"TO THE MARRIED."

i Cor. 7.

In those days, so many deceptive spirits are in the world, that we have felt impressed by the blessed Holy Spirit to write a letter on the seventh chapter of First Corinthians, that blessed letter which Paul has sent to the church.

The Corinthian church was one of Paul's most gifted churches, and just as it is today, where a church is very gifted, the only safeguard from deceptive spirits is by rightly dividing the Word of God, to keep out fanaticism. We may let down on some lines and rise on others, but God wants everything to be balanced by the Word of God. Paul writing to Timothy (II Tim. 1: 13, 14) says, "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou has heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." And again he says (II Tim. 3: 14): "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." So the Lord God wants us to search and compare scriptures with scriptures.

This Corinthian church had run into freeloveism, and a good many isms. Great division had arisen in it: it had split into several parts, and Paul had to settle them down into the Word of God. He writes this letter to them, for they had got into awful trouble.

Paul tells them in the first verse of this chapter to avoid immorality. He says, "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me, it is good for a man not to touch a woman." (He does not mean a married man here, he means a man that is single, as verses 8 and 26 show.) He says in the 7th verse, "Every man hath his proper gift of God." And to those that can receive this gift, Paul writes in verse 8, "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I." That is to say, by living a single life, they would have more power in the Spirit. He writes this to the church, to any who are saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul thought it was best, but he showed that everyone had his proper gift of God. So he did not put any bondage upon the people of Christ, because he had no scripture for it.

He says in the second and third verses, "Nevertheless, to avoid fornification, 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." This of course means conjugal intercourse between man and wife. "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." That is to say, that the husband has no authority to live separated, without the consent of his wife; and the wife has no authority of herself to live separated without the husband. Then he says in the 5th verse, "Defraud ye not one another, 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." That is to say that every wife and husband should abstain from impurity, and give themselves to fasting for a time. It should be by mutual agreement between the two to fast for power and blessing, and many times to avoid impurity. But he advised them to come again, "that satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Paul here does not make this a law, but as one that had the Holy Spirit, he gives them this advice. He adds in the 6th verse, "But I speak this by permission and not of commandment." In Romans 1: 26, 27, Paul shows there is a natural use for a wife, which is not lust. Speaking of the ungodly, he says, "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature." May God help us to be clear teachers of His Word.

"I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that." Paul is referring here to Matthew 19: 12, where Jesus told the Pharisees that there were some men that were born eunuchs from their mother's womb (that is to say, unable to have wives), some have been made eunuchs of men (for other advantages in life) and there were some eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake. Men had prayed to God for this gift or blessing, just as Paul who said he wished all men were like him: he became no doubt a eunuch for the kingdom of Heaven's sake. Jesus Himself said (Matt. 19: 11), "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given." So Jesus did not put any bondage on men and women, but a man today that has received the power to become a eunuch for the kingdom of Heaven's sake can live a single life with all holiness and purity. Praise our God!

We must rightly divide the Scriptures and compare scripture with scripture so that there be no confusion and no deceptive spirit or wrong teaching may creep in.

Paul says in verses 29 to 31, "But this I say brethren, the time is short: it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; 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; and they that use the world as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." Bless the Lord! Now Paul in speaking this, did not put any bondage on mothers to fear that they would not be able to meet Jesus in His coming, because they were bringing forth children. Mothers and fathers that are saved and sanctified, to whom the Lord has given this gift of bringing forth children can live a pure and holy life before God and be of the bride of Christ, just as the bishop that teaches this holy Gospel can be the husband of one wife and raise his children in the fear of God.

Married couples who are mutually agreed, having received from the Lord power over both body, soul and spirit, God does not ask them to desire; but may they live as God has called them. Many times God gives this power to the husband before to the wife. Many times the wife has it; but in order to save the husband she has to submit to the husband. For God is not the author of confusion. This brings us back to the third verse of this same chapter. Also in Ephesians 5th chapter and 22d verse, we read, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord." Please read on down to the 33d verse. God does not make the husband the tyrant or cruel sovereign over the wife, neither does He make the wife to exercise tyranny over the husband, but He makes both one. God knows our hearts and our lives.

Someone may ask what Jesus meant in Matt. 24: 19, "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days." Well, beloved, here Jesus heart was upon the people that would suffer in the awful tribulation that was coming to Jerusalem forty years after His ascension. He says to them, "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Jesus was the Son of God but He was a man of prayer. He asked His disciples to pray with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. He knew that in the destruction of Jerusalem, if they prayed to God, the Father would not permit it to come to pass in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day. He knew if it was on the Sabbath day, the Jews would be keeping the old Mosaic law (Col. 2: 16) "Of new moons and of Sabbath days, which were a shadow of things to come, but the body of Christ." (The greatest thing that people need in this day is Christ, and then all the days will come in their order and in their place.) Jesus knew if their flight occurred on the Sabbath day, all the gates of Jerusalem would be shut and the Christians could not get out, and the mothers could not escape; so His heart went out for the precious women. The Lord Jesus Christ knows all about our struggles. He knows all about our sufferings and our trials. He is touched with every infirmity and He remembers us. Bless His holy name.

May God help everyone that is getting saved to stay within the lids of God's word and wait on God, and He will make all things right. Now we can give up anything that we see is really of self and affection. The Lord wants us to be temperate in all things. Bless His holy name. People that are desiring to get rid of self and spirit, soul and body, can have it if they will trust God.

I have been asked so much on this question, and I can only give what God has revealed to me through His precious Word. Bless His holy name!

W. J. S.

We read in I Cor. 14:20, "In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people, and yet for all that, they will not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe but to them that believe not." Tongues are a sign, for Jesus said, "These signs shall follow them that believe; in My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues." We believe because we have received God's word into our hearts and the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; therefore the sign of speaking in tongues follows. The sign is to those that believe not, that is, it convinces the unbelievers.

Dear loved ones, do not seek for tongues, but seek for the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and praise God and thank and bless Him, and He will manifest Himself. Everything we receive from God we receive by faith. When you have received the Word of God into your heart for the baptism of the Spirit, you must entertain the Holy Ghost by praising God and giving Him the glory for the Holy Spirit. Then He will manifest His power in the demonstration of speaking or singing in tongues, just as the Holy Ghost chooses. Hallelujah!

This Gospel means a crucified life. We must take up our cross daily and follow Christ. The cause of so many losing the anointing of the Spirit is that they neglect to mortify and crucify self. We wants our eyes, our ears, and all our members kept holy unto Him, that we might live after the Spirit and not after the flesh. He is looking for a people today that will die out to the flesh. How can our eyes revel in the things of the world and our ears listen to worldly music if they are consecrated to the Master's use. People say this is fanaticism, but it is the teaching of the precious word of God. We must measure up to it. He wants us to have our ears closed to the world and open to heaven.

PRAYER

Prayer is the Spirit making intercession through you. Sometimes it is in groanings that cannot be uttered. He takes your whole being and commences prevailing through you.

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God is listening when you are praying. He is right there to bless you. While you are making confession and supplication, Jesus comes down among us and breathes on us. O just think of the bright light that bursts on your face, when you are praying to your Almighty King.

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You first have to repent before you can pray to God, because you must have the Word of God in your heart. God heareth not sinners. But when one has Godly sorrow and repents to God and prays, he is no more a sinner. We must have Christ in us before we can have power with God. We only have power with God through Jesus. He puts the Spirit in us that He might recognize Himself. All we get from God we get through Jesus. Through that wonderful sacrifice that He has made, He freely gives us all things.

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Jesus is the door of salvation, and when we get into the Word, we have a chance to use the key of prayer. When Peter got into the Word, the Lord Jesus said, "Blessed art thou Simon, Son of Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but My Father which is in heaven." So Peter was converted and Jesus gave him the key of the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 16: 19. He was the first one converted under the ministry of the Lord Jesus, and the Lord recognized it and gave him the keys. So the Lord gives you the keys of the kingdom of heaven when you are converted.

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Many people get down and hollow to God and cry like the prophets of Baal and get nothing. It appears that they have a dead god. But those that have a living God, it does not take them long to get their petitions through, and He answers by fire.

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If you pray in the Spirit, you will strike be spring of living water and it will bubble up in you and you never get tired praying it is not your words. You have joy in your soul. But some of you pray and do not have any joy. You keep begging God and when you get almost through you remind Him to be faithful and be sure and do it. It seems you have a god you fear will not do you justice.

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We ought not to stop till we pray through and get what we want from God. We should persist with God till we get a witness. Elijah prayed for rain and sent his servant seven times till he got the witness, which was a cloud the size of a man's hand. Then he arose and went to tell Ahab the rain was coming. Paul prayed thrice for a certain thing before God answered him. God heard the first time but he did not get the answer till he prayed thrice for it. We should press our claim before the throne till we get a witness by the power of the Holy Ghost. God will do just what He says He will.

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Many people pray their own thoughts and do not stop and wait for the mind of God. Honor God by the spirit of prayer. You cannot pray yourself. Let the Holy Ghost give you the mind of God. It is the Spirit's work altogether. It is not our work.

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The Lord wants us to have more faith. When several are praying together for the same petition and one has prayed the prayer of faith, and the Holy Ghost has glorified Jesus by witnessing that the prayer is heard; then often someone will continue praying, just as they did for Peter after God had brought him out of the prison and he was knocking at the gate; and yet they would not believe that prayer could be answered so quickly. If you continue to pray, you grieve the Spirit by doubting, and show that you can hardly trust Him. The Lord wants us to know that He has heard us, and thank and praise Him, and it will help us a great deal in prayer. He does not want us to pray in doubt but in faith. "Believe that ye receive and ye shall have."

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The Lord wants us to claim His promises, everything we see in the atonement. Since we have Christ, we own everything that He owns, so we ought to claim it. We should have all the purchase of the atonement wrought out in our lives, justification, sanctification, the baptism with the Holy Ghost and healing of our bodies.

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All prayer should be directed to the Father through Jesus. In casting out devils, it is through the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In laying hands on the sick, it is in His name. All prayer must be in the name of Jesus.

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O may God help us all this year to keep prayed up and read up and sung up. If there is too much reading the word without prayer, you get too argumentive, and if you pray too much without reading you get fanatical. One or two verses revive your heart. It is blessed to have God's word. I could not live without the word.

CAME FROM CHINA TO AMERICA FOR PENTECOST.

As I am on my way back to China, I feel led to leave my testimony for the glory of God since he has manifested Himself. It is hard to express the wonderful way that He has led.

Five years ago a burden came on me for more of Him. I know I was sanctified years before but it did not satisfy me, and one night a brother came to my house. He did not say much, but I felt power in his words and that made me hungry to get something, and I called it the "melting power of the Holy Ghost," and I kept pressing toward the mark. God wonderfully blessed me, and in 1904 I started for China. When I got there the burden became stronger yet, and I kept pressing on in prayer because I saw the need of God's power to present His Gospel.

About December, 1906, I received the Apostolic Faith paper: and as I read it through in the spirit of prayer, I saw it was the thing that I had been looking for, and the first day of January I asked God as usual for a verse for that year, and He spoke plainly these words, "They shall be endued with power from on high." That gave me such a wonderful faith!

After that I went to Shanghai with the intention of finding some one in the Centenial Missionary Conference that had the baptism of the Holy Ghost who could help me out. Instead of that I met opposition from every side, and one from Los Angeles that had attended the meetings denounced the whole thing as of the devil.

I went back to my station with a still stronger determination in my heart for the baptism. After I got home I received a letter from Chicago telling about the work going on in Chicago, and the writer herself had received her Pentecost. As my wife read the letter to me, this melting power that I had been praying for came upon me, and I fell down on the floor crying out "God's wonderful mercy!"

From that time I felt the love of God in my soul stronger than ever before, but I was conscious that it was not the baptism. A desire came into my heart to go to America, but I did not dare to believe that it was God's will that I should go. But as I prayed over it, that it was His will. He should open the way, He quickly did open the way, and I started and landed in Seattle, Wash., the 27th of August, just in time to meet a band of the Apostolic Faith people who were to go to Japan, Corea, India and China.

I went to their meetings and investigated the work carefully, and when I found out it wasn't anything but Jesus that they exalted, I went right in among them to receive my baptism. As I got to the altar God's blessing upon me was so great that I only shouted glory to God for a time. After the meeting was over I told the brethren that I could not understand how it was that I got so happy, because I thought I had something to do; but they said I could keep on praising Him, and that the Holy Ghost would come in in that way.

As I told them the battles that I had had in China and that I had surrendered all, they satisfied me by saying that I was "prayed up" to date. It seemed too good for me to believe. I moved on to Oakland, Cal., and the same thing happened there, so I went to Los Angeles and the third day, on Sunday, Sept. 15th, He baptized me. I was under the power of God on the floor for more than two hours, and it seemed that every nerve in my body was charged and my jaws began to move, and I said to myself, "I could do that," and I tried, but found out I could not do it mechanically, as it was done, and I was satisfied that it was of the Lord. Then my tongue began to move and a brother said to me, "Let the Holy Ghost have your your voice." I said to myself, "I am not going to obey man." A short time after, the Holy Ghost said, "Give me your voice," and I said, "I do not know what you mean." Then such a power from within came forcing up, and I began to say a sentence, "Ya! ya!" I said, "This is my native language and I don't want to fool the people, but it kept up for some time. So I began to praise God in English for the faithfulness of brothers and sisters around me, and they said, "Get your eyes on God." I was fully convinced that it was all of God, and I shouted Glory! Then He began to speak through me in an unknown tongue, and I rose up under the power, going back and forth before the people preaching. I had no control of my body. I praise God for His manifestation and for the wonderful sweetness and joy that is growing stronger every day. I will advise anyone to get rid of all that you have and gain that "pearl of great price." I pray God's blessing upon all that are seeking God's best and His mercy upon those who reject. Yours for lost souls in China.

B. Berntsen.

Tai-ming-fu, Chih-li, North China.

If a man is in Jesus Christ, he will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. Gal. 5: 22. When we see people that are not bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, it matters not how many tongues or how much power to move mountains they may have, the Lord says they are nothing.

When men and women are saved and sanctified, they need the Blood just as much as they ever did. We should not trust ourselves a half a second, we need the Blood every moment.