

*Daily Morning Message*  
*St Paul United Church of Christ*  
*5312 Old Blue Rock Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45247*  
*Allen M Fluent, Pastor*  
*Monday October 4, 2021*

*Lectionary Readings*      *Psalm 55:1-15*  
*Job 8:1-22*  
*1 Corinthians 7:1-9*

*Today's Scripture Verse:*      *To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain unmarried as I am. But if they are not practicing self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion. (1 Corinthians 7:8-9)*

*What it means:*      Paul's advice about marriage does not conform to anything that we would teach in Christian churches today. There have been churches that have tried to live without sexual activity – the Shakers who formed communities in the United States during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century come to mind. But, having no children and few converts, they died out, of course. There have also been religious communities that have historically advocated that those in religious vocations remain sexually unattached, and that may be closer to Paul's reasoning, since he felt that the believer's religious commitment should take priority over personal attachments. When reading a passage like this, it is helpful to remember that Paul's beliefs were built upon ideas common in his historic time. Among those beliefs was the notion that the world would end in his lifetime, so believers should be free of attachments.

*Reflection:*      Gracious God, we pray for the wisdom to discern the difference between eternal truths and beliefs that conform to cultural understandings and practices. May we always seek the truth under the guidance of both Scripture and the consideration of what is most loving in our own time and place.

