

Sunday, December 11, 2016—I Corinthians 7:25-28 Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage Given the Present Distress, Part 2

### Introduction

- Last Sunday we began looking at verses 25 through 28 in which Paul addresses the topic about divorce and remarriage given the “present distress.”
- Verses 25-26—Paul answers their questions about virgins and advises that they remain unmarried given “the present distress.” We also discussed the possibility in verse 25 that Paul’s judgment on this matter was born out of his personal circumstances, “as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.”
- Verse 27—we studied the first half of the verse and noted that “the present distress” is not grounds for a believer to divorce their spouse. We then discussed two primary reasons why marriage fail: 1) misplaced dependencies and 2) unrealistic expectations.
- This morning we want to more on and continue our consideration of this section.

### I Corinthians 7:27

- **Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.**
- Paul’s instructions here are simple and straightforward. A duly loosed member of the body of Christ should not actively be seeking a spouse. The verb translated “seek” is a present active imperative which means that Paul is strongly suggesting this course of action.
- Before one concludes that Paul is forbidding remarriage we need to think through this considering the context.

#### *Immediate Context*

- First, Paul’s instructions in verses 25-26 regarding virgins are made in light of “the present distress.” Given the socio-political climate, Paul recommends that virgins remain unmarried.
- Second, Paul’s instructions to married and loosed believers in verse 27 are also made considering “the present distress.” Therefore, if Paul’s advice to a virgin was to not get married; it makes sense that his advice for a loosed (unmarried) member of the body of Christ would also be to “seek not” a spouse, given “the present distress.”

#### *Context of the Chapter*

- Third, based upon I Corinthians 7:11 it seems that Paul’s preference would be for a believer to reconcile with their former spouse if possible.

- Fourth, based upon I Corinthians 7:2, 9 what would be preferable? For a member of the body of Christ to burn with passion and commit fornication or get married and possess his vessel in sanctification and honor (I Thess. 4:3-4)?
- Therefore, the second part of I Corinthians 7:27 should not be viewed as a prohibition against all loosed members of the body of Christ getting remarried. This discussion then naturally leads us into verse 28.

### **I Corinthians 7:28**

- **But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.**
- *But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned*—if the loosed saint from verse 27 does remarry Paul explicitly states that person has “not sinned.” Divorced members of the body Christ can remarry without the stigma of wrong doing. Religion and non-dispensational teaching regarding this topic has caused undue emotion distress and hearth arch for many believers.
- The following is a summary of Paul’s instructions regarding divorce and remarriage.
  - Seek not to be loosed. Don’t depart from one another. Work it out under grace.
  - Believing spouses should remain married unless the unbelieving spouse desired to depart.
  - Divorce is a last resort not your first option.
  - Reconciliation is best.
  - Remarriage is permissible without the stigma of wrong doing.
- If you are contemplating divorce it is best to involve the eldership of the church sooner rather than later.
- **EMOTIONS** moderated by **REASON** guided by **TRUTH = CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION**
- *and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned*—likewise if a virgin goes against Paul’s judgment in verses 25 and 26 she has not sinned.
- Why have these two categories of people not sinned in verse 28 by getting married? Because Paul was not giving them a commandment of the Lord in verse 25, he was offering his judgment.
- This highlights the flexibility of grace and the importance of each believer to be making decision their life based upon truth out of a renewed mind.

- Romans 12:1-2
- I Corinthians 2:16—you have Christ’s mind on any matter before you in God’s word.
- I Corinthians 6:12, 10:23
- *Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you*—those who chose to get married will have more trouble in the flesh than those who chose not to get married. This is true in a general sense. In the context, this general truth is compounded considering the “present distress.”
- It is this trouble that Paul’s judgment is trying to spare the believer. In light of the circumstances of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Paul is trying to spare believers undo trouble but he is not ordering or commanding a particular course of action.