

Should I Marry?

Regardless of your choice, what must your #1 priority be? (Matthew 6:33; Luke 14:26)

The word "hate" (in the Luke passage) focuses on the *contrast* between our loyalty to *God* and our loyalty to *people* (including ourselves). It is not intended to be interpreted as a contradiction to other passages that tell us to have love for all people. Our love for God should be so great, that it "eclipses" our love for people (including ourselves). Normally, there shouldn't be any conflict between the two focuses, but if a conflict ever does occur, we must always give priority to love for God.

What are some of the advantages of remaining single? (1 Corinthians 7:1, 7, 32-35)

What are some of the advantages of being married? (1 Corinthians 7:2-5, 8-9; Proverbs 18:22)

The ability to remain single is described as a "gift" from God. Yet not all have this "gift" (Matthew 19:10-13), so God has also provided marriage - which is also a "gift." In this present world, each of these "gifts" has advantages and each has disadvantages.

Is either choice *sinful*? (1 Corinthians 7:36–38 - This is a difficult passage to translate, but the general idea can still be understood.)

Does one of these choices result in a greater number of problems (or concerns) in this present world? Explain. (1 Corinthians 7:32-35)

Verses 33-34 do not say that married people are to give *less* attention to God's kingdom; rather it says that they need to have an *added* focus. Caring for one's spouse is to *never* be done in a way that is incompatible with our primary focus on the kingdom of God!

A good recommendation. (1 Corinthians 7:26-31; see also the previous verses, beginning with v. 17.)

- What is the recommendation?
- Why did Paul give it to us?

This recommendation is especially useful, when we aren't sure about what choice to make. Included is the issue of what preoccupies our minds. Is our greatest focus centered on the temporary decisions of this present life, or on the kingdom of God?

There are consequences to each choice in life - and some choices will result in a greater number of concerns and problems, than will other choices. It isn't sinful to *not* "remain as you are" (as illustrated by vs. 21, 28), but trying to change your situation shouldn't be the preoccupation of your life.

The emphasis of v. 29-31 is that the situations in this life are *temporary*. We are *not* to get our "significance" from such things - not from marriage, not from circumstances (whether happy or sad), not from possessions. *None of these things will last forever.*

An important qualification. (2 Corinthians 6:14-16; also implied in 1 Corinthians 7:39b)

If we have already made a wrong choice, these verses do not tell us to *break* our marriage commitment. But we will experience many difficulties that would have never occurred, if we had taken heed to God's warnings!

Don't let this be a description of you! (Humor)

A pastor visiting a fourth-grade Sunday-school class asked the class, "What does God say about marriage?" Immediately one boy replied, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"