

MARRIAGE

The Purpose of Marriage

God established the institution of marriage for two reasons. One of which was to be the means of our multiplying and filling the earth. For at the beginning, God said to mankind, **“Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and have power over it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth”** (Genesis 1:28). Therefore, one purpose of marriage is to bear and rear righteous children.

The second reason God established the institution of marriage was for our companionship. For after God created the first man, he said, **“It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make a help meet for him”** (Genesis 2:18). And after creating the woman, God said, **“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cling to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh”** (Genesis 2:24).

There can be no companionship closer than a man and his wife becoming one flesh in marriage. For without doubt, a loving and devoted husband and wife companionship is one of the greatest joys of life, if not the greatest. Done God’s way, marriage is the most beautiful and wonderful experience anyone can have in this world. To illustrate that I will quote a few verses of the Bible taken from Song of Solomon, a book written about a model marriage:

Behold, thou are fair, my love, behold, thou are fair. [Her husband then describes various parts of her body.] **Thine eyes are Thy hair is as Thy teeth are like Thy lips are like Thy temples are like Thy neck is like Thy two breasts are like Thou are all fair, my love, and there is no spot in thee How fair is thy love, my sister, [my] bride! How much better is thy love than ...** [he then lists many sources of other pleasures] (Song of Solomon 4:1-10).

And God created our nature so that both men and women have a longing for that companionship. Although that longing is somewhat greater in women. For God said to the first woman, **“And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee”** (Genesis 3:16).

God also created the process of sexual intimacy to reward obedience those two purposes. To serve the purpose of bearing and rearing children, God commanded that sexual intimacy be limited exclusively to a man and his wife. Sexual intimacy also serves the purpose of strengthening the unity of the one-flesh companionship of the man and his wife. And in order to serve those two purposes, God made the process of sexual intimacy to be very pleasurable, indeed, the most pleasurable of any natural process.

Encouraging Marriage

Therefore, in America, God's way marriage and child rearing would again be encouraged. As an example of such encouragement, in the law that God gave to his people Israel, he said, **"When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out in the army, neither shall he be charged with any business. He shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer his wife whom he has taken"** (Deuteronomy 24:5).

That could not mean a vacation of a year. It no doubt means he was free to use his time for personal matters, such as building a house and other things needed for a family. And it was no doubt also restricted to a man's first wife and not to all others he might take. For Jesus taught that God only tolerated polygyny among his people.

In America, God's way some other things could be done to encourage marriage and child rearing. Reduced taxes should be done, especially during the first years of marriage. Reduced taxes for having children was commonly done in America before it became pagan. But it should be done only for children born legitimately. No financial aid should be given for bearing children out of wedlock. America, God's way would punish sin, not reward it. That is the only way to have a strong and health country.

The Rights of Fathers

In God's law for his people Israel a young woman apparently needed the permission of her father before she could marry (unless he was deceased), as indicated by this passage: **"If her father utterly refuses to give her to him ..."** (Exodus 22:16-17). Indeed, until modern times it was traditional in America for a suitor to ask a father for permission to marry his daughter. In America, God's way a woman would be bound to her father that way while was still living with him under his authority.

In the law God gave to his people Israel fathers also had the right to sell their daughters for maidservants: **"And if a man sells his daughter to be a maid-servant, she shall not go out as the men-servants do"** (Exodus 21:7). That meant committing her to a labor contract. A daughter probably had the right to agree to her contract (sale), because such women usually became wives or concubines of their masters.

In America, God's way women would not be bound by such a law because we have no such traditions. Nevertheless, in the sight of God, fathers have great authority over their wives and children. However, in most countries of the world their rulers have robbed them of those rights, including in pagan America. They have justified robbing them in conformity with the evil philosophy of humanism.

God would not have given fathers such rights if he thought it was evil, or was going to result in evil. In fact, taking those rights away from fathers has resulted in far more evil to everyone. It has created more trouble for fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, as well as to society in general.

There were several other laws that God gave his people Israel about wives. All of them were given to command kindness and consideration to the women. Nevertheless, none of them would be applicable to America, God' way. The world and its traditions are just too different from those of ancient times. Nevertheless, the principles of showing kindness and consideration toward women should be applied in America, God's way.

Divorce

Jehovah hates divorce. For example, the prophet Malachi said to the sons of Israel, **“Ye cover the altar of Jehovah with tears, with weeping, and with sighing, insomuch that he does not regard the offering any more, nor receives it with good will at your hand. Yet ye say, Why?**

“Because Jehovah has been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou have dealt treacherously, though she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did he not make one, although he had the residue of the Spirit? And why one? He sought a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For I hate putting away, says Jehovah, the God of Israel ...” (Malachi 2:13-16).

Psychologically, divorce is like a death, the death of the one-flesh that is a marriage. According to one website, “Divorce ranks as one of the top two most stressful life events. Only death of a spouse ranks higher on the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale, which lists 43 life events that can contribute to illness.”¹

When people meet and marry in a mature way, and then live together as God would have us, divorce would be very rare. And it was when most Americans were Christians.

Since marriage is a civil contract, then in America, God's way if divorce is desired righteous judges (a panel of them) would be needed to approve of it. It would be their duty to judge who was guilty of provoking the desire for divorce, as well as determining other circumstances that might be involved. It would be their duty to see that justice was done if the divorce was unavoidable. That would be needed to determine both the financial matters and custody of children if they still lived with their parents.

For Christians (in any country) since marriage is also a vow before God to live together for life, then the elders of the congregation where the husband and the wife are members would serve as judges, using the teachings of the Bible as their guide.

1. <http://www.healthline.com/health/depression/divorce>