
Words of Truth

When Fornication Exists In A Marriage Amongst Disciples...

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Sadly, fornication [unlawful sexual intercourse] is not a new problem amongst those proclaiming to be disciples of Christ (I Corinthians 5:1-13). God's way for avoiding this problem is for a man and a woman to be lawfully married and then to satisfy sexual desires within that lawful marriage. Notice: *"Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"* (I Corinthians 6:15-7:5).

While sexual desires and lusts are supposed to be realized in the marriage bed (Proverbs 5:18-23 and Hebrews 13:4), fornication still exists amongst married people. Marriage is supposed to be an unbreakable covenant (Mark 10:1-12 and Romans 7:1-3). Since fornication amongst disciples of the Lord must be dealt with, Jesus gave an exception to marriage being an unbreakable covenant. As an exception, not the rule, a fornicator may be put away for the cause of fornication (Matthew 19:3-12).

If divorce for fornication happens amongst a Christian man and a Christian woman the sin of fornication is often all that is discussed. We all know that fornication causes a soul to be lost (Galatians 5:19-21) as well as being grounds upon which a marriage might end (Matthew 5:31-32). However, when fornication exists in a marriage amongst disciples of our Lord there have been more sins committed than just fornication. Let's consider some of those sins.

Consider These Sins That Exist When Disciples Go Beyond Their Marriage Bed

As Christians we are commanded to have temperance [self-control] (Galatians 5:22-23 and II Peter 1:6). As disciples of the Lord we are commanded to be honest (Romans 12:17). As

disciples of the Lord we are commanded do unto others even as we would have them do unto us (Matthew 7:12). As disciples of Christ we are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves (Romans 13:9-10). As disciples of Christ we are commanded to love our brothers and sisters in Christ as Christ loved us (John 13:34-35). As disciples of Christ we are commanded to show that love for our brethren by our lawful deeds (I John 3:14-18). As disciples of Christ we are commanded to serve one another (Galatians 5:13). As disciples of Christ we are to be forbearing, loving, forgiving, merciful, kind, humble, and meek toward one another (Colossians 3:12-14). As disciples of Christ we are commanded to be of one mind, have compassion one for another, love as brethren, be pitiful, and to be courteous (I Peter 3:8). More and more could be said, however the point should have started clicking by now. Every command listed above is broken when a disciple of Christ commits fornication against his or her Christian spouse!

How does a wife submit unto her husband as unto the Lord when she is sleeping with another man (Ephesians 5:22-24)? How does a husband love his wife as Christ loved the church when he is sleeping with another woman (Ephesians 5:25)? How is a Christian woman loving her husband, loving her children (if there are any), being discreet, chaste, a keeper of the home, good, obedient to her own husband so that the word of God be not blasphemed, etc.; while committing fornication (Titus 2:3-5)? How is a husband dwelling with his wife according to knowledge, giving honor unto his wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; while cheating on her (I Peter 3:7)?

Countless other things could be discussed concerning the many sins that are committed when a disciple of the Lord fornicates against his or her spouse. Just consider how God views people whom are covenantbreakers, etc. when you think of an adulterous Christian (Romans 1:18-32). Now, we have to discuss why realizing all of this matters to us all.

It Matters When Considering Repentance

If we face a situation wherein we must deal with fornication amongst members of the body, and repentance enters the discussion, we must realize that more than fornication has to be repented of. Each of the things above, and more that could be said, must be repented of before God or brethren will/can forgive the erring saint (Luke 13:1-5 and Luke 17:3-4). As we seek to convert (James 5:19-20) erring brethren back to Christ, we better make sure they realize all the sins they've committed so that we do not give them a false sense of spiritual security. We must also remember that proper repentance [change] must be proven, not just stated verbally (Matthew 3:8, Acts 26:18-20, Ephesians 4:17-32, and Revelation 2:1-7).

Conclusion

The Lord said: *“But **fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God”*** (Ephesians 5:3-5). We can NEVER close our eyes to that which the Lord says ought not be named amongst us. Thus, be prepared to deal with fornication as with all sins!