

1 Corinthians 7

by John Nelson Darby

John Nelson Darby's sermon on 1 Corinthians 7 explores the holiness of marriage and the importance of remaining in one's calling while navigating faith in a mixed-belief context.

Topics: "Christian Living", "Marriage"

Description

John Nelson Darby discusses 1 Corinthians 7, emphasizing the sanctity of marriage and the importance of remaining in the state to which one is called. He highlights the distinction made by the apostle Paul between commands from the Lord and personal spiritual judgment, illustrating that not all scripture is equally inspired. Darby explains how a believing spouse sanctifies the unbelieving partner and their children, contrasting this with Jewish customs. He encourages believers to live in the world without being attached to it, advocating for freedom while also recognizing the value of staying where God has placed them.

Transcript

The apostle turns to marriage in this chapter, and then the general truth of staying wherein you are called. It is a beautiful passage of scripture, as to the holiness of marriage. We must deal with every subject from God.

231 In verse 12, "To the rest speak I, not the Lord," is very precious, because the modern infidel speaks of inspiration as if it were the highest expression of the inner life. Now I find the apostle making a difference here, which is instructive. He says, "As I have received mercy of the Lord to be found faithful," as a man, I give you this experience; and to the rest speak I, not the Lord. Scripture therefore meets everything, repudiating the whole system of those men who deny inspiration, carefully distinguished between Paul's best thoughts and the Lord's commands. On this subject Paul will not give us a command, and he is inspired to tell us that. And very precious that is in itself. We have his spiritual judgment, and him clearly telling us that that is not the command of the Lord. He is inspired to make that difference. Not all that is in scripture is inspired, for you get the devil's words and wicked men's words, but the writer who gives them is inspired to make the record.

Verse 14. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." It is in contrast with the Jews; if a Jew had married a Gentile wife, he had to send her off, and her children off too, or he profaned himself. If the Jew were to be holy, they must all go. The Christian system being gracious, it is just the opposite, and

the Christian, instead of being profaned by the unbeliever, sanctified him or her, and the children too. They are "sanctified," just in the sense opposite to that in which a Jew was profaned.

The other leading thought of the chapter is, that I am to leave what I cannot abide in with God. Christ being rejected, and the power of evil having come in, though marriage is all lawful, and so on, yet let even those that have wives, be as though they had none (v. 29-31), even using this world in everything as not a possession of mine, as not belonging to me. And so in verse 23. Do not be slaves of men if you can help it; yet stay where you are if you can, with God. A servant in most cases in the New Testament was a slave; masters might be heathen, and so on. Be free if possible; that was to be preferred, but not to be an object for the heart to be set on.

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