

Preparation For Godly Marriage

Part 4

“⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

Now a day they will say that the Old Testament is no more because now we are in the New Testament, and some others they will say that the time is now changed and what is in the bible is no more a practical thing that we can live our lives as the the people in the bible they lived.

Development in technology and various aspects of life might be changing from now and then, but the moral aspect of life and the holiness of living that God would expect to see in us is the same because the word of God tells us that, *“⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)* What the word of God dictates to us and demands from us is still standing and valid for us to follow.

We will tackle now what the New Testament speaks about the period that just precedes marriage. When a man is pledged to marry a certain woman, will the word of God allow that they will be together and in privacy without being married? Or does the New Testament speak about dating, court and love before marriage?

The bible does not agree and speak about that. From the life of Joseph and Mary the mother of Jesus, we will see whether those who were pledged to get married they were allowed to meet one another and be in privacy before being married.

Let us read *Matthew 1:18-25* *“¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”--which means, “God with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.”*

Is Joseph and Mary were meeting together and be alone before marriage? The answer is ‘No.’ And the following are the proofs:

- 1- The word of God tells us the following, *“His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.”* The clear statement here is this: *“but before they came together.”* So they were aware that they will marry but they did not come or be together in privacy. They might see each other while Mary with her family or Joseph with his family but they did not come together or be together and in direct intimacy.
- 2- When Mary was found pregnant, *“Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her*

quietly.” The question is this: if Joseph and Mary were being and meeting together before marriage then how Joseph would be able to prove that he is not the one whom Mary was pregnant from? Surely Joseph was never together in a private place with Mary, because how he will convince the people that he is not the man that she was pregnant from.

- 3- The angel who appeared to Joseph in a dream told Joseph the following: *“Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”* The statement of the angel *‘do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife,’* That means that Joseph did not yet took Mary to himself, to his body, or to his home and be in privacy with her.
- 4- The fact of what God’s word tells us in *Matthew 1:24*, *‘When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.’* We can conclude that only at that time Joseph took Mary to his home, *‘But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.’ (Matthew 1:25)*

God’s word shows us the truth clearly to help us to remain truthful to God and be committed to Him to live in holiness and full obedience to his word.

Paul told the Corinthians church: *“³⁶ If anyone thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to, and if she is getting along in years and he feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married.” (1Corinthians 7:36)* Paul speaking here that if someone engaged to a virgin girl and he is acting improperly toward her, then he should marry her. The Corinthian church was out of control from Paul authority who planted that church. And it was recorded in that church case of immorality that are not even recorded among the heathen, *“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife.” (1Corinthians 5:1)* But inspite of all that Paul emphasized on holiness in his letter to them as we can conclude the following points from *1Corinthians 7:36*:

- A- In mentioning the word *‘virgin,’* Paul meant here no sex before the wedding day.
- B- In mentioning the statement *‘acting improperly toward the virgin,’* Paul emphasizing here that there should not be before marriage any sinful improper acts and thoughts between the man and the woman like touch, kisses and talk that will cause both of them to be unclean.

My Dear and Beloved: God’s word teaches us God’s ways and will. The bible tells us *“² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)* So if you want to follow God and enjoy his good, pleasing and perfect will, then no more in following the pattern of this world and don’t be deceived and follow the bad example of others who are disobedient to the faith that we follow as you agree to pray.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself to apply your word in my life and in the life of my children and disciples and in the life of your church. Lord give me the strength and provide for me to do your will, and raise up people who are willing to abide with your word and will in regard to marriage and family life. This is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.*