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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

3750 Washington Street, Sanford, FL 32771; www.RefugeSanford.com

**Elder Joel Brooks, Pastor**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**ABIDE IN YOUR CALLING**

**1 Corinthians 7:18-40**

***I Corinthians 7:18-19***

***18 "Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised."***

***19 "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God."***

Paul’s counsel for believers to remain married to unbelievers is an application of his overall principle that every Christian should live his life in the situation the Lord assigned when God called him. In other words, “abide in your calling.” Whether one is circumcised or uncircumcised before becoming a believer does not matter. Externals are non-essential. What matters is internalizing God’s commands and keeping them. This is just explaining that it is not the doctrine of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to keep the law of Moses. If a person is not circumcised, then let him stay that way. If he was acceptable to God why should the people put extra restrictions on him? Of course, if a person is already circumcised before he receives the Lord, that is alright, too. Accept them the way the Lord accepted them. Circumcision was part of the law which Jesus fulfilled on the cross. Sacrificing of any kind after the crucifixion of Jesus would have been saying that Jesus' sacrifice was not enough. You can see why all of this sacrificing was stopped.

***I Corinthians 7:20 "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called."***

To “abide” is to live, continue, or remain. A believer’s “calling” is God’s drawing him to salvation. So, to “abide in the same calling” is to live in or remain in Christ. When a person is saved, he or she is held secure in a permanent relationship. Therefore, “abiding in the same calling” is essential to maintaining salvation.

***John 10:28-29***

***28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.***

***29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.***

***Hebrews 6:4-6***

***4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,***

***5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,***

***6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.***

God wants us to have assurance of our salvation, and the best way to do that is to “stay in your ordained lane” pursuing godly virtues and actively growing in the Christian life.

***I Corinthians 7:21-22***

***21 "Art thou called [being] a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use [it] rather."***

***22 "For he that is called in the Lord, [being] a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, [being] free, is Christ's servant."***

This just means that if you were a slave when you received the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, you should not use your salvation to try to get your freedom. In a case like that God would have you to serve him while you were a servant. You should endeavor to serve as if you were serving the Lord. If your freedom comes, accept it and work where God sends you. We are all servants to the Lord, even if we were a freeman when Christ called us. Whatever position we find ourselves in we must serve our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to the best of our ability under the circumstances we are in at the time.

***I Corinthians 7:23-24***

***23 "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men."***

***24 "Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."***

Believers have been bought at a price by the blood of Christ, so regardless of our status in life, we are to called to serve as Christ’s slave. The price that we are bought with here, is the precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

***1 Peter 2:21-25***

***21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:***

***22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:***

***23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:***

***24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.***

***25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.***

Our Master is the Lord. Our position in society is of little importance to the Lord. Christian, no matter your vocation, you are called first and foremost to render faithful service to the Lord who saved you. Every job that we are called to do should be done unto the Lord. "Abide" means continually dwell. We must not seek to be changed, or moved, until the Lord moves us.

***Ephesians 4:1-7***

***1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,***

***2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;***

***3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.***

***4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;***

***5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,***

***6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.***

***7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.***

***I Corinthians 7:25 "Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful."***

Having spoken about a kingdom view of marriage, Paul also addresses what it means to live as a kingdom single. A kingdom single is an unmarried Christian who is committed to fully and freely maximizing his or her life under the rule of God and the lordship of Jesus Christ. An unmarried believer is to approach life as a follower of the King. Paul’s instructions here follow the same principle he just outlined in 7:17, 20, and 24. Believers ought to remain in the situation in which they were called to Christ. He applies this to single believers, whom he refers to as virgins because according to a biblical worldview, unmarried believers are not to be sexually active. Paul says he has no command from the Lord about this situation but provides his own opinion (or decision). The Lord Jesus did not deal directly with this particular subject, and Paul is just giving his judgement {opinion} here. What he means is that the Lord Jesus didn’t teach on this matter during his earthly ministry, so Paul gives Holy-Spirit-inspired instruction. We know that all, whether virgins or not, should be faithful to the Lord. This is speaking of male virgins, as well as female.

***I Corinthians 7:26 "I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, [I say], that [it is] good for a man so to be."***

Paul argues that it is good for a man to remain as he is. Paul is saying, because of all the distress and problems surrounding being a servant of the Lord Jesus at this time, it would probably be better to remain a virgin. Notice, that Paul says for a man to be so. This actually means man or woman.

***I Corinthians 7:27 "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife."***

Paul is saying, if you were married when the Lord called you, stay married. If you were single when the Lord called you, stay single. Whatever condition you were in when the Lord called you was pleasing unto Him, or He would not have called you. Both marriage and singlehood will include difficulties; thus, he encourages single and married Christians to remain as they are.

***I Corinthians 7:28 "But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you."***

Paul is explaining that there is no sin in marriage. Marriage, even Christian marriage, has unique challenges because it’s the uniting of two imperfect people. Paul is saying that all of the advice that he has been giving them was to save them as much pain in this life as he could. So no one should go running about in a flippant search for a spouse. That will inevitably bring some level of trouble, so Paul wants them to give the matter careful investigation.

***I Corinthians 7:29-31***

***29 "But this I say, brethren, the time [is] short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;"***

***30 "And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;"***

***31 "And they that use this world, as not abusing [it]: for the fashion of this world passeth away."***

Paul is encouraging them to use all of their time for the Lord. He believes that the coming of the Lord is very near and that all should spend their time in winning people to the Lord instead of enjoying worldly pleasures. All of these things are a temporary situation. They will pass so quickly away. Do not be caught up in the things of the world which pass away so quickly. They will not always be. Christians are living in this world, but their home is in heaven. Someday we will not be in this world, in fact, someday there will not be a world as we know now. He is saying, you must live here, but don't get too attached. We must not lose sight of heaven by maximizing the time spent in earthly pursuits. Make decisions based on an eternal perspective and not based on earthly pressures.

***I Corinthians 7:32-33***

***32 "But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:"***

***33 "But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please [his] wife."***

Paul, again, is showing the difference in working for the Lord as a single person and working for the Lord as a married person. The single person can devote all of his time to the Lord without distractions, but the married person has to divide that time between the work of the Lord and the duties of family. A married person can be just as dedicated but may not have quite as much time.

***I Corinthians 7:34 "There is difference [also] between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please [her] husband."***

This is the very same statement as above, except the other was speaking of the man, and this is speaking of the woman. Women do like to please their husbands, and that is not a sin. In fact, if they are married, that is what God expects them to do. The married woman can be dedicated to God, but, again, may have less time to fulfill the things of God in.

***I Corinthians 7:35 "And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction."***

Again, we must remember that these are Paul's thoughts on the subject. We do know that it would be somewhat of a distraction to be married and in the service of God. All things are possible with God. We must fulfill the job that God has for us to do in whatever circumstances we are in at the time He called us. He knows the problems we face and will help us with the problems. Our part is to be totally obedient to His call.

***I Corinthians 7:36 "But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of [her] age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry."***

"Uncomely", means in an unbecoming way. It seems to me, that this is speaking of a man who has become too personal with a girl who is old enough to be married. He should not behave in this manner unless he intends to marry her. If they marry, there is no sin. If they do not marry, this is the sin of adultery, whether they actually went through with the act or not. Jesus said to look upon a woman to lust in your heart is to commit adultery with her in your heart.

***I Corinthians 7:37 "Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well."***

Paul is saying that to remain a virgin in the service of the Lord with no lust in your heart would be very good. This person {male or female} is to be highly commended. They have put their work for God ahead of all else.

***I Corinthians 7:38 "So then he that giveth [her] in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth [her] not in marriage doeth better."***

Paul is saying that either thing you decide is perfectly alright. You have not sinned either way. Some serve the Lord while they are single others serve the Lord married. Either way, they are pleasing unto the Lord.

***I Corinthians 7:39 "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."***

Before leaving the topic of marriage, Paul considers the inevitable situation in which a spouse dies. A Christian husband or wife is bound as long as the spouse is living. But if the spouse dies, a believer is free to remarry anyone only in the Lord. In other words, a believer in Jesus Christ must marry a fellow believer. Marriage is not to be taken lightly.

***I Corinthians 7:40 "But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God."***

Paul is saying {in his judgement} that she is usually happier with the memory of her first love, than trying to start over again and find a new mate. She will have more time to serve the Lord, if she does not remarry. Many times the marriage bond is so great that not even death can take it away. Many people talk about finding a soul-mate, but the Lord wants us to find a spirit-mate.

***Matthew 19:6 “Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”***

***1 Corinthians 6:16-14***

***16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.***

***17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.***

**QUESTIONS**

1. Let every man \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the same calling wherein he was called.
2. If you were a slave when you received the Lord, did that stop you from being a servant?
3. He that is the called in the Lord, is the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. What was the price we were bought with?
5. Every job we do, regardless of what it is, must be done \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. What does "abide" mean?
7. In verse 25, Paul said he had no command of God, but gave his\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
8. Art thou bound unto a wife, seek \_\_\_\_ to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
9. If a virgin marries, has she sinned?
10. Verse 30 is explaining that all these things are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
11. And they that use this world, as not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ it.
12. The fashion of this world \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.
13. We must live in the earth, but we should not \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
14. He that is married careth for the things of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
15. What is the difference in a married woman and a virgin working for God?
16. Verse 35 reminds us that these are whose thoughts?
17. What does "uncomely" mean?
18. Jesus said to look upon a woman to lust is to commit what sin?
19. How long is the wife bound by the law?
20. A widow is usually happier, if they remain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.