



PREACHING THE CROSS
God's Remedy for a Troubled Church

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAKE ORION

Marriage: A Means to Sanctification

Sunday, July 17, 2016

Dr. Juan M. Moreno

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 7:10–16

Paul delivers another blow to the Corinthians who were pushing for divorce for the sake of singleness. For the Corinthians, marriage was an unnecessary temporal institution that hindered spiritual growth. Paul continues to challenge their distorted thinking by giving specific instructions concerning the *prohibition of*, and the *permissibility for* divorce.

In his instruction to the married where both are believers, divorce is not an option. If a divorce does take place, both must remain single or be reconciled (7:10-12).

In his instruction to those in “mixed-marriages,” that is where one partner is an unbeliever, divorce is not an option for the believer if the unbeliever is pleased to dwell with the believer. If, on the other hand, the unbeliever is not content to dwell with the believer because of his or her faith, then the believer is not bound to the marriage (7:12-16).

I. REVIEW

A. The First Slogan: *All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything, 6:12.*

B. The Second Slogan: *Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, and God will do away with both of them, 6:13a.*

C. The Third Slogan: *Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, 6:18b.*

D. The Fourth Slogan: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman, 7:1b.*

II. THE INSTRUCTION TO THE MARRIED CHRISTIAN COUPLES, 7:10–11.

A. Married Christian Partners May Not Divorce, 7:10.

1. The Lord's instruction concerning divorce, *I give instruction, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband.*

a. Mark 10:2-12, esp. verse 11.

b. Matt 5:32; 19:9.

2. God's hatred of divorce, cf., Mal 2:13-16.

a. Marriage is a covenant, Mal 2:14.

b. Marriage is to be permanent, Gen 2:24.

c. Marriage is to be a picture of Christ's love for the church, Eph. 5:22-23.

For believers, divorce is not an option.

B. Married Christian Partners That Divorce must Remain Single, 7:11.

1. What is encouraged: Reconciliation

2. What is not permitted: Remarriage

III. THE INSTRUCTION TO "MIXED" MARRIAGES, 7:12-16.

A. The Believer in a Mixed Marriage Is Not Permitted to Initiate Divorce, 7:12-14.

1. The reason to remain: God's sanctifying work in marriage.

2. The possible results for remaining: the salvation of the spouse, 7:16.

B. The Believer in a "Mixed" Marriage Is to Allow the Unbeliever to Depart If He/She Is Not Content to Dwell with Him/Her, 7:15-16.

1. The believer is not permitted to initiate the divorce.
2. In context, the reason for the divorce is faith related.

The context of the situation is one where a spouse in a marriage accepted Christ and the other spouse is not content to dwell with the new believer.

IV. APPLICATION:

A. For Married Believers

1. Allow your marriage to be a picture of Christ's love and sacrifice for the Church.
2. Make your marriage a place where your spouse can find continual forgiveness and reconciliation for the sake of Christ.

B. For a Believer Married to an Unbeliever Who Wants to Remain Married

1. Trust the Scripture that neither you nor your children will be defiled by your unbelieving spouse.
2. Trust the Scripture that both your children and your unbelieving spouse will be sanctified because you are a believer. (They become a special target of God's attention.)

C. For a Believer Married to an Unbeliever Who Wants to Depart

1. If the unbeliever begins divorce proceedings, the Christian partner is not to contest.
2. The marriage bond is dissolved between a husband and wife only by death (Rom. 7:2), adultery (Matt. 19:9), and an unbeliever leaving.
3. Although God permits divorce in the case of desertion, He has little to say about remarriage in such a situation.