

WEEK 4:

DAY 1: BEING MARRIED HELPS PEOPLE OVERCOME TEMPTATION

1 Corinthians 7:1-9

1. Last week we saw that when we are Christians, we are careful how we use our bodies.

Of whose body are our bodies a part? _____

Write 1 Corinthians 6:20 to show what we Christians should do in our bodies.

2. Our bodies are part of the body of Christ. Find 1 Corinthians 6:20 in your Bible. See if you have written it well. We should bring glory to God in everything we do. This means we should bring glory to him in marriage.

This week we will learn about Christian marriage. We will study 1 Corinthians 7. You remember that the people at Corinth wrote Paul asking him questions. Marriage was a problem for them. They did not know what was right.

1 Corinthians 7:1:

Now concerning the matters about which you wrote

Do people in your church have questions about what is right and wrong in marriage?

3. Many people have questions about marriage. Some people wonder if it is good to marry. Today we will learn one reason why it is good to marry.

Being married helps people overcome the temptation to commit fornication.

Genesis 2:18, 21-22:

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." . . . So the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with the flesh; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

From these verses, who planned marriage? _____

4. God saw that man needed someone to live with him. It was God who made woman. It was God who planned marriage. All God's plans are holy. Paul wrote to the Corinthians about marriage.

1 Corinthians 7:2:

... each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.

From this verse, what should each man have? _____

What should each woman have? _____

5. Each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. This is one of God's gifts to people. Tomorrow we will see that not being married is also a gift which God gives to some.

There are many reasons why people should marry. Paul tells us one big reason in this chapter.

1 Corinthians 7:2:

But because of the temptation to immorality (or fornication), each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.

What does Paul say is a big reason why people should marry? _____

6. It is because of temptation to immorality or fornication. If people are married they overcome this temptation more easily. People who are not married have strong temptations. They are tempted to sleep with people they are not married to. This is sin.

When God made man and woman, he made them desire each other's bodies. God has given us these desires. But God wants us to control them. These desires must only be used when people are married.

Do you think unmarried people have a hard time to control the desires of their bodies?

7. Some do have this problem. Paul says that people who do not marry have trouble ruling their desires.

1 Corinthians 7:9:

But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion (or strong desire).

People who do not marry are tempted to commit fornication. What does Paul say they should do so they will not commit this sin?

8. Paul says that they should marry. When people marry, they are not tempted so much as when they are not married.

What are unmarried people sometimes tempted to do? _____

9. Unmarried people are tempted to commit fornication. Married people can also be tempted. But Paul says that unmarried people are tempted more than married people.

It is sin when two people join their bodies if they are not married. When unmarried people do this it is the sin of fornication. When married people join with people who are not their wives or husbands, it is the sin of adultery.

Who wrote that people should marry to avoid temptation? _____

10. Paul wrote this. But it is God's plan that people should marry. He has told us about it through the writers of the Bible. When Jesus was on earth, he went to a wedding at Cana. By going to the wedding, Jesus showed that weddings are good. He showed that marriage is the plan of God.

John 2:1-2:

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage with the disciples.

Marriage is God's plan. Why does Paul say people should marry? _____

11. They should marry so they will not be tempted to commit fornication. People who are not married are tempted to sin. Paul also teaches us something about married life in these verses. He teaches that a husband and wife should not refuse each other their desires.

1 Corinthians 7:3:

The husband should give to his wife her conjugal (or body) rights, and likewise the wife to her husband.

What do you think a husband is tempted to do when his wife refuses him?

What is a wife tempted to do when her husband refuses her? _____

12. The Bible teaches that a husband and wife should not refuse each other. If they do, there is temptation to commit adultery. Adultery is sin. Husbands and wives should not refuse each other. They can only refuse for a short time for a special reason.

1 Corinthians 7:5:

Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer.

Why does Paul say people should marry? _____

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13. They should marry so they will not be tempted to commit fornication. These teachings are important for all Christians. But they are especially important for shepherds and church leaders.

1 Timothy 8:1:

Now a bishop (or shepherd) must be above reproach, the husband of one wife. . . .

1 Timothy 3:12:

Let deacons be the husband of one wife, and let them manage their children and their households well.

This is a short lesson. Take your Bible now and read 1 Corinthians 7:5 to 16. This will help you to prepare for the rest of the lessons this week.

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14. Why does Paul say people should marry? _____

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WEEK 4:

DAY 2: SOME PEOPLE SHOULD NOT MARRY

1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 25-40

1. Yesterday we learned that marriage is God's plan. And it is right that many people should marry.

Why does Paul say people should marry? _____

2. People should marry so they will not be tempted to commit fornication. They should marry if they cannot stand the temptation. But the Bible does not say that all people are forced to marry. Paul wrote that some people should not marry. They should not marry for two reasons:

- (1) Jesus is coming soon.
- (2) Unmarried people can give God undivided love.

Take your Bible now and read 1 Corinthians 5:25-35.

Some people do not marry. What do people near you say when someone does not marry?

3. There are many customs about people getting married. There are other customs about people who do not marry. We will talk about your answer in class.

1 Corinthians 7:7-8:

I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do.

From this verse, was Paul married? _____

4. The Apostle Paul was not married. He was single. Paul says that God has given gifts to people. To some he has given the gift of marriage. To others he has given the gift of being able to remain single.

We should not look at unmarried people and laugh at them. Being unmarried is a special gift from God. It is a gift that should be respected. If a person chooses to stay single in order to serve God, he is using a gift from God.

From God's word, is it wrong for a person not to marry? _____

5. It is not wrong for some people to stay single. God has given this gift to some people. Most people should marry because of the temptation to fornication. But God gives a gift to some people. He gives them the power to overcome the temptations that come to single people.

God loves all people the same. He does not love married people more than single people. God needs all kinds of people to work for him. His field is big. The work cannot be done by married people only. God gives different gifts for the work to be done in his field.

Let us say a certain person has the gift from God not to be married. Should he hate himself for this?

6. I do not think a person who is unmarried should do this. It is right for some people to remain single. Paul said that there are two big reasons for this.

(1) Jesus is coming soon.

(2) Single people can give God undivided love.

Paul believed that Jesus would soon return to earth. Because of this, he did not want to take time to marry. He wanted to use all his time preaching and working for the Lord.

Paul believed Jesus was coming back to earth soon. Because of this, what did he say some people should not do?

7. They should not marry. Paul said that he himself would not marry. And there were others who had the same gift. He said that if people did not marry, they could spend more time working for God. He believed Jesus was coming soon. He knew that there were troubles ahead. He knew that the Christians would be hunted and killed. He wanted them to be free of things like marriage. Perhaps we too face troubles ahead.

1 Corinthians 7:26, 29:

I think that in view of the present (or coming) distress (or the Lord's return and judgment) it is well for a person to remain as he is

I mean brethren, the appointed time has grown very short.

Paul said some people should not marry. What is the first reason for this?

8. Paul said that Jesus is coming soon. He wanted to give all of his time to work for the Lord. This is what Paul wrote about Jesus' coming again.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17:

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds.

Because Paul believed Jesus was coming back soon, what did he not do?

9. Paul did not marry. Having a wife and children takes time and work. A married man must care for his family. He must have money. He must have a good house. It takes time to get these things, and there is little time left.

What is the first reason why Paul said some people should not marry?

10. Jesus is coming soon. Paul did not take time to marry because he wanted to give all his time to God. Today we also believe Jesus is coming soon. God asks some people not to marry for this reason. But this is not the only reason. The other reason is that a single person can give God all his love. He does not have to divide his love between God and the person he has married.

Do you think a person who is not married can work in the church today?

11. We will talk about your answer in class. We should remember that Paul was one of the leaders in the early church. He was not married.

Samuel finished Bible college in Kenya. Then he went to do evangelism in a place far away. There was only a very small church. He did not have a good place to stay. He did not have much money. Sometimes he did not even know where to get food. Samuel was not married. This meant he did not have to care for a wife and children. He was able to give all his time to the Lord.

Do you think Samuel could have done as much work for the Lord if he had a wife to care for?

12. If Samuel had had a wife, he would have needed more money. He would have needed a better house. But the church was new. There was little money. There was not enough money from the church to keep a family. I do not think a married man with children could have worked for God in this place.

Take your Bible now and read 1 Corinthians 7:32 to 35. From these verses, what kind of person is concerned about the things of the Lord?

What kind of person is concerned about the things of earth? _____

13. Single people can be concerned about the things of the Lord. Married people are concerned about the things of the earth. Married people sometimes spend much time pleasing the person they married.

People who are not married can give all their love to God. People who are married must divide their love. They cannot give all their time and strength to God. They must divide it between God and the person they married.

Paul gave two reasons why some people should not marry. Write the first one. Then read the second.

(1) _____

(2) Single people can give God all their love.

14. The first reasons some people should not marry is that Jesus is coming soon. Let us look at the life of Paul. This will help us understand what he teaches.

2 Corinthians 11:25-27:

Three times I have been beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

Do you think Paul could have done this work so well if he were married?

15. I do not think Paul could have done this as a married man. He would have wanted to be with his family. He would not have been able to go away for long times as he did. He would have had to work for his family. Paul was not married. He was able to give all his love to God.

Some people today refuse to have a church leader who is not married. They say this is wrong. They say that if the shepherd is not married, he will fall into sin.

Do you think it is ever right for a shepherd not to be married? _____

16. We will talk about this in class. And what about the women? Some women choose not to marry. They give their lives to God's work. They teach or help the sick or do evangelism.

What is the second reason Paul said some people should not marry? _____

17. The second reason is that they can give God all their love. They do not have to divide their love between God and the person they married. They do not have to divide their time, their strength, and their money.

What kind of person can give God all his love? _____

18. Unmarried people can do this. Paul gave two reasons why some people should not marry. We have learned these reasons today. But we must also remember what we learned yesterday. Paul was careful to say that it is also right to marry. It is God's plan for most people to marry.

Why did Paul say people should marry? _____

19. Most people should marry so they will not be tempted to commit fornication. Write two reasons why some people should not marry.

(1) _____

(2) _____

WEEK 4:

DAY 3: HUSBANDS AND WIVES SHOULD NOT SEPARATE

1 Corinthians 7:10-16, 39

1. We have learned that God gives some people the gift of marriage. To others he gives the gift of not marrying.

Write two reasons why some people should not marry.

(1) _____

(2) _____

2. There are two reasons why some people should not marry. First, Jesus is coming soon. And second, unmarried people can give all their love to God.

Today we learn more about Christian marriage. Remember that being single is a gift from God. Being married is also a gift from God. It is God's plan that many people should marry. He wants them to live together as husband and wife. Today's lesson teaches three things about marriage.

- (1) When people marry, they should live together until one dies.
- (2) After one dies, the one who is left may marry again.
- (3) Jesus said that people who divorce and marry again commit adultery.

Do you know people who are divorced? _____

3. Divorce is a problem in many countries. Sometimes when people have been married for a time, they argue and fight. Then the husband or wife leaves the home. Sometimes the husband sends the wife away. Or she just runs away. Some people then get a divorce by law.

Paul wanted people to know God's teaching about divorce. Let us see what Jesus said about divorce.

Take your Bible now and read Matthew 19:3 to 9. Read verse 5 again. From this verse, how does God see two people who are married? Does he see them as two people or one person?



4. Jesus said that God sees two married people as being one person. Jesus was talking to the Pharisees here. They had asked him questions about marriage.

Matthew 19:5:

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one.

In marriage, two people are joined together to become one. When you think of a husband and wife, you should think of them as one person.

If God joins two people together in marriage, how long do you think he wants them to live together?

5. God wants them to live together until one dies. God does not have any plan that lets married people separate when they are tired of each other. The Bible teaches this very clearly.

Matthew 19:6:

What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder (or separate).

1 Corinthians 7:39:

A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

From these verses, when is the only time a married woman may marry someone else?

6. The only time a woman can marry again is when her first husband is dead. Fred and Ruth were married for six years. They had three children. Suddenly Fred became ill and died. Ruth was very sad. She had many problems because she had to care for the three children. About a year after Fred died, Ruth met a man at the church. He was not married and was a good Christian. After some time, Ruth and this Christian man were married.

Was it right for Ruth to get married to this man? _____

How long does God want a husband wife to live together? _____

7. It was right for Ruth to marry this man. God wants married people to live together until one dies. Then the other one is free. Ruth was young and she needed help to care for the children. She followed the teaching of the Bible.

When is the only time a person may marry a second time? _____

8. The only time a person can marry again is when the first wife or husband is dead. But there is another teaching here. A Christian cannot just marry anyone. Look at the verse again.

1 Corinthians 7:39:

If the husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

What do you think is meant by the words, "only in the Lord"? _____

9. Paul says that when a person dies, the wife or husband may marry again. But he says this must be "in the Lord." This means that he can only marry a Christian. Christians should never marry people who are not Christians. This is what Paul wrote to Timothy about widows.

1 Timothy 5:13-14:

. . . they learn to be idlers, gadding about from house to house, and not only idlers but gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, rule their households, and give the enemy no occasion to revile (or laugh at) us.

From this verse, what kind of widows did Paul say should marry again?

10. Paul thought younger widows should marry again. If they did not do this, there would be problems. Jesus taught very clearly that people should not separate or divorce. But if they divorced they should not marry someone else. Paul also taught this.

1 Corinthians 7:10:

To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband. . . and the husband should not divorce his wife.

Luke 16:18:

Every one who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

When is the only time a person may marry a second time? _____

11. The only time a Christian can marry a second time is when the first wife or husband is dead. This is what the Bible teaches.

If a man divorces his wife and marries another, what did Jesus say he does?

12. Jesus said he commits adultery. Adultery is sin. It is not something small. We must remember that this sin brings many problems. When a man divorces his wife and marries another woman, it is very difficult to make things right again. The problem has become very big.

Robert and Margaret were married for seven years. But they often fought. Robert was angry because Margaret did not have children. One day he forced Margaret to leave home. Then Robert married another woman. Later Robert knew that he had done wrong. He wanted to ask God to forgive him. He repented and God did forgive him. But he had a very big problem to take care of. He now had two wives.

Whose command is it that Christians should not divorce? _____

How long should husband and wife live together? _____

13. Jesus gave God's command that Christians should not divorce. Jesus taught that people should marry and live together until one dies. Paul repeated these commands in his letter. They are important for all Christians. But they are especially important for leaders in the church.

1 Timothy 3:2:

Now a bishop (or shepherd) must be above reproach, the husband of one wife. . . .

If a man is divorced and remarried, can he be a shepherd in the church?

14. He cannot be a shepherd in the church. A man who does this is in sin. God does not want people to separate. But sometimes they separate anyway. God says what should be done in this case.

1 Corinthians 7:11:

But if she does (separate), let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband.

What did Jesus say people are doing when they divorce and marry again?

15. Jesus taught that they are committing adultery. Jesus taught that people should not separate.

When is the only time a person may marry a second time? _____

16. The only time a person can marry again is when the first wife or husband is dead. Until that time, the husband and wife should live together.

What did Jesus say people are doing when they divorce and marry again?

17. Jesus said these people are committing adultery. This teaches us that marriage is very important. When young people decide to marry they should know how important this is. They should know they are choosing someone to live with for life. They must choose a wife or husband very carefully. This is something church leaders should teach their young people.

On another paper write some things to tell your young people about marriage. Make a plan for your teaching. Bring your plan to show in class.

18. How long should husband and wife live together? _____

When is the only time a person may marry a second time? _____

What did Jesus say people are doing when they divorce and marry again?

WEEK 4:

DAY 4: THE NEW CHRISTIAN SHOULD NOT DIVORCE THE UNBELIEVER

1 Corinthians 7:12-16

1. When is the only time a person may marry a second time? _____

What did Jesus say people are doing when they divorce and marry again?

2. The only time a person may marry again is when the first husband or wife is dead. Jesus taught that a person who divorces and marries again is committing adultery. This is sin.

Let us go on learning about marriage from 1 Corinthians 7. This chapter tells us what to do when one person becomes a Christian but the other does not. This is what we will learn today:

Husbands and wives should not separate when one is an unbeliever.

The Christian and unbeliever who are married should stay together for two reasons:

- (1) The Christian may bring the unbeliever to Christ.
- (2) The children are made holy.

Take your Bible now and carefully read 1 Corinthians 7:12 to 16. Ask God to help you understand these verses.

3. These verses talk about a problem of the Christians in Corinth. It is a problem which we have today. At first there were no Christians in Corinth. Then Paul went and preached there. Some people became Christians. Sometimes a wife believed, but her husband did not. Sometimes the husband believed but the wife did not.

Notice that Paul is not talking about a Christian who marries an unbeliever. He is talking about someone who becomes a Christian after he is already married.

Do you think a Christian should marry someone who is not a Christian?

4. The Bible teaches that it is wrong for a Christian to marry an unbeliever.

2 Corinthians 6:14:

Do not be mismated (or wrongly joined) with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity (or sin)? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?

Esther wanted to marry Peter. She was a Christian, but Peter was not. Esther said, "I will marry Peter and witness to him. Then he will believe." But Peter did not want to become a Christian. He pretended at first to want this. But after they were married, he said he never wanted to be a Christian. He made life hard for Esther. He did not want her to go to church and serve God.

When people marry, how long does God want them to live together?

5. God wants them to live together until one dies. Esther made a bad mistake in marrying Peter. After she married him, she had to stay with him.

But what happens when two people who are not Christians marry? After a while one of them may become a Christian. This is what happened at Corinth. It happens in many places today. Should the person who believes leave the one who does not? Here is the answer.

1 Corinthians 7:12-13:

... if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him.

If a person is married to an unbeliever, what should he not do? _____

6. These verses are talking about people who married before one of them became a Christian. Paul teaches us that they should not get divorced. They should continue to live together. This is sometimes very hard. A husband who is not a Christian can trouble a Christian wife. He can cause her much harm. Sometimes he may get drunk. He may beat his wife because she will not drink with him.

What happens in families near you when one person becomes a Christian and the other does not?

7. This can cause many problems. We talk about your answer in class. It can be very hard for the person who becomes a Christian. But God can give that person strength and help. God can protect the person who has become a Christian.

If the unbeliever agrees to have the Christian live with him, what should the Christian not do?

8. The Christian should not separate or get a divorce. God does not want husband and wife to separate. He wants them to stay together. There are two reasons why God wants the Christian to stay with the unbeliever:

- (1) The new Christian may bring the unbeliever to Christ.
- (2) The children are made holy.

1 Corinthians 7:15:

But if the unbelieving partner desires to separate, let it be so, in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. For God has called us to peace.

What should the Christian do if the unbeliever does not want to live with him?

Do you think the Christian should then get divorced and marry again?

9. This verse says that sometimes the unbeliever does not want to live with the Christian. Then the Christian may leave the home. The Christian should not stay and cause trouble and fight. This verse says that God wants peace. But even though the Christian may leave, he may not marry again. This is hard teaching. But it is the teaching of Jesus.

When is the only time a person may marry a second time? _____

10. The only time a person can marry again is when the first husband or wife is dead. Paul teaches that people should try to live together. The Christian wife should not try to leave her unbelieving husband. And the Christian husband should not chase away his unbelieving wife. The first reason for this is that the Christian may bring the unbeliever to Christ.

1 Corinthians 7:14, 16:

For the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband. . . . Wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?

If the unbeliever agrees to live with the Christian, what should the Christian not do?

11. The Christian should not separate from the unbeliever. He should not leave the home. The Christian should stay in the home.

What is the first reason why the Christian should stay with the unbeliever?

12. The first reason is that the Christian may bring the unbeliever to Christ. The unbeliever can learn about Jesus. Then he can accept him as Saviour. The unbeliever will see the change that has come in the life of the Christian. He will see the joy and peace.

1 Peter 3:1-2:

Likewise you wives, be submissive to your husbands, so that some though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behaviour of the wives, when they see your reverent and chaste (or clean) behaviour.

If a Christian wants to bring his unbelieving wife to Christ, what must he not do?

13. He must not separate from her. He should not leave her or send her away. It may be hard for a Christian to stay where others are not Christians. But this is what we must do. We must stay and try to bring peace in the home. We must try to show the love of Christ by the way we live. This does not mean we go around preaching to those in the home. But we must show kindness and love.

There are two reasons why a Christian should stay and live with the unbeliever. Write the first and then read the second.

(1) _____

(2) The children of the family are made holy.

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14. The first reason is that the Christian may bring the unbeliever to Christ. The Christian wife can witness to the unbelieving husband. Or, the Christian husband can witness to the unbelieving wife. If they do not stay together, they will not be able to witness. There may be no chance for them to hear the gospel and be saved.

But this is not the only reason. We must remember that there are children in a family. If the Christian leaves, no one will help the children learn about Jesus. The Christian should stay to help win the children to the Lord.

Chipo and Kundai are married and have three children. When they married, they were not Christians. Then Chipo became a Christian. What should Chipo not do if he wants the children to be made holy?

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15. Chipo should not separate from his wife. He should not send her away. There are two reasons for this. The first is that Chipo may bring Kundai to Christ. The second is that others in the family may be made holy.

Who did Paul say may be made holy if the Christian stays in the home?

=====

16. The children of the family can be made holy. This means that the Christian can teach the children and bring them to Christ. Paul says that the husband and wife should stay together.

1 Corinthians 7:14:

Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is they are holy.

Who can help the children to be made holy by staying in the home?

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17. The Christian can do this. He should not leave the home.

Why should a Christian who is married to an unbeliever stay in the home?

(1) He may bring the unbeliever to Christ.

(2) _____

18. First, the Christian may bring the unbeliever to Christ. Second, the children are made holy. Sometimes it is hard to witness for Christ in such a place. But the Lord will help us.

Church leaders should be very careful to care for people in these homes. They should encourage Christians who are married to unbelievers. They should pray for them and help them understand the teaching of Paul.

Think of the people near you. Think of some who are new Christians. Think of some who have problems in their marriages. Go to one of them and explain the things you have learned this week. Be ready to tell in class what happened.

19. Sometimes one person in a marriage becomes a Christian and the other does not. What does Paul say the Christian should not do?

Why should a Christian who is married to an unbeliever stay in the home?

(1) _____

(2) _____

WEEK 4:

DAY 5: DO NOT CHANGE YOUR POSITION IN LIFE

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

1. Yesterday we learned about when only one person in marriage is a Christian.

What does Paul say the Christian should not do? _____

2. If a Christian is married to an unbeliever, he must not separate from that person. He must stay with the same person even if the other does not become a Christian at first. There are two reasons for this. That person may become a Christian. And the children are made holy.

There are many questions which face new Christians. There are many things they do not understand. Many things change when a person becomes a believer.

2 Corinthians 5:17:

Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.

Write one way in which your life changed when you received Christ. _____

3. I am sure that many things changed. You can tell some of these things in class. Before we become Christians some things in our lives are very wrong. We know that we should not do them after we are saved. But there are other things about which we have questions. Today we will learn:

New Christians should not try to change their position in life.

Do new Christians near you have questions about right and wrong? _____

4. Sandra is the second wife of a man who is not a Christian. Sandra recently became a believer. She wants to join the church. She has many questions about what she should do in her home. Sandra has been married for four years and has two children.

From 1 Corinthians 7, what do you think Sandra should do? _____

5. We will talk about this in class. Paul taught that a new believer should stay with the person to whom he or she is married.

Think again about the two reasons for this. We learned them yesterday. Write them.

(1) _____

(2) _____

6. The Christian may lead the unbeliever to Christ. And the children are made holy. The new Christian can witness to the unbeliever and to the children. In today's verses, Paul gives more teaching for new Christians.

Take your Bible now and read 1 Corinthians 7:17 to 24. Read verse 24 again. In what does Paul say everyone should remain?

7. People should stay in the state or position in which they were called. This means that when you become a Christian, you should not try to change your place in life. But what does this mean? It is important that we understand this.

There are some big things in life which are not changed. When we become Christians we cannot change where we live. We cannot change who we are married to. We cannot change our position in our family or tribe.

From the verses for today, what kind of people should not try to change their position in life?

8. Paul is writing to new Christians. New Christians should not try to change their position in life. But we must not use this in the wrong way.

George is a young man who lives near me. He has just become a Christian. Before he was saved, he often went to the bar. He drank much beer and wasted his money. He read these verses from 1 Corinthians 7. He says that he should not change his position in life. He says he can still go to the bar and drink with his friends.

Do you think George understands this verse well? _____

9. I do not think he understands well. The Bible teaches that some things are wrong for Christians. Christians should not do sinful things. When a person becomes a Christian he should stop these things. He should change his sinful actions and do things which please God.

But what should a new Christian not try to change? _____

10. A new Christian should not change his position in life. The people in Corinth had questions about this. Some of the Gentiles thought they should be circumcised. They thought they should become Jews if they wanted to be Christians. Paul said they should not do this.

1 Corinthians 7:18:

Was any one at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was any one at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision.

Some Christians at Corinth were slaves at the time they were saved. They were owned and ruled by other people.

What do you think Paul told these slaves about changing their position in life?

11. He said they should not try to change their position in life. If they could be free, they should accept this. But they should not try to be free from being slaves in order to be Christians. He said they were already free in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 7:21-22:

Were you a slave when called? Never mind. But if you gain your freedom, avail yourself of (or accept) the opportunity. For he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord.

A new Christian should not change his position in life. But what should a new Christian change?

12. A new Christian should change his sinful ways. He should live for God. He should work for God. He should leave the bad things of his old life.

Peter is a bus driver. He has done this work for many years. Now he is a new Christian. He feels that as a Christian he should stop being a bus driver. He thinks he should do something else. He also thinks he should leave all the old customs of his people.

What would you tell Peter to do? _____

13. You could tell him not to change his position in life. He should not leave the old customs which are good. And he does not have to stop being a bus driver to be a Christian. It may be that God does want him to do other work. And if God wants him to do other work and opens the way, this is good. But as a new Christian, he should not quickly try to change his position. God wants new Christians to stay where they are and live for God. He wants them to bring their old friends to Jesus.

What kind of things should a new Christian stop doing? _____

14. A new Christian should stop doing sinful things. He should stop lying and fighting and loving only himself. It is never right for a Christian to do such things. But the new Christian should not try to change his position in life. Think of the things we have learned about marriage this week.

What should a Christian married to an unbeliever not do? _____

15. He should not separate from the unbeliever. This is one of the things he should not change. Paul has taught much about marriage in 1 Corinthians 7. Not changing your position in life also means marriage.

Some people have two wives when they became Christians. This is a problem in many places today. Some people say these verses are also talking about a man with two wives. They say that if a man has two wives when he is saved, he should not try to change his position. He should continue to care for both his wives. He should be accepted into the church.

What do you think God wants us to do with a man like this? _____

16. Some say Paul taught that we should accept this man into the church. If the man sends his second wife away, this is very hard for her. She will have many problems. However, not all Christians believe this. We will talk about your answer in class.

There is an important verse we should remember in this chapter. Let us read it again carefully now.

1 Corinthians 7:24:

So, brethren, in whatever state (or position) each was called, there let him remain with God.

A new Christian should not try to change his position in life. From this verse, with whom should he remain?

17. This is important. When a person becomes a Christian he should stay with God. A new Christian must live in fellowship with God. He should walk with God. He should work for God. New Christians have many questions. Sometimes they do not know what to do. They should learn to ask this question: Does this help me to stay with God?

If the position helps us stay with God, then we should not try to change. If it takes us away from God, then we should change.

Read about these new Christians. Write Yes beside those who should change their lives. Write No beside those who should not change.

Harold often went to his friends' houses to play cards. He gambled and lost much money. After he became a Christian he still went to gamble.

Mark and Mary were not Christians. They were married for six years. Then Mark became a Christian. He kept on living with Mary, even though she sometimes laughed at him.

Sam worked on the railway. One day he heard the gospel and received Christ. Sam thought he should leave his job on the railway because most of the other men were not Christians.

18. We will talk about these new Christians in class.

In 1 Corinthians 7, what does Paul say new Christians should not change?
