The Physical Relationship of Marriage

I Corinthians 7:1-9

6-4-2023

Introduction: verses 1; 6-9

***God's people must know what the Bible teaches about sex.**

Principles about sex from I Corinthians 7:1-9

I. **Sex <u>prior</u> to marriage is sin (v. 2)**
(wrong <u>time</u> for sex)

II. **Sex <u>apart</u> from marriage is sin (v. 2)**
(wrong <u>kind</u> of sex)

III. **Sexual relations within marriage are <u>clean, good, and wholesome</u> (v.2-3).**

IV. **Sexual relations within marriage are to be <u>regularly participated in</u> (v. 3)**

V. **Sexual relations are to be <u>unselfish</u> (v. 3 & 4)**

VI. **There is to be no sexual bargaining (controlling or manipulating) (v. 5)**

VII. **A couple must seek to keep each other sexually satisfied to decrease the chances of Satan tempting in the area of lack of self-control (v. 5)**

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I. **Sex prior to marriage is sin (v. 2)**
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II. **Sex apart from marriage is sin (v. 2)**
(wrong kind of sex)

III. **Sexual relations within marriage are _____, good, and _____ (v.2-3).**

IV. **Sexual relations within marriage are to be _____participated in (v. 3)**

V. **Sexual relations are to be _____ (v. 3 & 4)**

VI. **There is to be ____ sexual _____ (controlling or manipulating) (v. 5)**

VII. **A couple must seek to keep each other sexually satisfied to decrease the chances of _____ tempting in the area of lack of self-control (v. 5)**

The Physical Relationship of Marriage

I Corinthians 7:1-9

5-28-2023

Introduction: verses 1; 6-9

V. 1

"Ye wrote unto me" - The Corinthians were confused about many areas of the Christian life (in large pagan cities with diverse religions and cultures, diversities of opinions would abound).

Perplexed about the matter of celibacy, they wrote to Paul asking him if they should remain single. Paul addresses this issue in chapter 7.

"Touch" =

--to literally touch with the hand (Mt. 8:3, 15; 9:20, 21, 29)
--to cling on to (Jn. 20:17)
--to be in contact or close association with (II Cor. 6:17)

"It is good for a man not to touch a woman" - It is beneficial for an unmarried man not to establish an intimate relationship with a woman (to be unattached, to remain single). It is advantageous for an unmarried person to remain celibate (if this is her/her gift - v. 7).

V. 6

"Not of commandment" - The revelation Paul is giving here was not previously given in God's Word. The admonition to consider remaining celibate (unmarried) was not a commandment of God, but now is a suggestion by God via Paul.

V. 7

"I would that all men were even as I myself" = Single, unmarried (cp. v. 8; 9:5)

(Some believe that perhaps Paul had been a member of the Sanhedrin [[cp. Acts 26:10] and therefore he must have been married, and perhaps his wife had died and he remained a widower. --However, no statement of Scripture would clearly substantiate this.)

Paul never hints at a previous marriage in his Epistles.

"Every man has his proper gift of God" - Some people are endowed with a gift of celibacy (most are not).

Some have no desire to get married (and there is nothing wrong with a person who does not need a mate).

However, to try to exercise a gift you don't have is indeed frustrating. Not all people are able to accept the statement: *"It is good not to marry"* (Mt. 19:12).

V. 8

"It is good" - This phrase ties back to verse one and explains it.
Paul is saying, It is good to be single.

V. 9

"If they cannot contain" - If they are unable to exercise life-long self-control over sexual appetites and passions -- ***"It is better to marry than to burn"*** (lit. be inflamed).

"Burn" - Two views:

1) In hell because of a life of fornicating (F.F. Bruce) (Mt. 5:27-30; Heb. 13:4; I Cor. 6:9)

*2) In passionate lust (to be inflamed [passive] with sexual desires)

Satan today (via the TV, movies, music, magazines and other media) has glorified illicit sex. Through over-emphasis, he creates obsessions in the minds of people in regards to this area of life.

Definitions of "Love" in the Greek language

1) **"Storge"** -A loyal/family love (Rom.12:10; cp. II Tim. 3:3 "astorge" - in the last days many will be without "natural affection")

2) **"Philia"** -An affectionate/friendship love (Titus 2:4; Heb.13:1)

3) **"Agape"** -A self-giving love (A decision of the will to give sacrificially, & unconditionally - Eph. 5:25,28,30; I Pet.3:7)

4) **"Eros"** -A physical/sensual love (This word is not found in the N.T.)
This "love" has its source in a emotional & biological urge which seeks fulfillment in sexual union.

The old testament equivalent would be the word "doth" which literally means to "boil"
and is used of passionate lovemaking (Song of Solomon 1:2; 4:10)

Two wrong extremes existed in Corinth:

1) **Eroticism** -To please the flesh at all cost (no absolutes)
(cp. I Peter 4:1-5)
2) **Asceticism** -To view anything enjoyable or physical as being evil (cp. Colossians 2:20-23)

Evidently some at the church in Corinth taught that a couple (to be spiritual), ought to live as though they were not married; to never enjoy the intimate physical relationship.

Sex is an expression of love which God designed to be the unique experience between one man and one woman, an experience not to be shared with anyone else. It is the most personal and intimate knowledge that one human being can have of another. This is why the Bible uses the euphemism "know" to describe this most intimate of relationships (Gen.4:1; 25).

***God's people must know what the Bible teaches about sex.**

Principles about sex from I Corinthians 7:1-9

I. Sex <u>prior</u> to marriage is sin (v. 2)
(wrong <u>time</u> for sex)

V. 2

God never asks us to <u>avoid</u> something that is not harmful to us. If something is forbidden, it is because it is not beneficial to us. It is bad, dangerous, etc.

"Fornication" refers to premarital sexual relations, whereas adultery refers to a married person who commits intercourse with someone other than mate (cp. Gal. 5:19; I Cor. 6:9 where a distinction is made; NOTE I Cor. 6:18 - Fornication is a sin against one's <u>own</u> body; adultery would be sin against two: you and your mate).

"To avoid fornication" - "Marriage cannot be reduced simply to being God's escape valve for the sex drive" (MacArthur, p.156) However, marriage is a lifelong commitment to mutual helpfulness and mutual fellowship (Gen.2:18). The result of the marriage bond however, will be an outlet for the sex drive to be satisfied in a private, satisfying, and proper way.

"His own wife (singular) ***. . . her own husband*** (singular)" - God's will is a monogamous relationship of <u>one</u> woman married to <u>one</u> man for life.

"The <u>two</u> shall be <u>one</u> flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:5; Eph. 5:31).

Cp. Jacob who waited until marriage - Gen. 29:21 - "And Jacob said unto Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her." (Such intercourse would consummate the marriage)

Cp. Shechem who didn't wait until marriage - Gen. 34:2, 31.

See I Thessalonians 4:1-8

II. Sex apart from marriage is sin (v. 2)
(wrong kind of sex)

The word fornication comes from the Greek "porneia" from which we get our English word "pornography."

You must guard your eyes and mind (Job 31:1 - "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?").

Jesus said Lust is the same as adultery (Mt. 5:28)
Not only is pre-marital sex wrong, but a pornographic thought life is.

Masturbation is sin because it is selfish in nature; It is a manifestation of a covetous spirit.

*"His own wife . . . her own husband" (**"own"** - to belong exclusively to someone) (v. 2)*
"Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well" (Prov. 5:15)

If sex is for marriage, it follows that anything which would lead to sexual contact should also be reserved for marriage (EX: kissing, hugging, petting).

Sexual activity is not limited to intercourse. Many delude themselves into thinking that if they go just as far as to come short of intercourse, then they are still innocent of fornication (a *"lustful look"* is adultery - Mt. 5:28).

Any stimulation of sexual organs by any means (whether by thought, visual stimulus [EX: pornography], audio stimulus [EX: Dial-a-porn], masturbation, etc.) is fornication.

Fornication is wrong because:

1) **Fornication is a perversion (twisting) of God's plan for marital oneness** (Gen. 2:24-25; I Cor. 6:16) (It is acting out a lie, since the ones involved really are not "one" in God's eyes)

2) **Fornication is a violation of God's clear commands against it** (Exodus 20:14; Dt. 5:18) (Fornicators will be judged - Heb. 13:4)

3) **Fornication cheapens human dignity and treats the body like an object to be used then discarded**
(that which is common [profane] is cheap) (I Thes. 4:4; Prov. 11:22)

4) **Fornication is not God's will for true sanctification**
(I Thes. 4:1-3) (Defilement is a dirty feeling)

5) **Fornication reveals a lack of self-control over one's sexual desires** (I Cor. 7:5)

6) **Fornication is stealing what belongs to someone else** (or will in the future belong to someone else) (I Thes. 4:6)

7) **Fornication preoccupies and enslaves the mind and becomes an idol which may substitute for God** (II Pet. 2:14; I Cor. 6:13) (It can be more addicting than drugs)

8) **Fornication violates a trust of faithfulness between you and your spouse** (Prov. 6:29-35)

9) **Fornication runs the high risk of acquiring serious infection and fatal disease** (Rom.1:27)

10) **Fornication results in unwanted pregnancies, evil abortion, and children who will lack a proper family structure** (II Sam. 11:5; Prov. 5:17)

11) **Fornication is totally inconsistent for a saint to commit** (Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:3-5)

III. Sexual relations within marriage are <u>clean, good, and wholesome</u> (v.2-3).

Sex was God's invention, not Satan's (Gen. 1:27, 28, 31; 2:25; 4:1).

Sex is not sinful within the walls of marriage. Within the marriage bonds it is holy and good.

"It is indeed a sad, sad situation that the high and holy function of sex life should have been so abused that we have come to think of it as something filthy, sinful..." (Dehaan, p.75)

Heb. 13:4 - "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed (koite - marriage bed; sexual intercourse) undefiled: but whoremongers (fornicators) and adulterers God will judge" (i.e. "let marriage be <u>held</u> in <u>honor</u> by all (everyone); Marriage has a <u>dignity</u>; a <u>value</u> above and beyond any other human relationship.

How will God judge violators of the marriage bed?In this life - AIDS; STDs
In the next life - (I Cor. 6:9)

Sex is for procreation, but it is primarily intended for <u>pleasure</u> (Prov.5:19)
Certain parts of the human (male & female) anatomy have no biological function other than the pleasure of sexual fulfillment. Sexual expression should not be viewed as a "necessary evil in which spiritual Christians engage only to procreate children. It is far more than a physical act. God created it to be the expression and experience of love on the deepest human level and to be a beautiful and powerful bond between husband and wife." (MacArthur, p.157)

"The pursuit of pleasure with your mate in bed is <u>unlimited</u>, except where a certain act would violate the moral law of God's Word or would do harm to the temple of the Holy Ghost, your body" (Dr. Tim Jordan)

Are certain acts forbidden? No, as long as it will not damage or harm your body; or is dissatisfying to your spouse.

The physical act of marriage should consist of that which would please your spouse. If both partners do not give consent, then the couple should abstain from that particular practice.

IV. Sexual relations within marriage are to be <u>regularly participated in</u> (v. 3)

"Render" = This imperative means to pay or give back.

The present tense implies to <u>pay</u> your debt to your mate on a <u>continual</u> or <u>habitual</u> basis. The frequency of the physical union is up to the couple.

Just as God designed the marriage relationship to remain permanent, He designed for the sexual relationship to remain permanent. (MacArthur, p.157)

--Such satisfaction will prevent temptation to find satisfaction elsewhere.
--Such satisfaction will prevent "burning" (unfulfilled sexual desire - v. 9)

V. Sexual relations are to be <u>unselfish</u> (v. 3 & 4)

V. 3
"Due benevolence" = obligation or debt. It's not only a privilege to have relations in marriage it is a responsibility!

Note: This is one debt that can be mutually satisfying to pay if a married couple has the <u>right attitude</u> about it (look at it as a debt you "get to" pay, rather than "have to" pay).

You are obligated to <u>please</u> your spouse (whether or not he/she is a Christian).

If you are married, you can't say, It's my body, not yours" (v. 4).

A wife cannot say to her husband: "It's <u>my</u> body and you can't have it."

When the "two become one," their lives are no longer separate (distinct). Their lives are mysteriously interwoven so that an inseparable oneness occurs.

What's mine is hers and vice versa. It's no longer "you" and "me," but "we."

God is teaching us "mutual dependence." Each is the other's property.

Sexual problems in marriage are <u>not</u> the problem, but are symptoms of a deeper problem. (Anger; guilt; selfishness; unfaithfulness hurt the sex life)

Sex in marriage is usually a good barometer which measures the spiritual temperature of the marriage itself.

Your goal in sexual relations is not to please yourself but your spouse.

"The Husband seeks to please the wife, the wife to please the husband. Each is willing to forego his or her personal wishes, if need be, for the sake of the other. And when this is done in Christian love, marriage can be beautiful" (Dehaan, p.75)

True happiness & fulfillment in life comes as the result of unselfishly giving to others. (It is more blessed to give than to receive)

"Your primary consideration in sex must be meeting your mate's need, not your own! You go to that bed to please and satisfy the other" (Dr. Tim Jordan)

Generally, women require some: 1) Romance; 2) More Time

Someone has described the average man as being like a "light bulb" (which can be quickly turned on & off); The female however, is like a piece of iron (it takes time to heat up, but once hot it remains that way for a while)

The Purpose for sex: Your physical relationship is a reassurance of love and affection.

Technically, Sex should not be called *"making love"* but *"showing love"* This is because God intended sex to be an expression of the oneness, love, & affection you have for each other.

This is why fornication & adultery are lies. Such sexual unions are expressing a oneness which does not truly exist.

VI. There is to be no sexual bargaining (controlling or manipulating) (v. 5)

"defraud" - To deprive; keep back; to rob.

Never use sex as a means of exploitation or as a way of conniving to get something else in return. "I will, if you will....."

"Sexual love is a beautiful tool to build with, not a weapon to fight with" (Wiersbe, p.591)

Abstinence must be with consent (agreement).

God says to the bride and groom on honeymoon, "Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." (Song of Solomon 5:1).

VII. A couple must seek to keep each other sexually satisfied to decrease the chances of Satan tempting in the area of lack of self-control (v. 5)

During times of deep burden, a couple may not have any sexual desire, but may wish to devote themselves to ***"fasting and prayer"***.

But such abstinence should be temporary so that Satan will not gain foothold into their marriage and introduce alternative means of sexual fulfillment.

"Incontinency" - lack of self-control

Satan tempts after great victories (when our guard is down)
Satan also tempts when needs are not being met.

"When a husband and wife are yielded to the Lord, and when they seek to please each other in the marriage relationship, the marriage will be so satisfying that neither partner would think of looking elsewhere for fulfillment" (Wiersbe, p.591)

If you keep your mate satisfied, you greatly lessen the temptation to look for greener grass elsewhere.

Prov. 27:7 - "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."

Sexual expression in marriage fulfills the person's manhood or womanhood, satisfies the sex drive, relaxes the nervous system, reduces friction in the home, and reassures each other of faithfulness and love. (Tim LaHaye - "The Act of Marriage")

Contrary to popular opinion, sexual happiness in marriage will not occur naturally or by accident. It takes work & sacrifice like any other aspect of marriage.

Sex is not the most important part of marriage, but it is a very important part that must be talked about (between the couple) and worked on! (Dr. Tim Jordan) It takes a concerted effort to be mutually unselfish in this area.