

## Questions and Answers 10-18-11

Question: *Why do Christians say that the Bible is an inspired book when Paul clearly contrasts the teaching of Jesus with his own personal opinions in 1 Corinthians 7:10-12?*

**Answer:** The passage says, “*To the married I give this charge (not I, but the Lord): the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife. To the rest I say (I, not the Lord) that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her.*”

As we begin it is important to remember that sometimes the apostles would refer to something Jesus personally said during His ministry (Acts 20:35). However, Jesus did not have the time to reveal everything that needed to be revealed during His ministry, nor were His apostles prepared to hear everything then. Thus Jesus promised that He would send them a Helper, the Holy Spirit, who would guide them into all truth through a period of continual revelation (John 14:26; 16:7-13). When that period was completed the perfect, complete revelation of truth had been revealed (1 Corinthians 13:8-10; Jude 3).

While on earth Jesus taught on the subject of marriage and divorce (Matthew 19:9, etc.). Paul refers to the Lord’s teaching on this subject in verses 10-11 of 1 Corinthians 7. However, Jesus did not specifically deal with the point introduced in verse 12 during His ministry. However, the contrast is not between what is inspired and what is not. The contrast is between what Jesus personally said and what was being revealed to an inspired apostle by the Holy Spirit.

In verse 17 Paul said, “*This is my rule in all the churches.*” The life and spirit of Paul makes it inconceivable that he would seek to bind his own uninspired opinion as a rule in *all the churches!* This was the very man who spoke so powerfully against binding upon others the uninspired judgments of men (Romans 14). The words of an inspired apostle is every bit as binding as the words Jesus Himself said while on earth. When an apostle mentions something that Jesus personally said and then gives additional instruction on the subject, it does *not* mean that he is simply pulling something out of his own hat and stating a personal opinion. He is giving instruction received through inspiration of the Holy Spirit which builds upon the instruction of Christ Himself.

In summary, Paul told the Corinthians the personal instruction of Jesus Christ while He was on earth. Upon reaching the conclusion of that instruction he gave his judgment on other parts, as an *inspired* apostle, or representative, of Jesus Christ. That which was bound in heaven was bound on earth.