



THE BEAUTY OF COVENANT MARRIAGE

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1 Corinthians 7:1-7 NIV

Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry.

2 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.

5 Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 I say this as a concession, not as a command. 7 I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

BIG IDEA: Covenant marriage is part of God's design for purity and personal development.

Malachi 2:14 "...the wife of your marriage covenant."

2 Cor. 6:14-15 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers...

Marriage provides a solution to _____. (2)

Marriage gives us a singular _____. (2)

Marriage _____ us to serve. (3-6)

Marriage _____ our self-control. (5-9)



LIFEGROUP LEADER'S GUIDE, LESSON 6 THE BEAUTY OF COVENANT MARRIAGE

Date of Sermon: 10.15.17

Warm up: Paul begins his discussion on marriage with the line, "It is good for a man not to marry." (Someone might want to share a good marriage joke at this point!) What are some of the obvious, and funny, frustrations of marriage?

Going Deeper:

Read Malachi 2:13-16 NIV

13 Another thing you do: You flood the Lord's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. 14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

15 Has not [the Lord] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

16 "I hate divorce," says the Lord God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

How is "covenant" marriage different from our culture's view of marriage? How is a covenant more binding than a promise or commitment?

What does Malachi show us about how important the marriage covenant is to God?

Is our God a covenant-making and covenant-keeping God? How so?

Read 1 Corinthians 7:1-9

Chapter 7 seems to teach that both singleness and marriage are good. There is a purpose for both. Why would Paul say that it is good for a man to remain single?

What would be the conditions to do so?

There are many purposes for marriage. Before getting into verses 2-9, what would you say are some of the purposes of marriage?

Focus on verses 2-9 and discuss the following:

(2) Does marriage automatically prevent against immorality?

(2) What does “his own wife” and “her own husband” infer? How should marriage cause an individual to have a singular focus? What disciplines are required to focus on one’s mate?

(3-6) How does fulfilling one’s marital duty to his or her spouse require an attitude of selflessness and service? How are men and women different in how they approach serving their spouses, whether it is physically, emotionally, or doing things around the home? (See also Ephesians 5)

(5-9) Paul had the gift of celibacy. Singleness requires self-control. In what ways does marriage require self-control?

Overtime Challenge:

What are the benefits and joys of marriage? Why is it worth the effort? If married, share one of the most meaningful experiences of your married life.

Closing: Pray for the marriages in your group and the marriages in our church.