

1 Corinthians 7

Sunday 6/19/2011

As you know, we have been coming through each book of the Bible and laying out how Christ is portrayed in each book. We have not been doing a verse-by-verse study, but rather focusing on how Christ is portrayed. But in certain books of the Bible, given where we are at and what we are trying to accomplish in our church, and some of the issues that are very prominent issues today, some of these things we have just kind of stopped and taught on so you could learn how to deal with it, learn how to understand it.

We got into 1 Corinthians 7, and we have been here now for several weeks. We have been focusing on the New Testament teaching given to the church on God's viewpoint on how the church, which is the structure in our lives, is to deal with the issue of marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Those three issues are really covered in this chapter, and it is something that everybody needs to learn, especially if you are going to work with people.

I have noticed and talked with many of you throughout the process of this. Many of you have been working hard to get all this material down and get it into your Bible. You have noticed that many of the people around you have a wide margin Bible, as we call them, really a Bible with an extra area of space around to put notes in. The reason why we do that is because we teach that the greatest study Bible—and you can buy just about everybody's study Bible. You can buy a new school Scofield, an old school Scofield. You can buy a Ryrie. Everybody has got one. But I guarantee you that for the serious Bible student, the greatest Bible study, the greatest study Bible that you could ever have will be your own. It is what God gives you and you putting it in there as God shows you and teaches you the Word of God. That is really what the Bible Basics class is all about. You, in time, will take the things that we are going to talk about next week, and you are going to incorporate them into your Bible in a format that every time you open your Bible, it will be right there in front of your face. That is how you learn. You just keep seeing and understanding how those things work.

We talked about the aspect of a prepared servant, being ready to deal with issues that God puts you in, where you work in your own family, maybe, or wherever. Certainly, there will be no greater issue that you will be faced with today and have to deal with than the issue of people that are getting married, people who get divorced, and then struggle with the aspect of remarriage. I am going to give you a very easy format for 1 Corinthians 7. That is the way I break my Bible down. I am a very simple individual. I do not deal with complicated things very well. So when it comes to the Bible, I have to break it down in basic formats that I can grasp each section, much like what we are going to do with Bible Basics.

This chapter basically breaks down into three sections. I want to give you those three sections before we move into the third section today, because then we will have a complete understanding of this chapter. The first thing you should have down and you want to remember is that 1 Corinthians 7 is the teaching to the church. In most churches today, if not all churches today, when you are faced with marriage or divorce or remarriage, they always go to Matthew 5 or Matthew 19. We know that those are not passages to the New Testament church. Nobody is even asking anything there about the subject. They are trying to entangle Jesus in His talk and affairs

and trying to get Him to mess up someplace along the line. So there is no interest there of learning anything about the Bible. No, the clear teaching for you and me as New Testament Christians is found in 1 Corinthians 7.

I want to give you these three sections here, and then I will show you how each one of them breaks down. Then we are going to move into the third one here.

I. Defining Marriage (1 Corinthians 7:1-9)

Section one will be 1 Corinthians 7:1-9. In my Bible, and you can do however you want to do it, I have those little parentheses coming down on it, encompassing all three of these sections. I write in there section one, section two, and section three. So section one is going to be 1 Corinthians 7:1-9. In this section is where he defines marriage. Remember now, our study in chapter seven is the concept from God's viewpoint of marriage, divorce, and then remarriage. So the first section, verses 1-9, is going to define marriage for us.

Then we are going to find out that each section breaks down into subsections, and I want to give you those.

- Verses 1 and 2 deal with the gift of celibacy. It talks about how the aspect of staying single is something that everybody needs to understand. We are going to learn more about that today.
- Verses 3 and 4, we studied the context of what it meant to give to each other, to do benevolence. We know what that is and how that is a key aspect.
- Verse 5 deals with not defrauding your marriage. We talked about how people defraud themselves in a marriage and what that is. Fraud is deceit. In other words, your marriage is a fraud. It is not real. It is a deceitful marriage because it is not based on the principles of the Word of God.
- Verse 6 is one you want to mark in yellow and mark in red and probably purple, chartreuse, and every other color you can get because this verse tells you one of the key verses here that what you are reading here, that this is extra stuff given to the New Testament church that is not found in the Old Testament.
- Verses 7, 8, and 9 go back to the single concept again of verses 1 and 2. In this section, we find our first two rules. So when you put your notes in your Bible along this one, you want to put Rule 1 and Rule 2 in this first section.

II. Defining Divorce (1 Corinthians 7:10-24)

The second section runs from 1 Corinthians 7:10-24. You are going to find that in this particular section, he deals with the concept of divorce. Where the first section defined marriage for you,

which we now know is flesh joining flesh, in this section, he defines divorce for us, which is basically flesh leaving flesh. We go through that concept. You are going to find that in this particular section, you have Rule Number 3 up to Rule Number 12. There are 20 rules here that we talked about. From here in this section, you have Rule Number 3 up to Rule Number 12. You are going to find that again, it is broken down into verses.

➤ Verse 10 deals with the concept of a wife not leaving her husband. This is not in the sense of physically getting up and leaving, but in the sense of in her heart, defrauding the marriage by giving her heart to something or somebody else. We made a great key point here that there is no reference to the husband doing that because the husband is never to do that because the husband in the marriage is the type of Christ, and Christ would never leave His bride or separate Himself from His body. We may separate ourselves from Him, but He will never separate Himself from them. So that was a great key concept.

➤ Verse 11 dealt with the Bible aspect of a biblical separation.

➤ Verse 12, we start to see some examples. It talked about a saved man with an unsaved wife. The Bible says that if the unsaved wife is pleased to dwell with the saved man, then stay together and work it out because obviously, God is going to use the saved person to get the unsaved person saved.

➤ Verse 13, we saw the reverse of that. We saw here we have a saved wife and an unsaved husband, same scenario. If the unsaved husband is pleased to dwell with a saved wife, then stay with him because you are going to be the avenue by which God is going to probably be able to do something in that marriage.

➤ Verses 17, 18, and 19, he gave us the example of circumcision. We talked about this last week, how that you are not a Christian because you say you are one. You are a Christian because you do what the Bible says. That is really the theme of Christ being portrayed in 1 Corinthians, Jesus as Lord. That is what we gave you the verse in Luke 6:46, where Jesus Himself said,

➤ Then we saw verses 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24. We saw where he basically says, in any given situation that you are in, given all the rules that we have studied and come through so far, stay where you are at, let God work it out. If you are staying, can stay in a marriage, or you have to get a biblical separation, stay where you are at, let God try to work it out. He talks about the aspect of a servant, that a servant does not care who his master is, because he understands that if he is saved, he is free in Christ. You should not care about what circumstances you find yourself in.

Because if you do what is right, God will always show you the path out of the situation that you are in. That is a great concept.

➤ Verse 14, we find that God sanctifies a marriage. We looked at the word that comes in sanctification. In this particular case of a saved person, an unsaved person, God goes ahead and sanctifies the marriage for the children's sake, for the saved person's sake, for the children. We talked about that.

➤ Verse 15 basically is the aspect that if you are in a situation where either the wife or the husband will not do what is right, and they continually do not follow biblical principles, and they not necessarily leave you physically by moving out, but leave you emotionally and leave you from the attitude of heart that they no longer want to be with you, then the Bible says,

➤ Then in verse 16, he comes down here and he says, stay with the unsaved and get them, that you might get them saved. I already gave you verses 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, but that goes on to the bottom of that. So that is how that second section lays itself out.

III. Defining Remarriage (1 Corinthians 7:25-40)

Section three is where we are at today. Section three is going to be 1 Corinthians 7:25-40. Section three deals with the aspect of remarriage. Your rules, 13 through 20, are going to be found in this section. Again, I would mark out each section and label it section one, section two, section three, put the aspect where section one defined what marriage was, where section two defined what divorce was. Now we come to section three, and in section three, it deals with the aspect of remarriage. That is what we are going to look at today. That is where we are at today. So we will break down these in the next verses here, and we will look at it.

Three sections: one section defines marriage, the other section defined divorce, the other section defines remarriage, and then the rules and the principles to go by. It is an easy outline. You want to get it into your Bible. You will want to begin to put the information that we did. As we come to this third section, personally, I think the third section is the most important section. Because, obviously, there is good stuff in here if you have never been married to learn before you get married. If you have a rocky marriage and you are having issues, there are things here that you can do to fix your marriage. But many, many times in dealing with people, you are going to find people who were already married and are already divorced, or it is too far gone that there is nothing that really can be done. We have covered all of that before. So I think that this is very important because in any church, in any congregation of people today, anyhow, in the world that we live in, you are going to find people that are in these situations. Our job is to try to help them.

So what I am going to do today is by coming through this last section, I am going to give you eight things to consider, no matter what situation you find yourself in. If you are single and never

married, then these eight things are for you to consider. If you have been married and you have been divorced and now you are unmarried, these things are absolutely essential for you to consider. It is just that simple. There is a word that we use today that everybody likes to use. We have elevated words to another whole level here that people use to suggest ideas. One of the words, it is a big word today, is proactive. Proactive means get active before you have to deal with something. In other words, make a plan. The Bible talks about that in the Old Testament. In many examples, one of the great ones is back there when it lays example, one of the stories that you do not wait till your well runs dry before you dig another well. So we are going to be proactive today. Look at this in a modern 21st century proactive perspective. Let us all become Renaissance people today and you get a rebirth of learning and knowledge and become proactive in our lives. I think that is wonderful. Maybe we will hold hands and sing Kumbaya before we leave today. Who knows?

Anyway, I want to read this last section to you here and then we will start coming through and making some comment on it. But here is what it says:

1 Corinthians 7:25-40

Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.

Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

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 this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;

And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.

The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

Now, Father, we thank You and praise You today. We thank You for the Lord Jesus. Lord, we love You. We ask You that You will help us grasp this great last section. There are so many things here that we need to see today and great concepts that people need to take internally and then give it back out to other folks that may be struggling. Help me to lay it all out, help them to accept it and to hear it and take it and use it for Your honor and glory. We will thank You and praise You now in Jesus' name, for Your sake we ask it. Amen.

You can see in this last section how it kind of jumps back and forth with things. If you do not know where to divide it, like we have divided up the previous sections, it just looks like a bunch of mumbo jumbo. It goes from one thing to another and it is hard to follow how the thing goes along. But once you understand what he is doing in the chapter, then it is easier to break this chapter down and that is what I am going to do for you today. We are going to take it verse by verse or verses by verse, however each thought is concerned. We are going to separate these thoughts out and then you see how it comes together in a whole concept. So you will want to be able to divide this out and then use it and then put it back into your Bible and then have a handle on it, being able to use it.

IV. Rules for Remarriage and Singleness

Here is what he says in 1 Corinthians 7:25-26:

1 Corinthians 7:25

Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

1 Corinthians 7:26

I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be.

Here is another place where there is nothing in the Old Testament law on this, that he is giving his judgment based on the reality and the revelation of the New Testament church, but he is

telling you again that this is something different than the Old Testament. "Yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I suppose therefore that this is good for this present distress. I say that it is good for a man so to be."

This is Rule Number 13 here, and Rule Number 13 deals with a virgin, and this would be a person who was never married, male or female. What he is saying here in verse 25, and what he does is he covers all the bases again. When you are done understanding this, you have everything laid out for you that every base is covered. Now he is saying, and this would be in verse 25, which would be Rule Number 13, a virgin, someone who is never married, can marry whoever she wants as long as the person is a saved person. I say that in the sense that as long as you follow all the other principles that were laid out here, we are going to talk about that. But this particular Rule Number 13 is if you have never been married, you are free to marry whoever you want as long as that person is a saved person. That is what he is talking about. You want to make sure before you marry that person that they can meet your, what we talked about, the due benevolence, your physical needs, your emotional needs, and your spiritual needs. I guess if you want to put that in the right order, it would be your spiritual needs first, then your emotional needs, and from that would come your physical needs. You will want to make sure that the person you marry, male or female, they have a good lordship relationship, that is their personal one-on-one, which leads to their next one, which is their fellowship, and that will include you, and then between the first two, that will bring you to the right kind of relationship. So he is saying there that a virgin can marry whoever she wants, but under the guidelines that we have already talked about, you need to understand that these are things that need to be in the person you are going to marry, and obviously they need to be a saved person.

Then verse 26: "I suppose therefore that this is good for this present distress. I say that it is good for a man to so to be." This goes back to 1 Corinthians 7:1-2, and he is basically saying, do not jump into a marriage. I know this is foreign for today in the world we live in. Do not jump into a marriage before you consider the aspect of staying single if that is a gift that God has given to you. I know that that is not for everybody. If it is for anybody today, it probably is not, not with the world we live in. But what he is saying is this: the best advice that he is giving you if you have never been married, and you are going to see why here in a moment, the best advice he gives if you are a virgin and you have never been married and you are going to get married, then get married right. Put the things in the dating, the engagement, the marriage to make sure it is right, and then once you get it in there right, then do the things in the Bible to keep it right. I go back to what I said when we first started this, when it deals with so many marriages and why so many people get a divorce: when it starts wrong, it usually ends wrong unless God gets in it and you guys let God in it. It is headed for a disaster, and that is just the way that it is. I have seen many, many cases over the years where two people have done it wrong at the beginning, but somewhere in the process they start to want to do what is right. They both take it seriously, they both do what the Bible says within the Bible structure in the New Testament local church, and it can work out. But it is becoming a rare, rare thing as time goes on.

Then he says in verse 27, and this is great advice based on the information we have already had:

1 Corinthians 7:27

Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

That is great practical advice based on what we have already got. This brings up Rule Number 14. We already understand how that if we are bound to a wife, that we are not going to try to get out of the marriage. If you are already doing what needs to be done, then you stay with it. We have already covered that. But then he also says if you are loosed, if you have gotten divorced, if you were in a bad relationship and now you are out of the relationship, then he says, "seek not a wife."

Now this brings up Rule Number 14, and when you put this thing all together, it does not mean that you cannot ever remarry again. That is not what he is saying. You are going to see that in just a second. But now he is talking about the rebound effect. He is talking about, do not get in a hurry. No rebound effect. Do not jump from one bad relationship into another bad relationship. There is a cycle in bad marriages. Most people, the epidemic of our culture in America is absolutely divorce. There is no question about it. Most people, like most things in their lives, they never break the cycle. There is a cycle in everything in your life, in my life. You know what you did when you got saved in a most basic format? When you got saved, you came out of the darkness into the light. You came from the world to a new life in Christ Jesus. The Bible says in John 8:44 that you and I before we were saved were "of our father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning." It goes right on down the line and it tells us that the lust that we did before we were saved was the same thing that associated with the devil. Do you really know what happened in the most simplest, basic form the day you and I got saved? We broke that cycle of sin in our life, did we not? We went from out of the darkness into the light. What you did was in your own personal life is break the cycle of sin that dominated you.

You see it in your own individual life. You see it in families. The Bible talks about God visiting the iniquity of the children on the fathers to the third and fourth generation in the Old Testament. When you understand that, how it fits into that, it goes into that same mindset. Families get into cycles of sin, and you see it all the time. Mom and Dad got married back here years and years ago, and they did not do what was right. They produce kids, they do not do what is right. They produce kids, they do not do what is right. They produce kids, they do not do what is right. You have four or five generations now, and the key is every generation from the first generation gets worse than the last generation that it was. So you have Mom and Dad who have a terrible marriage. You have a girl that grows up into that terrible marriage. Maybe the dad is abusive, maybe they have a terrible thing, and she sees that. She hates that, and she wants nothing to do with it, and she cannot wait that she gets out of that relationship to be free from it. Then you know what she does? She goes out and marries somebody that is just like the abusive father that she had. You know why? You are trapped in a cycle. You and I were trapped in a cycle before we got saved. Families get trapped in a cycle in a generational phase. At some point, I see it true in this church. I see some families in this church that the families were good people, they just never had anything going for them, and they had all kinds of issues and all that. Some place along the line you got saved, and when you got saved, you know what you did? You broke that cycle. Then you had an effect on your parents, you had an effect on your brothers and sisters, and what God

did with you is He took you and He broke that cycle. Now there is a breach, now there is a place that people can look to, and if other people want to break their cycle, now they have something to look at in their own family because you decided, "I am not going to let my marriage, I am not going to treat my wife like my dad did. I am not going to have that kind of marriage that they had. I am not going to do that. I am going to do what is right." By standing up, you and your wife, you know what you did? You broke the cycle.

I see it all the time. It is one of the basic fundamental concepts of human life on planet Earth that is so simple that nobody ever sees it. Who could not read the book of Ecclesiastes chapter one and not know that all of life is in the cycle? That is why his favorite phrase is, "there is nothing new under the sun." Why? Because the cycle continues, and you and I are caught up in that cycle, and if you and I do not take the Bible, a supernatural book, and break the natural cycle of sin in our lives, nothing changes, nothing changes. This is why you see a daughter get married, produce more children who are more screwed up, and it just gets worse and worse and worse and worse, and it never ends. This is also why an unsaved man or an unsaved woman keeps getting worse and worse and worse and worse, and nothing ever changes the cycle. This is also why many people get married time after time after time after time after time after time after time, and they actually deceive themselves into thinking that because it was the other person's fault, the next one will be okay.

Let me tell you something. The national rate, the percentage of people who get married the first time, take a guy over here and a woman over here who have never been married before, and you get those two married, the national rate of divorce in first time marriages in this country is 35%. You know what the national average percentage is of second time marriages getting a divorce? It is 60%. You know what the national average is on third time marriages? It is 80% in failure. It does not get better. That is what the world tells you evolution is all about, "we are getting better and better and better." No, the Bible says we are getting worse and worse. But we get this mindset, and you know what our problem is? We will go from one bad marriage to another bad marriage to another bad marriage to another bad marriage, and we will never stop and break the cycle because the cycle is what needs to get broken. That is what he is saying here. He is not saying you cannot ever get married. He is saying you do not get a rebound, man. Do not jump from one bad relationship to another. Break the pattern.

Now I call this the Egyptian Syndrome. I have a syndrome for everything in the Bible because I see all the Bible principles. You remember when the children of Israel came out of Egypt? They were in really bad shape in Egypt. They were under the oppression of Pharaoh who hated them, and more than that, the devil was behind Pharaoh who hated them even more than Pharaoh did. The devil's whole idea was to starve them to death, work them to death, and eradicate them under the bondage of Pharaoh. So Pharaoh would do things like he would come out and they would make bricks, and they would make bricks with straw and stuff that they would give them, and they worked in the brick kiln where they made bricks, and then Pharaoh built all of his stuff with those things. Pharaoh would get an attitude, he would go down, and the tally of bricks did not meet what he thought, did not feed them anything. Now they are starving them to death, whipping them with the whips on their back because they did not work hard enough. If your kid

was sick, you went to work and your kid went to work. A terrible scenario to be in. So they are down there, and Pharaoh would come out and say, "Well, you know what? There is not enough bricks. Well, I will show you what we are going to do. We are going to take half the straw that you need to make the number of bricks you did not make today, and you better make the number of bricks tomorrow that you should make with half the straw." You know what that is called in life? That is called a no-win situation. You know what the world loves to do to you and me? Put us in no-win situations. I ask you a personal question: why do you exist in this world as a child of God letting the devil and yourself put you in situations you cannot win in?

So God does what God does what He does for you and me: sends them a deliverer, Moses. Charlton Heston. Somebody said one time, "You ever see the movie The Ten Commandments?" I said, "No, I read the book." Moses leads them out, takes them out on the way to the Promised Land. You know what that is a picture of? That is a picture of God breaking the cycle of sin in your life and then starting you on a journey. But you know what? That journey was not easy, and what happened was, if you study your Bible, the children of Israel did not totally obey God when they left because they brought the mixed multitude with them. You know who the mixed multitude are? Those are your buddies and your friends that hate God, hate the Bible, and do not want nothing to do with it, that you keep hanging out with, and they do the same thing with you they did with the children of Israel: they drag you back and hold you back. But you are too stupid to see it because the Bible says it was the mixed multitude when they got out there, they started whining and complaining. It was the mixed multitude that did not like Moses the leader anymore. They did not like the structure that God had given them, and they started infecting the people that God had brought out, and they started, you know, it is like the Bible says, "evil communications corrupt good manners," and the manners in the Bible is the manner of person you are, and they began to get corrupted because the mixed multitude, they did not care nothing for the things of God, they did not care anything about the Bible, they had an attitude toward Moses, they had an attitude toward the structure that God gave them, and now it is infectious to God's people, and now they want to stone Moses, now they want to go back to Egypt, now they want to go and what do they tell him? They say, "Moses, we were better off in Egypt, all of the melons and the leeks and the garlic that we ate freely, freely." You were under a taskmaster who crushed your father under the big stones and made the pyramids. You are under the taskmaster that whipped your back till it was raw to make his bricks. What you got freely was the short end of the stick every time you turned around. But you see, with the passage of time, the more and longer you are out of a relationship, and the more your emotions take over, your hormones take over, you are all harmonious people, I love you today. When you start to see that, you know what happens? You forget how bad it really was. Here are the people in Egypt that thought that all the slavery, all of the whippings, all of the beatings, all of the starvation, and now they are comparing it because they are out here, time has allowed them to forget the misery they were in, and that is what happens in a marriage when you leave that marriage and your emotions start kicking in and you get lonesome and you really start to think it was not that bad. What? It really was not that bad? Why you whined and complained how terrible it was? But you see, when the old emotions start kicking in, you really forget about the reality, and the principle here is, do not you get in a hurry. Do not you get in a hurry.

Now I am going to give you seven things that you need to do to break a cycle in a bad marriage before you get remarried. He is not saying you cannot get remarried. He is saying you better break the cycle or you are going to get right back into a bad marriage again, and brother, it happens, and that is why the average is 35%, 60% round two, and 80% round three. Now here is why that is.

1. The first thing you need to do to break that cycle that you do not get into another bad relationship is you learn what your issues are. You quit blaming. You quit blaming him for your problems and you quit blaming her for your problems, and that is what always happens. "Well, he is this. Well, she is that." No, you are both a piece of work, and the moment you want to break the cycle, quit looking at somebody else's sins and start dealing with your own. Exonerate that person from any part of the problem. Take full responsibility. You say, "Where did you get that?" It is a book called the Bible. It is like that black with gold pages because that is exactly what Jesus did for you and me to break the cycle of sin. He knew no sin, yet He was made sin for us. He exonerated you from your sin. He took it on Himself, and "he that are spiritual ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." You deal with your own issues. The very fact that you are impatient, you are emotional about it, and you have bad swings on it tells me right there you are not ready to get married yet. You do not have a handle on your problems, and you are going to go right into another spin cycle. You are going to go right into another relationship. You are going to find somebody that cannot ever meet your needs, but he is a warm body or she is a warm body, and they are what you need, their friendship, their fellowship, their snuggle-ship. Buy yourself a puppy. I do not know if snuggle-ship is a word, but it ought to be.
2. The second thing is start to build your own lordship relationship. I am going to tell you a true fact of life: you cannot build two intimate relationships at the same time. If you try to build a relationship with a man or a woman while you are trying to get your own lordship relationship and build an intimate relationship with God, let me tell you something, God will lose out every time. He will lose out every time. He will lose out every time because of the fact that he is here or she is here and God is not, and you have not learned yet how to build that practical spiritual lordship relationship, and you are a fool to think if you can build two relationships at the same time on an intimate level. You cannot. You deceive yourself, and you go right back to the same spin cycle because that is what you do. You just cannot do it. These are the fundamental facts of remarriage. I told you the best was last. You have to start building your own lordship relationship, no question about it.
3. The third thing you have to do is you have to get your, go out and buy yourself an aquarium. You have to get your emotions under control. I told you before, your emotions are like water. Water goes everywhere. Water without a containment will get wherever it needs to go. I can take this cup of water here and pour it inside that thing, and it will run out the rug, it will get underneath the rug, it will go up the wall, it will go everywhere. You know, that is your emotion, that is my emotions. Now you take that same 20 gallons of water and go out and buy an aquarium that has got glass sides and steel framework. Dump that same 20 gallons in that aquarium, and the water stays within that aquarium. Think of that glass and those structures as Bible principles that contain your emotions and do not let them go wherever

they want to go. You have to get your emotions and your feelings under control. That is what got you into problems in the first place.

Let me tell you something, folks, and I do not know how to tell you this: if you are going to do what is right in any aspect of your life, and I am just talking about this, if you are going to do what is right in any aspect of your life, let me just lay it out clear for you, you are going to have to quit doing it your way. Your way is what got you into problems. Your way is what caused every issue you have gotten in your life. You are going to have to quit doing it your way. For men, that is really tough. You know the biggest problem men have is being in charge. You know why? Because we got the "tatast." Man's number one problem is he wants to be in charge. He just wants to be submissive to the Bible. He wants to be his own god. He wants to be his own Bible. He wants to be the lord of all things. You see, and that is a man's problem. The woman's problem is her emotions. That is why a guy can look into her eyes and tell her whatever she wants to hear, and she will just run up the white flag and surrender. She is emotionally prone that way, and that is my point. You have to get those things under control. If you are going to do anything for God, you better understand it. At some point in your life, you are going to have to stop doing it your way and start doing it His way. Men and guys cannot do that. It is like if you ran your own business for 50 years and you were the president and the CEO and you had 5,000 people working for you, and you were telling people and firing people and hiring people and doing it all, and you set the office up there in a big penthouse on the top, you had a thousand people at your beck and call, and then suddenly you got to go down and work the job of a janitor. How do you think that worked for you? Well, let me tell you something, folks, that is exactly what it is spiritually. You may have been King Kong on the Empire State Building at one time in your life, but when you start to do what is right with God, you go to the janitor's basement, work your way up. I know you do not like that. You think I like it? You do not see me in a dress, do you? And we will see if you get my hair done, eyebrows waxed. I am a man just like you. I do not like it any better than you, but you know what? I am just smarter than you are. I just realized hitting my head against the wall was not going to get anywhere. A lot of you are like the kid that kept hitting himself in the head with a hammer, and the psychiatrist brought him in and sat him down, and the kid pulled out a hammer, started hitting himself on the head. So I said, "Why do you do that?" He says, "Because it feels so good when I stop." That is where you are at. Well, I realized that it might have felt good when you stop, but it just hurt again when you started doing it. But sometime in your life, you have got to come to the end of self. You have got to pick up the responsibility.

4. The next thing you have got to do is you have got to get God's perspective on what a wife should be. If you are a man, then you have got to get the perspective on what your wife should be in the Bible. If you are a wife, then you have got to get your perspective on what it needs to be, and it is in there. You may be surprised at some of the things you find.
5. The fifth thing is you have got to get God's perspective on what a husband should be. If you are a man, then you have got to get your perspective. Oh, that will take some stitching out of your sails. If you are a woman, then you need to find out because if you are going to find a perspective made someplace down the line, you better get the right one.

6. The sixth one is you begin to put biblical principles to work for you that in time, this time, you will marry the Christ in the man and not the man. Ladies, let me just tell you something, and you have got to come to this point in your life at some point. Get your hormones out of the way, get your emotions out of the way, get all of the things that mess you up out of the way. Go get you an aquarium this afternoon. Start dumping your biblical principles in it and just quit settling for a guy who will never be your spiritual leader and pretend he will. I do not know what to tell you. Fairy tales are exactly that, fairy tales. There are principles that have to be put in play, and when they are not in play and you find yourself in a bad situation now, this is what he says, "if you are loose from a wife, seek not a wife." Why? Because there are some things you better learn before you get back into it to break that cycle. Because you are looking for the third time around, 80% failure rate. God does not even know what it would be for the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth. I dealt with a guy one time married 10 times. Every woman that married him thought he was the greatest thing in the world.
7. The seventh thing is 1 Thessalonians 5:21: "Prove all things." Proper dating, proper relationship, engagement, proper marriage. It is just that simple, and this may take a while. It may take a while. It is one of those things where you say, "Well, what do you do?" I will tell you what you do. You stay busy. Quit focusing on, I tell this to people all the time, it is my number one rule in life. It is the only thing that keeps me from turning into you. Quit focusing on what you do not have and start focusing on what you do have. Focusing on what you do not have will defeat you every time. It is not a biblical format. Do not focus on what you do not have. Focus on what you do have. Let that thing carry you through, and you prove all things. You get busy. You get busy in the ministry. Help Kyle with what he is doing. Help me with what I am doing. There is something that needs to be done. Sitting around and whining because I am lonely. Oh, you will not be lonely long. Then you will be miserable again. Hang on. Bozo the Clown is right around the corner. Hang on. Just be patient. Then you will not be lonely. You will be miserable again. You are sitting there. "Oh, it was not so bad last time." Oh, I know. "Oh, Moses. Moses, why did you bring us out here to die? We had garlic and leeks and we had all of the stuff and onions." That stuff just gives you gas, man. You know what? That is what a lot of God's people are today. Just a lot of gas when it comes to the principles of the Word of God. I am telling you, this may take some time. You have done it your way long enough. You are going to have to break that cycle, and breaking that cycle can be the hardest single thing that you ever have to do. But it will never go anywhere until you get off who you think you are and you break the cycle and quit being the CEO and become the janitor.

V. Trouble in the Flesh

1 Corinthians 7:28 says:

1 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.

Now, this is based on all the rules and principles that we have seen putting into context. These are not held or scaled or principles. These are all based on what we have already seen. Rule Number 15 is if you have done it biblically, if you have followed all the rules, if you have applied all the things like the seven things I just given you, and you have proved a thing out, and you have got the thing, and the guy you are going to marry or the woman you are going to marry, you are convinced and proved it out, and they are really within the structure and doing everything that they are supposed to do, then and you have found the right person, then you are free to marry. He says, "you have not sinned." See, now this is in two situations. It is a divorced person. It is saying that a divorced person can get married and not commit a sin if they follow the things that have already been laid out. The second situation is a virgin can marry. We already saw that. She can marry the first time and has not sinned, but she also, a virgin, can marry a person who has already been had a marriage, and they can go ahead and do that, and they have not sinned if you are following the rules.

Ah, but then the last part of that verse, "Nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you." That is like saying, "Well, buckle your seatbelt. We have not got time to talk about this. Bob will fill you in later." "Such shall have trouble in the flesh. I spare you." Now this is the single reason right here why second and third marriages have such a high failure rate. No question about it. Let me tell you something. This is, I am giving you reality stuff today. This is not judgmental stuff. I am not, I do not, I am not, I never look at, I have told you a million times, I do not look at anybody, whatever situation you are in, we can work it out. You have got to learn there are practical things in life that there are, and you better understand and you better learn them. If you want to drive home today and you decided not to take the main roads and you try to cut through backyards, you are going to get into trouble. Well, that is what has gotten you in trouble in your life. You have been cutting through backyards and stayed off the main roads, which are God's highways. I am just telling you the directions, but you better realize some things. A second marriage will never be the same as the first marriage. It is just not going to be. I mean, there will always be issues that you have to deal with.

You realize, and this is another great principle of life, you realize that everything in life that you and I do is a trade-off. There is hardly anything we do in life that we do not make a decision that we do not trade something for what we just decided to do. It is just true. You see it all the time. People have irresponsibility with their finances. They do not do what is right with their money. They do not have a budget. They do not follow any through with anything. Then, five or six years later, they have enormous debt. They have all kinds of problems, and other couples go out and do this or go here or go on vacation and go on that. Somebody, and you start to get a little attitude about it. You start to say to yourself, "Well, why can't I do that?" Hey, time out. Let me tell you why you cannot do it. You traded this for this. Now, what is so hard to understand about that? You traded that for this. You are going to live your life the way you want to do it. Do your life, run it the way you want, thumb your nose at the Bible, God, and do your own thing, and maintain your own Christianity, and think you are doing just fine. When you get to the judgment seat of Christ, you are going to lose everything you had. You know why you are going to lose everything you had? You are going to stand there and say, "Well, I do not understand this." God is going to say, "Time out. Let me tell you why this is the way it is. You traded this for this. You

enjoyed your life down there. You did what you wanted to do when you wanted to do it. You did not make church a priority. You did not make the things the church was doing a priority. You made your friends a priority. You made your life a priority. You made your retirement a priority. You made all you wanted to do a priority. Now you are going to stand here and look at this golden millennial inheritance that everybody else is getting, and you are going to look at me and say, "Why?" It is easy. You traded this for this. Is that hard? Maybe it is just me. I do not think it is hard. I have seen it in every aspect. I have had people in my life over the years that get mad at me and did not like something that I did or something I said, or maybe just got an attitude on themselves. It was something that could have been worked out. It was something that there was no reason why it could not have been worked out. They get mad and they leave and they go to another church, and they are miserable the rest of their life. I get probably three or four letters a month from people 10, 15, 20 years ago. I do not know how many times I get a phone call late in the night and somebody is saying, "Man, I wish that I listened to you back then. If I had just listened to you, but I got an attitude about it and knew I was right and you were wrong. Now I am out here in California. I am out here in Colorado. I am out here, here, now here. I cannot find a church. Nobody believes the Bible." They always say to me, "I just wanted to call you up and tell you, I am not asking to solve my problem, but I am telling you, I was wrong. Now I am stuck in a place where they have no Bible. They have no teaching. They have no church. I had it. I got an attitude. I lost it. I do not know what to do." You know what my answer is? Hey, it is simple. It does not require you staying up all night and figuring it out. You know what you did? God puts you someplace. Then you traded this for this. Enjoy it. You traded what God gave you for something that God never intended you to have. You traded it. You can pretend to know how great you are and how happy you are, but inside the judgment seat of Christ is coming, friend. You made a bet.

Everything in life is a trade-off. My point being, in marriage, when you marry somebody, I am not saying you should not, not saying you could not. The Bible says you can if you follow all the rules. I am talking about the things you better consider. You better get the idea that this is like the first time with all of the white, frilly, purity and all of the stuff that goes along with it and all of the first time stuff. Let me tell you something. Paul himself said, "such shall have trouble in the flesh." May I suggest to you some flesh troubles you will have? You say, "Are they in there?" Not in there, but they are in the last 40 years of my ministry dealing with people.

➤ The first thing you are always going to have is an ex-wife or an ex-husband, unless they are dead. But you are always going to have an ex-wife or an ex-husband. Now ex-wives or ex-husbands can, they are scaled from one to 10. One being very good, 10 being, "Oh my God." No, you are laughing, but it is true. It is true. You are going to have to deal with that. You are going to have to deal with that. It is one of those things where they are not going to go away. In many cases, it worked out very well because both people put God in it, the Bible in it, they do what is right, and it works itself out. That is the way it should be done. That is what he is talking about here. But boy, I have seen some cases where it will not. I have

seen some cases, boy, they have been divorced for 20 years, and they both walk into a room, and you just feel the radiation coming off of it. I told you before, I did a wedding one time, this guy had been married so many times, he married, I did not know who all them parents were. You feel like you are at a show, "Will the real parents please stand up?" Then you make everybody mad because it is my fault. How am I supposed to figure out this mess? Wear name tags, first wife, second wife, third wife, fourth wife, do something, help me. But it gets bad. Oh, it can get bad. You better realize that that ex is going to be in there for a long time, probably longer than you would like. That ex is going to be there, and those exes, when they get a nasty ex, I mean, do not call them ex for nothing. I am not talking about ex, I am talking about X marks the spot. They can make life miserable for you because they know that they have you at somewhat an advantage, and it can get terrible. It can get terrible. You need to consider that.

➤ You also need to realize that the person you are going to marry, if they have been married before, or you both have been married before, you are going to have to have contact with that person. A lot of people do not like that. I have seen it before when a woman gets married to a man who has been married before, or vice versa, the husband says, "I do not want you having any contact talking to him at all." Oh, really? That is an illusion. That is not going to happen. Unless there are some extenuating circumstances, that is just not going to work. I have seen marriages where after they got divorced and a guy married somebody else, that the guy still had a bond with his first wife. What is that all about? You are talking about, "Well, you know, even, why, why do you call her? Why do you do this? Why do you get involved? Why do you do that on such a level? Why are you over there fixing her sink, fixing her stove, fixing her refrigerator, fixing her pipe?" "Well, we were married for 40 years or 20 years or 10 years, and you know what? There is just a bond there." No, no, no, get some un-bonding stuff because it has got to end. Those things happen. They happen. You know what? You have to know where to draw the line. You have to be able to look at between the two and know how to, and how to handle these things. You, this is what happened to people walk into these marriages, and it is always, you know what your problem is? You are not proactive. We need to be more proactive. Hold hands. Let us sing my favorite song, "Pine Tree."

➤ Here is the third one. This is a killer. Every day, if anything kills a marriage, it will be this one. That is children from a former marriage. Let me tell you something. If that is not handled right, you are going to have a problem. It really

should not be a problem because there is a real difference between biological and physical and spiritual parents. I am closer to some of you than your own physical father, but I am not your biological father. If I could be closer to you than your biological father by not being your biological father, but being your spiritual father, any father that gets into a relationship with a woman or a mother takes that same position. "I may not be your biological father, but I am going to be your spiritual father." The model is Paul and Timothy. If I do it in this family, why cannot you do it in your family? I will tell you why you cannot do it in a minute. Most men marry women with kids and they say, "Well, I am going to marry the woman, not the kids." Most women marry men who are kids and they say, "Well, I am going to marry the man, but I am not going to marry the kids." They are here kids. You are out of your mind. You are out of your mind. Listen, you get into that scenario. Paul says, not me. Paul says, like I said yesterday, I get a lot of flak. I did not write the Bible. Quit giving me grief. I did not write it. You say, "I do not like what you are saying." I do not either. I did not write it. God wrote it. My responsibility, just tell you what He said. "Why do not I like it?" Well, quit taking it out on me. "Well, I do not know what to do." I got a great suggestion for you. It is a full moon tonight. Go up on a hill, take your clothes off, rub paint all over it and scream. These are the concepts. You better, if you are going to get into this, folks, listen to me. If you are going to get into this, you better have a plan. All parties better understand and adhere to the plan, and it better be a biblical plan. It just better be.

A spiritual leader needs to grasp the reality of the situation. A spiritual leader in a family needs to provide a vision for the family. Habakkuk 2. The Bible says in Proverbs 29:18 that "where there is no vision, the people perish." That is true for a church. It is also true for your family. Whatever situation you find yourself, but especially one of this, the spiritual leader has to take the responsibility and he has to provide the vision. I told you about the lady a number of years ago that I met over in Kansas. We started talking, and she told me that she was going through a divorce. She was a very nice lady, and we talked back and forth, and I tried to give her a little Bible encouragement. I said, "What is your name, ma'am?" She says, "My name is Dorothy." I said, kind of light in the mood a little bit, "I bet you get a lot of ribbing about Dorothy, Wizard of Oz." She says, "More than you ever know. I have been married three times. First one had no heart. Second one had no courage. This one I am married to has got no brain." I said, "Okay." If you are a leader, you have got to provide the vision. I told that to a lady one time in a meeting when she says, "I do not know what to do with my husband." I said, "Well, he is going to have to take the reins and be the leader." I said, "It is the husband's job to provide a vision." She said, "Oh, he has got a vision, all right. It is a 60 inch. He is just on his fat rear end with a beer in one hand, watching television all day long. That is the only vision you are going to get from him." You have got to have a vision. It is your job. It is your job. Get a vision. If you do not know how

to get a vision, then Habakkuk 2 is the way it lays the whole thing out. You can get a vision, but you are going to have to get a vision.

I mean, you have got to realize that these things are what comes in, and then his financial issues. Let me tell you something. How many situations I have been in where they have been married before, and he has got two kids by one marriage and three kids by another marriage, and he has got to pay child support? So you have got to get a job and you have got to work extra hours. So his alimony is \$1,200 a month, \$1,400, whatever, however it worked out for two kids. So here he is. You married him. You have got to go to get a job so he can make the alimony money, giving the money to her. What a devil is going to have a field day with that. Do not tell me about these things. You are naive. I have dealt with these things for 40 years, 40 years. I have seen every mess that could ever get into, every mess that anybody could ever do. I have seen these things happen time and time and time again. You know what the key to success is? Lose the Cinderella idea. Lose the idea it is going to be a storybook relationship. It may well be if you put the book in it, but you better know going in, Paul said, "such is going to have trouble in the flesh." There are some things you better get down before you get into it. Do not wait till you get into there and you say, "Wow, why somebody did not tell me?" It is your responsibility to figure it out. It is like the Bible. You know what the judgment seat of Christ, when we all lose everything we got, all of us, you know why we will lose it? God is not going to hold us accountable for the things we knew or the things we did not know. God is going to hold us accountable for the things we could have found out, but we went somewhere else instead of being where we could have been to learn them. You betcha. You betcha. You need to look ahead. You need to look at what you are getting into. I am not saying you do not marry the person. The person may have done everything you are supposed to do. She may have done everything she is supposed to do. They now may have broken the cycle and be the most loveliest, kindest, wonderful, spiritual, Christ-like, Mary-like person you ever met in your life, but the baggage is still there. You have to be prepared for it. You need to look ahead of what you are going to have to deal with. You need to make it work. You need to examine your motive, your commitment, your endurance. I call this the walking on water syndrome because that is just about what you are going to have to do. You are going to have to have endurance, long suffering, patience. You are going to have to have discernment. You are going to have to have biblical principles.

VI. Marriage and the Lord's Work

Look at the next one, 1 Corinthians 7:29-31:

1 Corinthians 7:29

But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

1 Corinthians 7:30

And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;

1 Corinthians 7:31

And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

Here is what you have got. This is a great concept here, great concept here, but it is a strange verse, is it not? You just got married. We have just come through all these things about being married. We talked about due benevolence and weaker vessel syndrome and all that stuff, and now he says you just got married, and now you treat your wife like you have no wife at all. Boy, a lot of guys know what that verse is at. That is not what he is saying. This is Rule Number 16. Rule Number 16 is do not get too married, you forget the Lord. Marriage, like everything else in life, is a balance, and things change the moment you get married. You do not have your own freedom anymore to do what you want to do. Before you are married, you can go hunting, fishing all you want. Once you get married, you have got to put a stop to that to some degree. Once you have kids, you put a stop to it all degrees. But life is a balance. Things change the moment you say "I do." I am going to change that in my marriage from this point on, you are going to say instead of "I do," "I think so," or "I hope so."

Proverbs 16:11 says "a just weight and balance are the Lord's." Proverbs 11:1 says "a false balance is an abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight." You see, kids get married and they get so into each other that they are new to ever do anything for the Lord anymore. They lose the perspective of why God gave them marriage in the first place. You see, it is balance, balance. He says up there in verse 30, gives you an example here: "They that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not." Now that is the example. That is a contrast. He says, "and they that weep as though they wept not." Now a Christian weeps, but from the worldly standpoint, the Christian does not weep because a Christian should not weep after foolish things. See, so you weep, but you do not weep. It is okay to weep after lost people going to hell. It is stupid to weep after some sad movie that you see that the people are dying there and you are crying over down on the beach in Florida, living it up with a million dollars. You do know Psalm 56 says that God does have a bottle for your tears. You see, God has got all the bases covered. When you get to the judgment seat of Christ, He is not going to only look at everything that you did in your attitude of heart. He has got on that shelf up there a bottle, and that bottle has got your name on it. It never got things full of teardrops, and every teardrop in there is going to come out when God dumps it out, and those teardrops are going to hit the throne of God, and they are going to bust open, and they are going to say what they were spent weeping over. This is why he says, 2 Corinthians 5, "the judgment seat of Christ is the terror of the Lord." Why, you think you can hide your sinful life and do what you want to do? You cannot even hide your teardrops. He says, "They that rejoice as though they rejoiced not." You see, a Christian rejoices, but he does not rejoice in the foolish things. We talked about it a couple of Thursday nights ago. There are seven things they rejoice over in heaven. They ought to be the things you and I rejoice over. He says, "and they that buy as though they possessed not." A Christian buys things, but that is not all that he lives for because he realizes that life is not about possessions. You see the contrast into the world? What he is saying here is the fact that he says that when you get married, you do not want to get, you are married, but you do not want to get too married that you are so caught up in the

world's concept of marriage, you forget that God saved you and gave you that husband and wife to be a help meet for Him, and God has something that He wants you to accomplish for Him. Most couples, many couples never get to it. They have got so many issues that because they should have never gotten married in the first place, that they just never get around to why God really wanted them to get married in the second place. They are going to wind up with a judgment seat of Christ as God put them together, husband and wife to do a job for them. They are going to wind up hand in hand, naked and naked because of the fact that they wasted their, not only their life, they wasted their marriage. It is bad enough to waste your life. It is something else to waste your marriage. Welcome to reality church. You see, the key is balance in your marriage. You do not lose the real purpose of why God put you together in the first place.

Then he says in 1 Corinthians 7:31, "And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." Now that is a good verse. That is a good verse that shows you and I that we are in this world, but we are not of this world. Because we are in this world, we use this world, but we do not abuse this world. What does that mean? Well, last time I looked in the Bible, softball was not a game we are going to play up in heaven. Neither is volleyball. Those are worldly things, but we take those worldly things and we use them for the Lord to win people to Christ, do we not? That is taking something that the world has, using it, but not abusing it. What would be abusing it? Abusing it would be to start a softball league out of a church or a Bible that never puts Christ in the forefront. I told the captains when we started our league many, many years ago, in most church leagues, here is what you do. You get a bunch of people together to play volleyball, and then you are going to figure out how you are going to preach Christ to them. I said, "We are going to reverse that process. Your job as a captain is to get a bunch of people to preach to and then figure out how to play volleyball." Christ has to be first. When you use it, that means you take something that the world has and you use it for the honor and glory of the Lord, i.e. marriage, but also you can lose your perspective. In a day, we lose our perspective as we will just become more interested in winning than we do winning people that come on the teams. When you lose your perspective in marriage and you start to abuse it, marriage is the worldly concept as far as two people getting hooked up, going through a ceremony. When you lose that concept, then you wind up abusing something instead of using it for what God wanted you to do. Real simple, real simple.

VII. Single vs. Married Ministry

Then 1 Corinthians 7:32-35:

1 Corinthians 7:32

But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

1 Corinthians 7:33

But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

1 Corinthians 7:34

There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

1 Corinthians 7:35

And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

Here is what he is saying. This is Rule Number 18. He has already told you that a single person can live closer to the Lord than a married person. Here we have another killer about marriages, and this will be another balance factor. Of course, he is saying here that basically if you are married, you have got to care about the things of the world. If you are not married, you care about the things of the Lord. Now that sounds a lot worse than it is. The bottom line is that your dynamics change the moment you get married. Ministry is always ministry, but the dynamics of ministry change. Right now when you are single, you are free to go out and do whatever you want to do as far as ministry is concerned. This is what a lot of young guys cannot get. Ladies, I might suggest to you, do not marry one until he gets this because it will be a disaster. Young guys today do not understand. They think that ministry is just going out there and beating them up for the Lord or going out and doing some great thing or preaching down in Joplin or doing Bible studies or discipling somebody and all of those things. Now that is very important. There is no question about that. But if you do not keep the balance right, before you are married, you can do whatever you want to do. You can stay out seven days a week discipling, working with people, teaching Bible studies. You can stay out through midnight studying the Bible with your friends. You can do all that you want to do. The moment you get married, that has to change. You see, for a lot of you young guys, and some of you girls maybe too, you think that is wrong. You think you are not doing the ministry now. See, you are too immature to figure out that when you get married, the dynamics of your ministry change. Now, where before you were married, your first ministry could be all that you do. Now that you get married, your first ministry becomes that wife. So you do not go out and do everything. Now you start to meet her physical needs, her emotional needs, and her spiritual needs. Some of you think that if you are married to your wife, and she wants you to stay home and watch a movie, and you have got Bible study planned with the boys, that that would be almost sin in God's sight, would it not? For you to stay home frivolously to watch a movie while you could be out there learning the deep things of the Bible, while your first ministry stays home by herself. Hey, do not worry about it. It will not be long till somebody else be watching a movie with her. You better get it, guys. There is a balance in it. Now when you decide to marry, do not get married if you do not have the balance. If you are going to get into a relationship, then your dynamics change. You do not have the freedom to do whatever you want to do. In truth, you get just as much done, because once you become one together, then her ministry, what she does, and your ministry, what you do, all comes back to you. So in reality, you probably get more done than you did when you were single. But he writes that the way he writes it to tell you that there are some dynamics that you need to understand, and you need to grow up and mature into, that you realize that staying home with your wife, going to dinner with her, or doing something with her, or doing things around the house to help

her, is just part of it too. You do not get this thing. "Well, honey, I really need your help." "I cannot. You do not understand. I am up here right now, and I am just about to discover who the Antichrist is, and I cannot come down, darling. Me and God are locked into this thing, and He is about to reveal to me," and the door slams. She walks away and says, "Well, do not worry about it, pal. I already know who the Antichrist is." You better get it. Guys, you better get it. Ladies, you better get it. I mean, you have got to realize that there is a difference between being the single, and that dimension of a ministry, and that mindset, than when you take on a relationship.

The two ends of the spectrum. I mean, you will either marry a Bozo the Clown, who will never do anything, or you will marry somebody who is so spiritual. Hey, let me just put it this way. Ladies, never marry anybody who is so heavenly minded, he is absolutely no earthly good. If he does not take the time to spend with you, to do what you want to do, if he thinks that going to a grocery store, and going shopping, and doing these things, are downsizing things, when he has got to be out there doing the ministry, just pass him by. Here, get the song. "Pass Me By." It is in the song book. Just take "Gentle Savior, pass me by, O Bozo the Clown. Pass me by, O Bozo the Clown. Hit the road, you idiot." Put it in there. It will work for you.

There is a guy up here in North that has got a church. I have known him since he was a kid. He did not like me and I do not like him. Story of my life. This kid has been in every church, growing up in our church, not this church, growing up, I have known him since he was 14 years old. Been a problem all his life. Number one, problems with authority. He has had an authority issue all his life. When he got older, he got married, and married to an authority issue, authority problem. All the way it goes. He has been in every church in this city. Every church in this city, he has an authority problem with the leadership. Hey, what happens when you have an authority problem with every church in the city? What do you finally do? Start your own church or your own final authority. These guys are quite incredible. They would look at what we do. We would look at what we do on Friday night and Saturday night, playing softball, volleyball. They would look at that and they would think that we are the anti-Christ church. Now, what this kid does, he preaches on the street. If you would go down to the plaza, I think they got kicked out of the plaza, probably down Westport where they are at last I heard. You would go down there and they would have these big signs and they would have people burning in hell, and they are down there calling women walking up down the street whores, and they are doing all of this and all that. I went out with one of them one time when I was in Boston in a place. He had a speaker in his car with a microphone, a CB that had a PA on it, and we would stop up at the thing and we would be driving someplace and he would be the women walking across the street or a man walking with a woman across the street. He would turn the PA on him and say, "Where are you going? God knows where you are going tonight, you whore. God knows where you are going tonight. You two are going to sleep together tonight. God is going to judge you, you whore." Then he hands the mic to me and said, "Here, have a go at it." I said, "Park's line one." I keep going to do that. That is stupid. But you see, if you do not do that, you have no ministry. If you do not do that, you are defying God who could think while we are out preaching on the street, you are playing softball. Truth of the matter is in 25 years, they had never had anybody won to Christ ever, never joined that church. I tell you what, in this season alone, we got more people coming to this church and saved than they got in the last 30 years of doing what they are doing. But he is stupid.

He is unteachable. He has the aspect of the mess that he gets in, and he looks at those situations, and he is so prideful and arrogant that he thinks that this is the ministry. That is just the way that a lot of young guys look at it. That is why they lose their families. You do not minister to her, somebody else will. You can take that one to the bank. You have got to listen to her needs. You have got to meet her spiritual and emotional and physical needs. It is more important, you have to realize the dynamics that have to go into it.

VIII. Parental Guidance and Death in Marriage

1 Corinthians 7:36-38:

1 Corinthians 7:36

But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

1 Corinthians 7:37

Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

1 Corinthians 7:38

So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.

Breathe easy now. We are downhill from here. This is Rule Number 19. It basically says here, do not impose staying single on your child, even though the Bible continually says that is the best route. As a father, you as a father, you may know what the Bible says, that the Bible says that the best scenario is to stay single, or only marry somebody that has never been married before, but we do not have a right to impose that. I mean, you do have a right to teach the biblical principles and show them all the ramifications. But a father does not have the right to say to your son or daughter, "You cannot marry because you are going to have a better relationship." That is not your call. It is kind of stupid when you are married yourself. But then there are a lot of stupid people out there. I do not know what to tell you. Verse 37 says, "but if in your heart you can be steadfast in that concept and not burn," burn in the sense of lust, like we talked about first, second week, he says, "you are doing well," then stay single. Verse 38 says, either way, it is okay as long as you heed the rules and the principles that we have looked at in chapter seven. But it will always be less hectic if you stay single, but not everybody can. It will always, if you do marry, it will always be less hectic if you marry somebody for the first time and both of you do what is right, but that does not always happen. See, you are under grace. All things are lawful. Not all things are expedient. Whatever way you choose to go, it is okay as long as you recognize that each one has different dynamics to it that you are going to have to deal with. As long as you get prepared for it, bring it to the Bible, make the Bible work, get a plan, do everything that you are supposed to do that we have talked about, it can work. It can work. When you do not, it will just be another disaster. You have to break the cycle.

Then Rule Number 20, 1 Corinthians 7:39-40:

1 Corinthians 7:39

The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 7:40

But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

The last thing he says here is the fact that this goes back to Romans 7:1 and back to the Old Testament, that the only accepted divorce in the Bible from a biblical standpoint is death. Death is obviously flesh leaving flesh. He says there in a case like that, you are at liberty to marry whoever you want, "only in the Lord." In other words, bring it back even in that under the guidelines of 1 Corinthians 7. Then he says, "I think also I have the Spirit of God." That basically we can make that say, so we all understand these basically, trust me, I know what I am talking about. These things were given to me by the Lord. I am telling you the truth. You want to have a fruitful life for God. You want to get marriage defined in the right thing and make it no matter where you are at in life. That is the beauty about God. God fixed it. So whatever mistakes we have made along the way, or whatever bad scenario you find yourself in this very moment today, there is always something you can do. Now you know that it is not the hard part. The hard part is doing what you need to do. Every time, almost without exception, I have a husband and wife come in and they will lay out their issues, and they are very severe many times. Then usually at the end after they spill their guts for a while and rag on each other for a little bit, the wife will look at me or the husband will look at me and kind of shrug her shoulders and say, "Well, what do you think? Is there anything we can do?" I always answer, "You know what? That is never not the question. It is never the question, 'Is there anything we can do?' The real question is, 'Will you do what you need to do?'" It is always something you can do, but you have got to break the cycle. It starts with you changing who you are.

You now have the three sections broken down: 1 Corinthians 7:1-9, 1 Corinthians 7:10-24, 1 Corinthians 7:25-40. You have got all the principles in the right place. Get that in your Bible, go over it. You will see how as we continue to move through things in the Bible and grow that you will see how this stuff gets used and how it works. We will go from there. So let us have a prayer and we will be dismissed.