

1 Corinthians 7:1-7 Matrimonium or Celibacy

- Background
 - Four Roman types of marriage in the 1st Century
 - Among slaves- Tent Companionship- contubernium
 - Common Law-One year relationships- usus
 - Buying a wife by ceremony- coemptio
 - Confarreatio- Contemporary marriage is taken from this model
 - Two families planned the wedding
 - Pontifex Maximus was in attendance
 - Rings were exchanged, placed on the third finger
 - Vows were exchanged, 10 witnesses required
 - The bride wore a veil, carried a bouquet and most importantly—cake was served—speltbread
 - Divorce was common- like today- in all marriage types
 - A feminist movement developed
 - Competition with husbands became common
 - » Both in business and physically
 - Childless marriage was becoming common place
 - Many disparaged marriage completely in the church
 - Sex was said to lack spirituality
 - Celibacy was being held out as more spiritual
 - Confusion for Christians was obvious by their appeal to Paul for answers
- Celibacy is good v. 1
 - Paul responds to a specific written inquiry
 - Not touching a woman (having sexual intercourse) is good, if you are single
 - Genesis 2:18; 1:28
- But no matter how good, temptation always enters in v. 2
 - There is the danger of fornication
 - So marry, but each to his own wife only
 - and each to her own husband only
- Celibacy in a marriage is completely wrong v. 3-5
 - Fulfill your duty to one another as husband and wife
 - The duty is imposed by God
 - To fulfill the need for oneness and unity
 - With God's perspective being that sex in marriage is sacred, proper, and obligatory
 - Any celibacy in marriage
 - Should be temporary Ex. 19:15
 - Should be by mutual agreement only
 - And only for a time of devoted prayer
 - Don't open yourselves to temptation, get back together
- Celibacy is a special gift from God for some v. 6-7
 - Spirituality is not gained or lost in marital status
 - Each Christian should discover their own gift in this area