

## What Does the Bible Say About Marriage?

During the past several months you should have received the monthly Mt. Carmel Minute in your mailbox. We have written articles about *What America Do You Want for Your Kids?*, *Are our Children Being Indoctrinated?*, *America's Christian Founding*, and *Jesus in the Home*. This month let's consider what the Bible says about marriage.

First, we need to define marriage. Traditionally most people in the United States have never questioned that marriage was between one man and one woman. However, over the last several decades there have been groups that have pushed for the recognition of same-sex marriages. To battle this stance about marriage, The Defense of Marriage Act was passed in September 1996 and signed into law by President Bill Clinton. It allowed states the right to deny recognition of same-sex marriages conducted by other states. Furthermore, for all federal purposes various benefits were denied to those that were in same-sex marriages. Some of these denied benefits included insurance benefits for federal employees, social security survivor benefits, and the right to file joint tax returns. However, in 2013, the Supreme Court of the United States issued its ruling about the Defense of Marriage Act. It stated that being in a same-sex marriage is a fundamental right. This ruling requires every state to recognize the marriage of same-sex individuals -- basically overturning the Defense of Marriage Act.

Also, there are those that believe that one can have multiple spouses inside a marriage.

In order for us to determine what marriage really is, let's examine the institution of marriage that our Creator established! In His word, the Bible, we read in Genesis 2:24, "*For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.*" After reading that, you may ask, "for what reason?" In verses 18 to 23 we see that God created woman from one of Adam's ribs because there was no suitable helper for him. For that reason, God created woman from man. From the very beginning, our Maker instituted marriage as being between one man and one woman. Again, Jesus confirms this in Matthew 19:4-6. It says, "*4) And He answered and said, 'Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5) and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6) So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.*" Notice two things from this passage. 1) It helps us understand how long marriage lasts. 2) It explains who and how many are involved in the act of marriage.

First, the previous passage says that no one should separate what God has joined together. Furthermore, 1 Cor. 7:39 says, "*A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.*" So we see that marriage lasts until death. There is one exception for divorcing that Jesus tells us about in Matthew 19:9. It reads, "*And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.*" Notice that based on these scriptures, God allows one to remarry only after the death of his or her spouse or if his or her spouse has committed immorality. Otherwise, the one that remarries for any other reason commits adultery. Note that the word "commits" is in the present tense. This means that the act of committing adultery is continual. Every act of adultery is sin. How do we know that this is what God means in this passage? Look at John the Baptist's encounter with Herod in Matthew 14. In verse 4, John tells Herod that it is not lawful for Herod to have Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. Therefore, if one is living in an unscriptural marriage (one where one or both of the spouses are in a second (or more) marriage and one of them does not have the Biblical right to remarry based on the two exceptions referenced above), they are committing adultery. The Bible warns us in Gal.

5:19-21 that those that practice the deeds of the flesh, including immorality and adultery, will not inherit the Kingdom of God. So, marriage should last a life-time or until the death of one spouse.

Second, we see that the man and woman became one flesh (two became one). Marriage is between one man and one woman. From the beginning, marriage was only between one man and one woman (Also see Mark 10:6-9). So, in the beginning, God's institution of marriage did not allow for one to have multiple spouses.

In the next several articles, we will discuss other Biblical topics related to marriage such as "The Husband's Role in the Home", "The Wife's Role in the Home", "The Children's Role in the Home", and "Practical Parenting Tips from a Biblical Perspective." We encourage you to take out your Bibles and examine the scriptures with us about these topics.

On November 28<sup>th</sup> we had corresponding lessons on the topic of Marriage. Check our website for sermons titled "What is marriage? (Genesis 2:18-25)" from the AM service and "Marriage is a Good Thing (Matthew 19:3-9)" from the PM service. Also, you can find our worship services on our Facebook page