

- I. This age and the age to come
 - A. The imminence of judgment (7:29, 31)
 - B. Don't think that you can build a permanent life in this world. (7:17-40)
 - C. Live ready to lose the ties of this life
 - D. Married people: how attached are you to your life?

- II. Freedom to serve the Lord
 - A. "So glorify God in your body." (6:20)
 - B. Trouble in the world
 - i. troubled times mean extra trouble for married people
 - ii. married life means less single-minded attention to serving the Lord
 - iii. further, your life is not at your own disposal
 - C. Holy families: a witness to the goodness of Creation (Malachi 2:15; 1 Corinthians 7:14-16)
 - D. Holy singles: a witness to the coming of Christ
 - i. Jesus speaks of a time when relationships as we know them will be utterly different (Luke 20:34-36)
 - ii. we know by now what marriage is *about* – it is the love of God for his people (Ephesians 5:22ff.; Proverbs 31:10-31)
 - iii. to choose to live unmarried and chaste is to witness to that reality
 - E. Both witness to the love of Christ for his bride, but of the two witnesses, voluntary celibate unmarried life is *more powerful* (Matthew 19:10-12)

- III. Prizing the unmarried and the unmarried life
 - A. Have we fallen into the trap of thinking that all people should be married?
 - B. To this mostly married church:
 - i. Do we respect unmarried Christians as full and mature people?
 - ii. Do we teach our children to aspire to be unmarried believers?
 - iii. Are families good to unmarried people – in and out of the church?
 - iv. Are we watching out for the well-being of the unmarried people among us?
 - C. To the unmarried among us:
 - i. you are not "less than!"
 - ii. you are *critically needed* in the world and the church today
 - iii. your life as celibate and unmarried is an ongoing testimony that your hope is in Christ, not in this life

- IV. Why it is possible to live unmarried (see John 2:4; 20:17; Revelation 19:6)