it up that way.
- Read sections from *Bringing Up Boys About the Differences Between Men and Woman*.
 - Differences between the ways men and woman shop.
- I Peter 3:7—gusy stop trying to logically figure out your wife. Rather focus on “giving honour unto your wife, as unto the weaker vessel.”
- Ephesians 5:25—within the context of what we are talking about in I Corinthians 7 the husband is to offer his wife the same loving headship that Christ gives the church. The love that Christ demonstrated on behalf of the church is not an ego centric me first type of love.
- Ephesians 5:33—the central need of a wife is to know that her husband loves her beyond anything else. This is the type of love that values, esteems, and places the needs and well-being of one's wife above his own.
- I Corinthians 7:4—since the central tendency of husband is going to be to run roughshod over things he needs to remember that his wife has power over his body not him.