

# Married to An Unbeliever

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

1 Cor 7:12-16 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 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. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

I. To the rest ...to those who are married, but to an unbeliever.

A. It is never God's Will for a child of God to marry an unbeliever.

2 Cor 6:14-15) Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

- B. To enter into such a relationship knowing this is to leave the Will of God behind.
- C. How does it come to pass that a believer and an unbeliever are married?
  - 1. A saved person knowingly marries an unsaved person thinking they will be able to change them.
  - 2. They both claim to be saved before they are married but find out later that one was not.
  - 3. Both are lost when they are married but one gets saved afterwards.
- D. Whatever the case, the Bible is giving us instructions here about what to do with the situation.
- E. The man is not to put away the unbelieving wife as long as she is content to dwell with him and be his wife.
- F. The woman is not to leave her husband as long as the husband is pleased to stay with her.
- G. Marriage is meant to be forever and the fact that one is saved and the other is not is NOT grounds for breaking up the marriage and home once it has been established.

II. 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.

- A. The husband-wife relationship is such that a true Christian influence will enhance their marriage and relationship.
  - 1. True Christian character manifested by the fruit of the Spirit can do nothing but make the home a sweeter place.
- B. The unbeliever cannot live under the same roof and eat at the same table without being a partaker of the blessings God bestows on his redeemed one.
- C. The influence of a true Christian in any home, workplace, or nation acts as salt and light and there is a measure of purity and cleanliness, or at least a measured abandonment of the profane and ungodly.
- D. If there is a true Christian in the home that will be the prevailing influence.

- E. This is why many children turn out to serve God when they have only one parent that is a Christian.
- III. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.
  - A. No one can force their husband or wife to stay with them when they are of a mind to leave.
  - B. Marriage is to be held together by faith and love – not force.
  - C. So sometimes an unbelieving mate will depart and leave the Christian alone and forsaken.
  - D. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases.
    - 1. When they have done all they can possibly do to keep the marriage together.
    - 2. When they have been faithful to their spouse and to God and they are left alone.
    - 3. God is just and He doesn't punish the righteous for what the wicked do.
    - 4. To imagine that God forbids such a person to ever remarry seems to me to be unjust.
    - 5. To imagine that a person is still married when their spouse abandoned them years ago and is married to someone else and has another family is ridiculous and unjust – there will be no reconciliation there.
- IV. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?
  - A. This CAN happen and it DOES happen.
    - 1. The unsaved spouse is won to God by the saved one.
  - B. This relationship is different than any other.
    - 1. Other relationships do not work like this.
    - 2. Yoke up with an unbeliever and you will pick up his filthy ways.
    - 3. In marriage the things that are required to make it a godly, heavenly experience are the same things that a true Christian manifests in their spirit and life.
      - a) Love, patience, longsuffering, kindness, gentleness, meekness.
      - b) Reacting to injury with meekness and forgiveness.
      - c) Patience when provoked.
      - d) Love when despised.
      - e) Forbearance when words of harshness and irritation are used.
  - C. A harsh, fretful, condemning, attitude or words never wins the unsaved spouse.
  - D. But by showing how a Christian CAN live and living with them daily God is able to reach their soul.
  - E. It DOES happen.
  - F. This is the end we should look for and never give up – to see the unconverted spouse saved and worshipping God.