

Remain Unmarried or reconcile vs not in bondage

by Wm Tipton

Assertions/Conclusions of this Article

We will show briefly that the commandment of the Lord to 'remain unmarried or reconcile' is NOT a blanket commandment in all marital situations where a breaking of the marriage is taking place, but is instead directed to two believers who have left their marriage without just cause, and that Paul also had no commandment for those marriages that weren't equally yoked, didn't given the same instruction to these who were married to an unbeliever, not having any commandment from the Lord in the matter, and then also offered a concession not given to those who were equally yoked to another believer who had left their marriage for whatever frivolous reason.

Supporting Evidence

Firstly lets look at the actual passages

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. (1Co 7:10-11 KJV)

vs

*"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. (1Co 7:12- * KJV)*

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.

(1Co 7:15)

1.0

"Remain Unmarried or reconcile"

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord,

It doesn't take a rocket scientist or brain surgeon or even a biblical scholar to look at that passage as a whole to see that Paul is speaking to two groups there. The first being those where obviously both the husband and the wife are both listening since Paul addresses both of them therein.

This idea is made absolute by Pauls making a clear distinction in his next words in saying "BUT TO THE REST SPEAK I, NOT THE LORD" where he shows clearly that he is now speaking to 'the rest' of married couples who do not fall into whatever category as the first group fell. These are defined as being those who are married to someone who 'believeth not' which we understand as as 'unequally yoked' marriage.

Notice that Paul makes it very clear that to these who ARENT married to someone who 'believeth not' that he isnt speaking, but the Lord is giving commandment to these.

Easy enough concept to see, to understand and to accept for those reading and being honest enough to let the words say what they simply state.

To these who arent married to someone who 'believed not', these are married to someone who instead is a believer. They cannot be anything else or otherwise Pauls words "BUT TO THE REST" when he speaks to the rest who are married make no logical sense whatsoever.

These in verses 7:10-11 MUST be those who are NOT married to someone who 'believeth not' but MUST be to those marriages where the person being spoken to is married to a believer. Being honest with ourselves, we accept the targets of these words to be those marriages where both persons are a believer...ie 'equally yoked'.

To these, Paul shows that the Lord has given commandment if they depart to remain unmarried (ARAMOC/agamos/single/unwed) or reconcile with the man she left"

This makes logical sense and harmonizes quite well with Gods whole word and is even completely logical even if we set scripture aside for a moment.

These are two people who have compatible beliefs who, for whatever reason, have left their marriage who, as christians, should be quite interested in working together as ALL believers in Christ should be doing in order to be in harmony with one another.

BOTH of these persons, as followers of Jesus Christ, having entered a marital covenant and having set it aside for whatever frivolous reasonings, should be willing to work together to reunite what they created together previously and set aside without just cause.

The Lord has commanded these two believers to remain unmarried or reconcile this marriage cast away without just cause (as historical evidence of Corinth is quite capable of showing. That area was not exactly morally sound).

2.0

"not in bondage"

"But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not,

Now we move on 'to the rest'....to those marriages where Paul is addressing the believer who is married to one who 'believeth not'.

This is the greek for the 'rest'...

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Thayer Definition:

1) remaining, the rest

1a) the rest of any number or class under consideration

1b) with a certain distinction and contrast, the rest, who are not of a specific class or number

1c) the rest of the things that remain

These 'rest' are those that remain of the groups under consideration, which are clearly those who are 'married'. This 'rest' are those who are married to unbelievers, clearly indicating that the groups being spoken to in verses 7:10-11 are those who are believers married to believers...in other words, equally yoked.

Since the 'rest' are those who are Unequally yoked, logically there is no way that that Paul is speaking to 'the rest' in verses 7:10-11 then turning right around and addressing 'the rest' again starting in verse 7:12.

To 'the rest' who are clearly believers unequally yoked to unbelievers Paul has no commandment of the Lord but is clearly speaking his own mind in the matter. Believing that Paul may not be speaking by direct commandment, we still accept that he is speaking by inspiration of the Holy Spirit and thus his words are 'law' for these married to an unbelieving spouse.

Firstly we notice that Pauls words offer a more conditional tone.

"IF a brother has a wife who is pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away".

If this brother is married to an unbelieving wife who wants to live in peace with him, then he should not put her away.

This church had asked questions of Paul and based on Pauls response its easy to determine that they must have believed that if they became born again, that somehow they were defiled by being with an unbelieving husband.

Paul lets them know in this passage that that isnt the case. The unbelieving spouse is sanctified by the believer (in a physical or spiritual 'cleanness' type of manner, not meaning a free ride to heaven without repentance or anything like that).

These clearly were under the impression that it might be ok to just walk out of a marriage if they became saved, yet their spouse did not.

Paul straightens out this erroneous viewpoint and lets them know that if the the unbeliever is mutually 'pleased' along with the believer and wants to remain in the marriage, then they arent to put them away, and may even be key to their spouses salvation.

Paul then goes on to give concession not given to the two believers above.

First there was no commandment at all from the Lord to these as with the equally yoked marriage, but Paul now tells these that if the unbeliever wishes to depart the marriage that the believer is not in bondage to this marriage.

Instead of repeating other studies here, please see these articles:

["Let not man Put Asunder" vs "let the unbeliever depart"](#)
[Does the bible permit putting away a spouse for abuse?](#)

Now, these folks will casually leave out that Paul gives instruction to TWO different married groups there and try to apply 1 Cor 7:10-11 to ALL marriages, but this makes Paul's statement of 'BUT TO THE REST' and everything that follows completely illogical and unable to be harmonized with the whole properly.

And the reason they need to pull this deceptive tactic is because they like what the Lord has commanded in verses 7:10-11, but they aren't too happy with Paul's concession in 7:12 and after. It completely destroys these false teachings of theirs that Paul offers this idea that the believer might not be forced to remain bound in marriage to an unbeliever in whatever circumstance, and so they force the text to give instruction to a group of people, those unequally yoked, that Paul CLEARLY says he has no word from the Lord to.

Thankfully, you readers are quite capable of seeing the wording used for yourself and seeing what is actually presented by God's whole word....

Additional Evidence

1Co 7:12 But 1161 to the 3588 **rest3062** speak 3004 I, 1473 not 3756 the 3588 Lord: 2962 If any 1536 brother 80 hath 2192 a wife 1135 that believeth not, 571 and 2532 she 846 be pleased 4909 to dwell 3611 with 3326 him, 846 let him not 3361 put her away. 863, 846

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1Co 7:12 - to the rest--

the other classes (besides "the married," 1Co_7:10, where both husband and wife are believers) about whom the Corinthians had inquired, namely, those involved in mixed marriages with unbelievers.

-Jameson, Faucet & Brown

He has been speaking to the unmarried (1Co_7:8) and to married parties, both of whom were Christians (1Co_7:10). By the rest he means married couples, one of which remained a heathen.

-Vincent's Word Studies