

Marriage Disapproved

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Marriage Approved

(Genesis 1:28; 2:18; Matthew 19:5; Hebrews 13:4)

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(1Corinthians 7:1, 7-8)

Two beings created after the rebellion of Satan (Isa. 14:12-21; cf. Gen. 2:17; 3:1-15) are described in Genesis 1:27 as being "in the image of God" (Gen. 1:27). As God is spirit (Jn. 4:24), they also would have been composed of spirit. Therefore when they became flesh and blood, it would have been a direct result of sin (Gen. 3:11-19; Rom. 6:23; 1Cor. 15:50). They were described as being male and female, which would refer to the different talents and abilities that made them distinct from one another. Many people assume that these differences were limited to physical sexual roles (see studies: Symbolism). However, if they were originally created as spirit beings, this assumption is incorrect because marriage does not occur in the spirit realm (Mt. 22:30; Mk. 12:25; Lk. 20:35).

The existence of man in the spirit realm is described using symbolic language in the following scripture.

Before the throne (of Almighty God) there was (something like) a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. ⁷The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, and **the third living creature had a face like a man**, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle (Rev. 4:6-7; cf. Eze. 1:10; 10:14; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The name Adam simply means "man" but the woman who came from him was not given a name until after they both sinned (Gen. 3:20). Prior to their sin, the woman could not give birth to flesh and blood offspring. However, after sinning she was changed from a spirit composition to a flesh and blood form that could give birth to other human beings. When this change occurred, Adam named the woman Eve meaning "Life" or "Living" because she became the mother of every human that would follow.

And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was (now – following sin) the mother of all living (humans) (Gen. 3:20; NJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Before any sin was committed, the woman was described as being a helper to the man and her responsibility was to assist Adam with the tasks God would give him.

And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a **helper** (SHD 5828) comparable to him' (Gen. 2:18; emphasis added).

The Hebrew word translated into the English word "helper" is used numerous times in scripture to describe the assistance that God provides those He is working with.

And this he (Moses) said of Judah: 'Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him to his people; let his hands be sufficient for him, and **may You** (God) **be a help** (SHD 5828) against his enemies' (Dt. 33:7; cf. 33:29; Ps. 33:20; 70:5; 115:9-11; 121:2; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

As God assists those He is working with, so the woman was to assist Adam. She had a very important job and responsibility to fulfill. It

certainly was not menial any more than God's assistance could be described as menial. In both cases, it is vitally important work. As God established the relationship between a man and a woman, He does not want it altered in any way, or destroyed. To claim that marriage is disapproved shows a complete ignorance of the order that God established from the creation of Adam. This is why Christ confirmed that his heavenly Father never intended for a man and woman to separate, nor did He intend for people of the same sex to get married (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27).



...ARE YOU LOOSED FROM A WIFE? DO NOT SEEK A WIFE.

I Corinthians 7:27b

And he (Christ) answered and said to them (Pharisees), 'Have you not read that He (God) who made (created) them at the beginning (prior to their sin) *'made them male and female,'*⁵ and said, *'For this reason a man shall* (in future generations) *leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?*⁶ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore **what God has joined together, let not man separate** (Mt. 19:4-6; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

With this summary background, the texts that are used to claim God disapproves of marriage will be examined. In both examples, the Apostle Paul was discussing challenges that the early church faced due to persecutions. By ignoring this historical reality, it is easy to twist what Paul was saying (2Pet. 3:16).

Now concerning virgins: I (Paul) have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in his mercy has made trustworthy. ²⁶**I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present distress – that it is good for a man to**

remain as he is (1Cor. 7:25-26; Ed. note in parenthesis).

...Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife (1Cor. 7:27b).

Due to persecutions against members of the early church, it was Paul's opinion that single members remain unmarried, unless they were already engaged (1Cor. 7:27-28). Life expectancy was short and the trials in some cases were very severe.

But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, ³⁰those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess (1Cor. 7:29-30).

And they (Jewish religious leaders) stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep (died) (Ac. 7:59; Ed. notes in parentheses).

It would have been extremely difficult to maintain a good marriage for those who were serving God immediately following Christ's death and resurrection. Paul commented on some of the trials he went through when he was doing God's work.

Are they (false apostles; cf. 2Cor. 11:13) ministers of Christ? – I (Paul) speak as a fool – I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes (i.e. being whipped) above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. ²⁴From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep (i.e.

floating in the sea); ²⁶In journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils of the city, in perils of the wilderness, in perils of the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness (2Cor. 11:23-27; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So it was in the context of persecutions that Paul addressed the subject of marriage, and he spoke from personal experience.

Now concerning the things (trials and persecutions) of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman (1Cor. 7:1; Ed. note in parenthesis).



**BUT EVEN IF YOU DO MARRY, YOU
HAVE NOT SINNED; AND IF A VIRGIN
MARRIES, SHE HAS NOT SINNED...**

I Corinthians 7:28a

For I (Paul) wish that all men (in the early church) were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. ⁸But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am (1Cor. 7:7-8; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Paul noted, in 1Corinthians 7:7, that not everyone is the same and although unmarried life was advisable for his ministry, with its multiple trials and persecutions, he was not commanding everyone in the church to remain single or that married people become divorced.

Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. ¹¹But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And

a husband is not to divorce his wife (1Cor. 7:10-11).

But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned... (1Cor. 7:28a).

Paul was a passionate servant of God and he gave everything he had to the job he was given to do. He could not have maintained a good marriage with the trials and persecutions he went through and bringing a wife on his long and perilous journeys would be out of the question. Because many other church members were also going through severe trials, it was Paul's opinion that they would be better off if they were unmarried. So he was speaking in ideal terms even though unrealistic in many situations, especially for those who were already married.

The principle that Paul used can be applied to anyone who is obsessed with their work with little time to devote to married life. In situations like this, it would be unwise to get married.

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