

Sexual immorality

Continued from page 5B offers the solution of marriage so that they would at least practice such activity in God's plan (marriage). This is definitely not the best reason to get married, but it was an important one for the Corinthian church.

We should not assume that Paul wanted people to rush into marriage just to avoid sexual temptations. Marriage is a very serious commitment. As Paul will explain later in this chapter, the right to remarry after a divorce under Scripture is very limited. Individuals need to seriously consider whether he or she will spend the rest of his or her life with the person he or she chooses. Couples seeking marriage should definitely seek the Lord on this one, and they need to seek godly marriage counseling to ensure

that they are right for each other.

3. How were husbands and wives to be sensitive to the intimate needs of each other? (v. 3)

In any marriage, there are needs that each spouse needs to be fulfilled. This is especially true when it comes to each spouse's sexual needs. Couples must not deprive each other of the other's natural and reasonable sexual intimacy. Remember, God created male and female (Gen. 1:27); therefore, such activity is part of God's design for humanity. Now God only permits this activity in the bonds of marriage. Christians cannot be like the world and have sexual activity outside of God's bounds.

In marriage, two individuals become one flesh (Gen. 2:24). Now they have power

over each other (1 Cor. 7:4), but this is not a license to become a dictator to the other spouse. Rather, it is mutual submission toward each other (Eph. 5:21-23).

4. What exception does Paul give concerning this general rule? (v. 5)

Under normal circumstances, married couples must not withhold sexual pleasure from each other. Verse 5 does provide an exception, a time for fasting and praying. This time should not be too long, and this should be a mutual decision. It is important that married couples do not use spiritual concerns to withhold sexual pleasure from the other partner, especially if this would tempt the other partner to become unfaithful.

Jakes urges care of kids

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asked them to reach out to unrelated children that are in need of guidance.

"You don't have to be related to be connected to somebody to make a difference in their life," he said. "We need to empower the next generation."

While the focus was on helping children, the message, sent via satellite to 350 prisons across the country, also touched on the importance of families and the problems that absent fathers present.

He called absent fathers black America's "generational curse" and said they have to figure out a way to break that curse, starting with teaching boys the importance of fatherhood and about taking responsibility for their actions.

"Fatherhood is not optional," Jakes said. "Rather than focusing on the fathers that left, we need to focus on the ones who stayed."

The Essence Cares campaign is being promoted in a short video featuring celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey, Danny Glover, Mariah Carey and Harry Belafonte. It was played before Jakes' address. Jakes thinks that this project could affect change.

"One of the mistakes we have made historically is ... to think that there's only one way to attack an issue," he said. "But through a multiplicity of ways I think we really can make a difference. I'm an optimist."

He shared with the group seven steps for helping get the most out of children that included exposing them to many different things, connecting with them and stressing the value of education.

Saturday's seminars also featured Mary J. Blige, gospel singer Yolanda Adams, Michael Eric Dyson and activist Angela Davis. Davis spoke on what she calls the over-incarceration of black youth and renewed her call for the abolition of the country's current prison system. She called for an end to mandatory sentencing and the decriminalization of drug use.

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